

## 2018 Candidate Statement, Bio, & Q&A

### Leigh Michl

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#### Candidate Statement

Mad River Glen is, quite simply, a place like no other. In a divided world of extreme rhetoric, short-term thinking, commercialism, homogenization, and inequality; Mad River is a universe unto itself, a sanctuary protected from and largely devoid of these ever-accelerating forces. I believe that the Co-operative and the “co-operative experience” has elevated us to another level of “community” and contributed to an experience even larger and more valuable than Roland and our other founders could have imagined was possible. I would like to rejoin the board to “preserve our paradise” - for myself, my family, my young son, my children’s children and, most definitely, for each and every shareholder.

I was an occasional but regular MRG skier from 1974 until 1980 when ski racing at Bates College and then the pressures of a young family and new career conspired to keep me away until 1995. From the moment that the first two of my four children were able to ski unassisted, I returned in earnest – becoming a passholder since 1996, a shareholder and homeowner in 1998, MRG Co-operative Trustee from 1999 until 2005, and a full-time Vermont resident (living at the top of the Practice Slope) since 2015.

#### Brief Bio

- Bates College, BA Economics 1984; MS Finance, Boston College, 1990
- General Electric Financial Management Program 1984-1987
- Technology venture capital investor 1988 – 2011
- Chairman & CEO, Ultimus, Inc., a global provider of business process management technology and solutions, 2009 – present
- MRG Co-op Board 1999 – 2005 (serving in various officer roles and as Chair in 2002)
- Co-founder of Stark Mountain Foundation
- Co-led development of Single Chair Campaign legal foundation and fundraising feasibility
- Leadership fundraiser for Single Chair Campaign
- Regular Finance Committee participant 2005 - 2010 and contributor thereafter

## **Mad River Glen Candidates Questions: 2018 (paraphrased)**

1. *What brought you to Mad River Glen initially? What keeps you coming back today?*

MRG's reputation as "the skier's mountain" first brought me here in 1974. The introduction of the high-speed quad at once venerable ski areas kept me coming back. I saw that eliminating liftlines in exchange for crowded trails, an increased need for snowmaking and grooming, and the resulting financial pressures that drove ski areas to become real estate developers, resort operators, and consolidators had all but ruined the sport. I keep coming back because, at MRG, skiing is still a sport!

2. *Why are you running for the board? Strengths? Roles?*

Mad River is in an enviable place, succeeding with the most contrarian business model imaginable. But we find ourselves today blessed with new management and financial resources on the one hand and an aging infrastructure, changing ski industry demographics, consolidation, and the pressures of climate change on the other. I believe that my professional and Co-op experience can help navigate these newfound riches and challenges and lay the groundwork for the next generation of Co-op success... and allow our grandchildren to experience what we are so fortunate to be able to experience today. I would be honored to serve in whatever role the board felt I could contribute; however, I believe I am most able to contribute to the establishment and maintenance of board policies, procedures, and governance and development of business and financial strategies.

3. *We have new leadership and are undertaking a significant philanthropic campaign. Where do you see the Co-op in 5/10 years and what is your vision of the board's role in this future?*

Although new leadership and financial resources are tremendous opportunities for the Co-op, we also face several equally large challenges. I see the board's role as ensuring that the Co-op's energy and resources are directed towards a sustainable future that does not adversely impact the spirit that made individuals want to contribute so generously in 1995, 1998, 2005, and again now. Specifically, the board must ensure that the three pillars of our future success – income from operations, capital resources, and the mountain experience – remain viable and in balance.

4. *What are you prepared to do to ensure the POP campaign meets its goal and how can you help it succeed between now and April 2009? What role does philanthropy play in the Co-op's future?*

I believe that, when people are confident that their donations are used to maintain an alignment with our Mission Statement, they will contribute more and thereby ensure the successful completion of the campaign. Subject to the availability of resources, in the next year I would like the board to initiate a visible project that demonstrates the Co-op's ability to invest these monies wisely. The Co-op cannot succeed on income from operations alone and, if we tried, we would not only fail, but we would destroy what led so many to contribute in the first place. But to ensure that philanthropy can continue to fill the gap, the board must, first and foremost, ensure that our natural, athletic, and community experience is preserved so that people will want to protect it always.