

**Ron Shems**  
**In-State Candidate Statement 2018**  
**Mad River Glen Cooperative Board of Trustees**



**Candidate Statement:**

I have been skiing at Mad River Glen since 1984 when I was a student at Vermont Law School, and have been a shareholder since 1995. I was born and raised in Maine where I learned to ski when I was five years old and skied most every day each winter from 7<sup>th</sup> grade through high school on the school ski team and as a junior ski patrol. I have been living in Moretown, VT since 1986 and am an active member of the Mad River Valley and Central Vermont communities.

As a Trustee for the last three years, I have been part of the team that led the Co-op to new management, and helped to oversee our transition to new management. I have also assisted in developing and implementing business and governance practices allowing the Co-op to make best use of Preserve Our Paradise Campaign donations and strengthen its partner relationship with the Stark Mountain Foundation. As an attorney with extensive experience with boards, cooperatives and non-profits, I work effectively to assure the Board's accountable, transparent governance and cohesive decision-making. I have served as Board Secretary and a member of the Executive Committee for the last two years. I believe that the Mad River Glen Cooperative has been well served by the Trustees' hard work over the last few years. I am hopeful that Mad River Glen is on a path of continued vitality.

I am deeply committed to preserving Mad River Glen as a unique, natural experience, and will work hard to assure its continued success. I would be honored to serve as trustee for another three years and ask for your support.

## **Brief Bio:**

I am an environmental and energy attorney with Diamond & Robinson, P.C., a prominent Montpelier law firm. I serve as General Counsel to the Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc., a local utility, represent several municipal and state boards, and have a busy litigation caseload. Prior to joining Diamond & Robinson, I served for four years as Chair of the Natural Resources Board – the agency charged with state-wide administration of Act 250, Vermont’s land use permitting law. I am a recipient of the prestigious National Association of Attorneys General “Best Brief Award” for excellence in brief writing in the United States Supreme Court.

I am a member of the Moretown Board of Civil Authority, and until July of 2017, was a member of the Moretown School Board. I also serve on the Board of the Vermont Environmental Consortium that promotes green business.

I am married to Maxine Grad. She is a State Representative that serves the Mad River Valley and Chair of the Vermont House Judiciary Committee. We have three children, who learned to ski at Mad River Glen.

## **Q & A:**

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

I first skied at Mad River Glen in 1984 when I was a student at Vermont Law School and never turned back! I have skied all of my life and was always looking for a place that offered interesting, challenging and beautiful terrain. A storeowner next to my school suggested that I try MRG, and assured me that it offered some great skiing. Not only does MRG have great terrain – it has a great community. Mad River Glen is uniquely special. I taught our children to ski here and they are now MRG skiers. It’s a great place for all of us!

### **2. Why are you running for the Board? What strengths would you bring to being a Trustee? Is there an officer role or committee chair in which you’d be interested in serving sometime during your tenure?**

I want to continue my role as an active member of the dedicated Board that preserves Mad River Glen and assures its continued vitality. I have been part of the team that led the Co-op to new management and oversaw our transition to new management. It is an honor to be a Trustee while the Preserve Our Paradise Campaign has geared up and been publicly launched. I care deeply about Mad River Glen, and want to do my share to help keep it going. I am also motivated to run for the Board because Mad River Glen is an important part of the larger Mad River Valley Community. I am a 32-year Moretown resident. Being on the MRG Board allows me to do my part in serving our community.

The skills I bring to the Board reflect that I am: an attorney who counsels numerous boards, the former Chair of the board charged with state-wide administration of Vermont’s Act 250 program, present and past member of several boards, and an active member of the local and larger Vermont communities. For the last three years, I have worked effectively with the Board

to take important steps assuring Mad River Glen's solid management and continued vitality. I also bring the skills and strengths needed to assure transparent and accountable governance and solid decision-making.

My understanding of the law assists the Board and assures solid decisions. My knowledge of federal, state and local government assists the Cooperative in managing tax, permitting, and other regulatory matters. I also bring knowledge of how cooperatives work. I am General Counsel to the Washington Electric Cooperative, a local utility, and have done legal work for cooperatives throughout my legal career. Equally important, I have the skills to work as a team with Trustees, staff, and shareholders to accomplish the Co-op's important goals.

I have been Secretary to the Board and a member of the Executive Committee for the last two years. I would be honored to continue serving in those or other roles.

**3. The Co-op has entered its third decade. We have new leadership and are undertaking a significant philanthropic campaign. Where do you see the Co-op in five years? Ten years? What is your vision of the Board's role in this future?**

I see the Co-op's future five, ten and more years from now as vibrant. I know from my work on the Board for the last three years that the Co-op's members, staff and other Trustees are committed and creative. That formula assures a stable future where Mad River Glen will remain as the unique and special place that it is. The Board's role in this future is to continue to foster and harness member and staff creativity and commitment, and to set policy, management goals, and exercise its responsibilities to best achieve that end.

**4. We are half way to the goal of \$6.5M with the Preserve Our Paradise capital campaign. What are you prepared to do to ensure the campaign meets its goal? How can you help the Campaign succeed between now and April 2019? What role do you see philanthropy playing in the Co-op's future?**

The incredible success of the Preserve our Paradise Campaign is first due to the amazing talent and commitment of the folks managing the Campaign. Bravo! It is also due, in part, to the assurance that donors are giving to a stable and well-run organization. I will continue to assure the Board's stable and transparent governance of the Mad River Glen Cooperative, and work hard to best meet the Co-op's needs.