



I was born and raised in Rotterdam, the Netherlands; graduated from the University of CA, Davis with a BS and MS in Civil Engineering; retired from the CA Dep't Water Resources in 2008. Happily married, raised 3 kids – who are now in their early 30's

Prior to retirement I had done about 6 or 7 GC trips, starting in the mid 70's, along with a host of trips down the Rogue, MF and Main Salmon, Green, Owyhee and Snake Rivers. Having retired, I decided to continue boating with an emphasis on the GC, which I've been able to do every year – thanks to the folks who have invited me to join them on their permits – they've all been great adventures. More importantly I've met and enjoyed the company of fellow boaters and I hope to continue doing so in the future.

I joined the GCPBA in order to help build on past successes such as the 2006 CRMP as well as continue and enhance the rapport with the NPS. Proposals such as the Escalade, Uranium mining, Hualapai upriver runs, west-end development, etc require that we, as private boaters, work in concert with other organizations to protect this unique and special place.

Vice President - **Rich Turner**



I was born in Chicago and spent all of my summers going to and working at a camp in one of Aldo Leopold's sand counties of Wisconsin. It was there that I fell in love with the outdoor world.

I first saw the Grand Canyon in 1955, when I was 9, and resolved then that I would spend the rest of my life where there were contour lines. Between my junior and senior years at Knox College, I participated in a program at the newly opened National Outdoor Leadership School, based in Lander, Wyoming.

Wes pent33days hikingandclimbingthelengthoftheWindRiverRange.Ourtripwasledbythe charismatic founder of NOLS, Paul Petzold. I decided that I would return and go through the instructor's course that Paul was setting up. Then, after graduating from Knox, I would return to NOLS to work. Upon graduating with a BA in History, Richard

Nixon decided that my talents (or lack thereof) would be best suited to ridding the world of the communists hiding in the jungles of Viet Nam.

Immediately after returning home in 1971, some friends invited me to go along on Grand Canyon Dory trip. Instead of going back to NOLS, I took the river trip. It was on that trip that I met Martin Litton and essentially got hired to work for him as a boatman/guide. I continued working for the Dories until 1986. I have been doing private river trips on and off since 1980 (whenever I, or a friend could wangle a permit). I was fortunate to have been on the river in 1983 when the Colorado was running 98,000 cfs. It was an experience I wouldn't have missed for anything, although I'm not sure I would want to repeat it.

In 1972, one of our dory passengers, a principal from Phoenix, hired me to teach 5th graders (probably not the best decision he ever made). I earned my Masters Degree in Elementary Education from Northern Arizona University, and after 36 years, I retired in 2008. I live in both Phoenix and Flagstaff, and hope that this close proximity to the Canyon helps me contribute to GCPBA.

Member at Large - **Blakely LaCroix**



A life long resident of Minnesota, I have always been surrounded by water. Known for its 10,000 lakes, Minnesota is also home to more than 6000 rivers and streams. Given the bounty of rivers and forest, a sense of wanderlust and the need to discover, it was inevitable that I would become a river runner.

I bought my first raft in 1994 for river tripping family vacations. Our first trip was on the 140 mile Wild and Scenic segment of the Missouri River in Montana, retracing the return journey of Lewis and Clark. Every year since, we have spent our family vacation rafting a desert river as often as the permits would allow.

In the summer of 1995, my wife gave me an early birthday present: a 14 day Western Rivers oar trip through Grand Canyon. I even got to row some of the flat water. With that trip, the hook was completely set. My name went on the Waiting List. Thirteen years later, in the 2008 lottery, I won a permit for my own trip through Grand Canyon in 2009. We ran just a single raft with my wife and daughter as passengers. It was simply the greatest adventure of my life.

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to the people and organizations who worked hard and worked together to make access to this incredible resource more equitable. Now, having reached a point in life where I can offer more than just financial support to the organizations that are important to me, I welcome the opportunity to be of service to the GCPBA Board and to promote and advance the goals defined in its Mission Statement.



About 25 years ago the Boston Ski Club had a weekend outing in Maine. One day of that was a river trip on the Penobscot River. I still remember the excitement of my first time paddling the rapids and the relaxation of watching the scenery come by, and everything in between. From that day on I was hooked. I knew that this river rafting would be something I'll want to do for the rest of my life. Now, in Colorado, I'm fortunate to have many rivers throughout the West less than a day's drive away. None, of course, compare to the Grand Canyon. My first time there I joined the group late; they already had enough boats. So, I went as a passenger. For many of those 18 days my boatman was the renowned Ricardo Martin. We drank a few tonics and spoke of many things, including the access issues facing private boaters in the Grand Canyon.

I'm glad to do my part for the GCPBA to make it more fair and easier for private boaters to access and enjoy their rivers, especially the Colorado through the Grand Canyon.

Membership – **Samantha Rist**



I was born in and raised in Kansas, and fell in love with the southwest at a young age. My father was an avid Grand Canyon enthusiast and prior Colorado River guide, so every time a tornado siren led us to our basement, we huddled up to hear stories and view slides of red rocks, blue skies, and turquoise waters of trips past. My dad, mom, brother, and I took our first crew vacation to Arizona when I was 10, where I spent every moment – that I wasn't complaining about being tired or hot – in absolute awe of the breathtaking beauty around us. It ignited a love for the southwest that has only grown with time.

I was privileged to go on my first private river trip in 2004, which changed my life in the course of 3 weeks. Waking up to the sun on the canyon walls around us, falling asleep under the canvas of stars above us, and pondering how small we really are in this world is more empowering and peaceful than anything I had experienced. Unable to stay away, I went on additional private river runs in 2006 and 2008, and dotted the time in between and since with hikes and camping excursions. On a particularly wonderful hike in 2018, my now-husband proposed to me on the Bright Angel Trail, which further solidified my connection to the place that already held a large piece of my heart. Suffice it to say, the Grand Canyon, the Colorado River, and the ability to support and advocate for private boaters are areas in which I am quite passionate. Alongside fellow board members, I look forward to continuing the legacy of the GCPBA, and aim to make a positive impact for private boaters who want to access and conserve the Canyon.

Treasurer - **Howard Robinson**



In 1970, I hitchhiked with two of my high-school buddies from our hometown of San Diego to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. We hiked down the Bright Angel Trail and jumped into the surprisingly cold Colorado River. I then turned around to get home in time for my very important dishwashing job. I didn't fully realize it at the time, but the Canyon had set its hook!

Not too many years later, UC Santa Barbara professor Roderick Nash, a rafting pioneer and foundational thinker of the modern environmental movement, suggested a small group of us buy cheap inflatable kayaks and try paddling down not-yet-dammed Stanislaus River. I quickly found myself captivated by rivers and rafting.

The highlights of my life have included many rivers, including an embarrassingly under-equipped trip on the Middle Fork Salmon with my girlfriend at the time, and now wife of 35 years; teaching my two daughters to row on the Rogue River; and winning my own lottery permit for a 16-person trip on the Colorado (the latest of 4 Canyon trips). I'm recently retired from a career in real estate development and land use consulting. For the past 20 years, I've represented clients with development projects pending before local government agencies, including the California Coastal Commission. In that work, I learned how to effectively engage with large governmental organizations, and used these skills to serve on the board of Friends of the River, the leading California river advocacy group, for 12 years.

As I begin this new chapter as a GCPBA board member, I'm excited to see how my experience on the board of an important river conservation group, skill in lobbying governmental agencies, and passion for the Canyon will benefit the GCPBA family.

Secretary - **Erica Stones**



Hey there! I am also a native of the Sunflower State (though I did take a little detour to live in beautiful Rouen, France for a stint). My professional journey started in the classroom, where I spent 8 years teaching high school French. I've since shifted gears into the world of Instructional Design, crafting learning solutions for a software

company. When I'm not deep in the world of tech and learning, you'll most likely catch me in action as the official dog wrangler for my two four-legged pals or indulging in some seriously nerdy content. And, of course, I'm all about soaking in the great outdoors whenever the opportunity arises.

My Grand Canyon story started in 2008 when I lucked out with an invitation for a private river trip that would change my life. Three magical weeks in the Canyon, and I was hooked, forever ignited with a passion for outdoor adventures.

I'm thrilled to be part of the GCPBA, working to safeguard access to this incredible natural wonder and to ensure its preservation for future generations. It's an exciting new chapter in my life's adventure, and I'm eager to contribute my skills and passion to this important cause.

Member at Large - **Helen Howard**



Born into a family who believed that outdoor adventure was important, I started early on a lifetime outdoor journey. Beginning with backpacking and canoeing almost as soon as I could walk, I progressed to whitewater canoeing with my Dad at 7, whitewater kayaking at 14 and my first Grand Canyon River trip in a kayak when I was 20 in 1969. Carrying on this family tradition I am often joined by my kids and grand-kids for both whitewater kayaking and rafting trips when they can get away from their busy lives. With a degree in Archaeology and a minor in engineering from Arizona State University, most of my professional career was working on more modern ruins as an insurance adjuster for Allstate Insurance Company. I worked both out of the Phoenix Office and various catastrophe offices around the country which gave me lots of extra time off between events which I spent hiking, kayaking or rafting, mostly in Grand Canyon. I've managed to take a total of 10 Grand Canyon River trips since that first one. In March 2014 I rowed a 16' 3" replica of the historic dory Music Temple through the Grand Canyon after two friends and I spent three months measuring and designing the build and five months building her. Rowing her through the Grand Canyon fulfilled a dream I had since seeing the Grand Canyon Dorries for the first time in 1974. I won a permit to row the Grand Canyon in 2014 at age 66, rather than at age 80, which I would have been under the old waiting list system. That trip I attribute directly to the GCPBA successful fight for more equitable access to the river for private boaters.

Over the years my passion for the outdoors has led me to attend almost every public hearing related to noise, access and a host of other issues related to the Grand Canyon and I have testified and provided written comments at a number of them. I have also been involved in access issues for other rivers in Arizona and California for a long time. In 2004, when I retired from Allstate, I moved to Bullhead City, Arizona to open Desert River Kayak which is a lively business operating between Hoover Dam and Imperial Dam on the western border of Arizona. While we provide canoe, kayak and standup paddleboard trips for all ages, we specialize in scout, church and school age youth trips to train the next generation of children in the skills they need to access the rivers I have loved and used for over 50 years.

Over the years I have been active in a variety of charitable and social organizations such as Kiwanis, the Phoenix Ski Club, American Cancer Society, Colorado River Heritage Greenway Trail association and the Black Canyon National Water Trail Association, holding officer and board member positions in most of them. Currently I am the Chair of the Bullhead City Parks and Recreation Commission, an Advisory Board, for the city which I have held for seven years. I bring a wide range of skills and a hard work ethic to GCPBA and hope that I can positively affect additional access opportunities for the private boating community for the Grand Canyon, the place I hold dearest in my heart.