

Peter and Judy Hatcher – Guardians of the Bay

1. Who are you nominating as Guardians of the Bay and what's their connection to Georgian Bay?

In 1967, Peter Hatcher and his wife Judy moved to Toronto from Virginia. "Not only had we left our home and moved to a new country," they said, "we also had said goodbye to the one thing we both loved very much: the ocean."

When friends invited them to their cottage on an island in Georgian Bay, they immediately knew they had found a place that would lessen their longing for the seaside. They have made many memories at their summer home since that day and they share their love of the Bay with three sons, their sons' wives and their eight grandchildren.



L-R: Ben, Peter, Judy, Stuart, Beau Hatcher

Peter and Judy have contributed so much to the Georgian Bay community and the protection of this "wondrously pristine, wild and beautiful body of water." They were founding members of the Sans Souci Tennis Club. Judy sat on the board of the Sans Souci and Copperhead Association for several years and headed up the regatta for three. Peter volunteered for six years to serve on the Board of Directors of Georgian Bay Forever (GBF), a charity that works on the protection of the water through scientific research, education, and restoration projects. Since his term finished in 2012 he has continued to volunteer by serving on GBF's fundraising committee.

2. Why is being a Guardian of the Bay important to the Hatchers?

Like so many in Georgian Bay, the Hatchers have said, "Our children and grandchildren have grown up exploring the Bay and love it as we have for so many years. We have a lifetime of

irreplaceable memories: swimming, fishing, sailing, enjoying precious times with family and friends, boating to favourite places and exploring new ones, and just simply loving the natural and rugged beauty of Georgian Bay."

"We believe, as do our children, that we have a responsibility to ensure that this special place is around forever." It is particularly important to Peter that the water is safe to drink, swim, and enjoy for next generations.

3. How have the Hatchers exemplified the Guardians of the Bay ethic?

Lake Michigan-Huron had a period of prolonged lows at the start of this century, with its lowest recorded water level being in 2013. A contributing factor was climate change.

In 2012, Peter decided to take action by aiming to double GBF's 2011 funding for science-based solutions to low water levels and other threats to the Bay. He initiated a "cottage challenge" that contributed significantly to accomplishing that goal, and in 2013 GBF did indeed raise double its 2011 donations.

Those additional funds would support the *Low Water Blues Report*, which found that if nothing was done, the resulting economic impact across the Great Lakes Basin would be \$18.8 billion (USD) between 2012 and 2050.

Those findings in turn helped build momentum to explore engineering solutions to attenuate future water level extremes brought on by the changing climate. Engineering firm AECOM presented three possible solutions in its report funded by GBF, *Providing Structural Solutions for Adaptive Management in the Great Lakes. Creating Climate Resilience*. GBF still uses this study and its recommendations to discuss practical approaches to climate change with government officials on both sides of the border.

Peter and Judy continue to personally support GBF programs and projects and to raise funds and awareness for the importance of protecting our most precious and valuable resource – our water. They are active in the Sans Souci cottage area, as are their children, and strive to ensure the community is thriving.

Peter and Judy exemplify the qualities of what makes a Guardian of the Bay and we are fortunate to have their support, determination and passion working for our water. ■