



BLACK ROCK FOREST CONSORTIUM

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American Museum of Natural History
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Applied Math and Science

Past Chairs

William T. Golden (1989-2007)
Founding Chair

Sibyl R. Golden (2007-2017)

In Memoriam: Sibyl R. Golden

September 26, 2017

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Sibyl Rebecca Golden, board chair of Black Rock Forest Consortium 2007-2015 and co-chair since 2015, passed away at her home in New York City on August 12, 2017. She, and her inspiring leadership, will be sorely missed.

Sibyl was the daughter of Black Rock Forest Consortium's founder, William T. Golden, and his wife Sibyl Levy Golden. She grew up loving nature and the outdoors, with a special fondness for her family's property in the Catskills, where she climbed many of the highest peaks. Sibyl majored in biology at Harvard and developed a lifelong love of science, honing her professional skills as an outstanding wordsmith and editor. She was Editor of the Consortium's newsletter, *Black Rock Forest News*, from 1999 to 2016.



Sibyl Golden at the Consortium's annual benefit in May 2016.

The generous, consistent support of Sibyl and her father enabled Black Rock Forest Consortium to flourish, establishing 18,000 square feet of customized facilities for science and education and increasing usage of the Forest by orders of magnitude. From an initial group of potentially interested institutions, the Consortium grew to include nearly two dozen academic members, including colleges, universities, public and independent schools, and other cultural and scientific institutions.

Like her father, Sibyl was often willing to "buy the first tank of gas" for institutions she supported, but also made sure that they cultivated diverse sources of financial support. Sibyl also maintained a lifelong interest in conservation. Over time she enabled the Black Rock Forest to expand to include adjoining properties of high ecological importance. In 2016, Sibyl played a lead role in putting into place a 3,777 acre conservation easement covering nearly all of Black Rock Forest.

Sibyl seamlessly took over leadership as chair of the Consortium from her father in 2007. Her characteristic fairness, equanimity, persistence, and generosity of spirit, along with her quick wit, drew many to the organization. Equally as important, Sibyl inspired the loyalty and engagement of her fellow board members, as well as educators, scientists, staff and volunteers. In 2017 the trustees of the Black Rock Forest Preserve expressed their appreciation in an official resolution:

The Trustees of Black Rock Forest Preserve acknowledge and express their deep gratitude for Sibyl Golden's service and leadership for the past ten years. Her vision and steady hand guided the organization through a pivotal period in its maturation, bringing benefits to countless thousands of people and establishing Black Rock Forest as major contributor to enlightened conservation in the Hudson Highlands and the advancement of scientific research and education.

Sibyl took keen interest in scientific studies, attending nearly all of the Consortium's biennial Research Symposia. She often interviewed scientists personally, so that she could interpret their work for the Consortium's various audiences. She was influential behind the scenes for many science organizations and helped them to thrive, including the American Museum of Natural History, the New York Hall of Science, and the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development.

Sibyl was a tireless supporter of science and consistently championed its importance to society. Many of her accomplishments will be of longstanding significance. Sibyl will be remembered and missed especially for her warmth, her sense of humor, and her many actions to leave the world a better place.

"Sibyl was our presiding genius and guiding spirit," said David N. Redden, board chair of Black Rock Forest Consortium. "Like her father before her she was determined that the Forest succeed. What she wanted above all was to secure our future. She drew upon her own resources and helped us to find others so that the Forest would be well-protected from all storms by its own permanent endowment. That she succeeded so well only adds to the poignancy of her loss," Redden said.

"Sibyl's vision of our organization was built on the unique synergies that can be created among our three foundational pillars - research, education and conservation," said Dr. Kevin Griffin, the board president of Black Rock Forest Consortium. "Stressing the importance of the interactions among these, Sibyl was a tireless proponent for the innovation and creativity that has led to the many successes of Black Rock Forest Consortium and gives us such a bright future," Griffin said.