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## MEET THE BOARD

# Harry Groome



**YEARS OF SERVICE:** Six

**BACKGROUND:** B.A., University of Pennsylvania; M.F.A. in writing, Vermont College. Retired chairman, SmithKline Beecham Consumer HealthCare. Director, Atlantic Salmon Federation; former chair, the Adirondack and Pennsylvania chapters of The Nature Conservancy. Author of short stories, poems and articles; recently finished his first novel. Authored a widely reprinted speech, "The Hal Letter," which explains his conservation ethic to his first grandchild, Hal (pictured above).

**Grew up in:** Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania.

**Family:** Married; three children; four grandchildren.

**Favorite outdoor activities:** Hiking and salmon fishing.

**Favorite places to hike and fish:** Adirondack Mountains, New York, and Miramichi River, New Brunswick, Canada.

**Most memorable wildlife encounter:** Nursing a white-tailed deer back to consciousness on a highly traveled road in Philadelphia, during rush hour, in my business suit. The deer had been hit by a car, but she didn't look like she had a broken leg or anything. I wrapped my arms around her neck and steadied her until she got squared away on her feet. She stood still for a second, then leapt the guardrail and went down into the

woods, perfectly fine. And everybody's looking at me, thinking, "You crazy b-----d!" I remember I had on a tan gabardine suit.

**Proudest Conservancy contribution:** "The Hal Letter," because it resonated with so many people.

**Why support the Conservancy?** Because it's our obligation to leave this place better than we found it. There's an old camper's saying: "You're welcome to use my cabin, use my campsite, just promise to leave it better than you found it." You sure as hell don't want it to be worse than when you found it. That's not a great legacy. Doesn't make for a great tombstone: "He really screwed things up. Rest in peace!"

ONLINE: READ "THE HAL LETTER" AT [NATURE.ORG/HAL](http://NATURE.ORG/HAL)