

NEPM CPB

Local Content and Services Report **FY23**



**PBS, NPR and local perspective
for western Mass.**



nepm.org

New England Public Media enriches people's lives in western Massachusetts and beyond by nurturing curiosity, inspiring community engagement, and reflecting the unique joys of living here. NEPM is the region's source for PBS and NPR programs and for locally produced news, video and music content. We are located in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Local Value

NEPM tells the stories of western Massachusetts through local reporting, and cultural programming. Our events and partnerships build community, and our education team brings educators, families, and youth engagement opportunities powered by trusted PBS and NPR content.

Key Services

- Journalism and storytelling
- History, current affairs and multicultural perspective programming
- Music, arts and drama
- Educational outreach
- Community engagement

Local Impact

With the track record of a trusted media resource, NEPM emphasizes sharing new voices and inspiring new conversations.



Vision

NEPM is creating the public media service of the 21st century, using all the tools at our disposal to share the unique voices and stories of western Massachusetts. Our best work strengthens community connections at home, across the commonwealth, and throughout New England.

Watch

With four digital television channels, video on demand, and streaming video, NEPM brings quality public television programs to audiences across western Massachusetts, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature and public affairs; to hear diverse viewpoints; and to take front row seats to world-class drama and performances.

PBS Kids helps children build critical literacy, math and social-emotional skills, enabling them to find success in school and life. NEPM's academic quiz show "As Schools Match Wits" is one of the longest-running shows of its kind in the nation.

Listen

On radio, New England Public Media provides a trusted voice for the region through local reporting and locally-produced music programming, and by connecting the region to the world through its partnership with NPR and other public media organizations. From its founding in 1961, and throughout fiscal year 2023 (the focus of this annual report), its flagship signal, 88.5 FM WFCR, and five repeating stations in Berkshire County presented news, jazz, and classical music, while the six stations of the NEPM News Network provided the region with news, talk and cultural programming. A substantial amount of conceptualization, planning and work was done during FY23 to pave the way for a major format change in September 2023. Now, 88.5 NEPM presents news, talk and jazz, and classical music has its own six-station network, Classical NEPM, where music is available 24/7.

Values

To realize its mission and vision, NEPM holds the following values:

Excellence

NEPM will strive for the highest quality in our programming, outreach, infrastructure and team.

Integrity

NEPM and those who work for the organization will adhere to the highest ethical standards.

Respect

NEPM will respect the opinions, contributions and needs of our audience and supporters, encouraging and facilitating civil discourse in our community.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

NEPM's programs and services will reflect the diversity of its community.

Creativity

NEPM will develop innovative approaches to address the dynamic needs of its community.

Learning

NEPM will nurture and support the fundamental lifelong desire to learn and grow.

From NEPM President Matt Abramovitz

This year, the NEPM team has been working towards our goal of becoming the indispensable guide to life in western Massachusetts.

We conducted a Listening Tour which gave us the opportunity to learn more about what people want from public media in the region; we brought on Monte Belmonte and Kaliis Smith to introduce us to the fascinating people that truly make this The Fabulous 413; we renovated and moved into new studios at 44 Hampden St. so the whole team could work together; and we expanded news, talk and analysis on 88.5 NEPM while opening up more air time for music on Classical NEPM.



Matt Abramovitz - photo by Matthew Septimus

All of these initiatives and changes were in addition to the award-winning journalism coming out of our local newsroom; community events like the Asparagus Festival, the Valley Voices story slams, and the NEPM Book Club; the inspiring work created by young journalists in our Media Lab program; and great music every night from our jazz team.

While we celebrate these accomplishments, it's important to acknowledge the challenges, too. The need to align our staffing with the new realities of the media landscape, along with serious financial headwinds from the last three years, led to the difficult decision to reduce our staff in March 2023. This was painful, but necessary to work toward fiscal sustainability.

Looking at the big picture, I have never been more optimistic about our future as a vital and sustainable resource in our community, a thriving studio buzzing with activity, and a fun place to work.

All that we accomplished in 12 short months is a testament to everyone invested in NEPM's success: our coworkers, board of trustees, community advisory board, local business partners, and supporters who make our work possible. I'm grateful to each of you for your commitment to building a thriving public media service here in western Mass.

Warmly,

Matt



New Digs for NEPM

We moved into our new headquarters in spring 2023, completing the important goal of uniting employees under one roof. Over the course of many months, the building that had housed WGBY for decades was transformed into a state-of-the-art multimedia facility. Now, guests arrive through the former garage, which has been converted into a welcoming lobby and community event space. Our operations and education teams and two TV studios are on the main level, along with a beautiful kitchen area for staff to enjoy. On the second floor, NEPM's

award-winning news team, "The Fabulous 413" team, and music hosts broadcast from all-new radio studios. The development, marketing and executive teams are on the third floor. The building was configured to include plenty of space for flex-time workers and interns, and creative space for collaboration and experimentation among our teams.

Local Journalism & News Reporting

In FY23, NEPM brought listeners coverage of major international, national and regional stories with our partners at NPR, and the New England News Collaborative. Our local newsroom produced 75 newscasts every week, along with features, interviews and commentaries. We closely tracked the Massachusetts political scene, with major coverage of the often-overlapping issues facing our region, including inflation, housing shortages and affordability, food insecurity, the impact of extreme weather events, immigration and refugee resettlement, the legal fight over the Housatonic River cleanup, LGBTQ rights and legal challenges, racial and socioeconomic disparities, and more.

The NEPM news department also continued its coverage of arts and culture, highlighting musicians, artists and authors from across our region. NEPM's commentaries have been recognized with awards from the Public Media Journalists Association for seven straight years. In FY23, regional commentators included Dr. Andrew Lam, writer Michael Carolan, teacher Andrew Varnon, teenage climate activist Ollie Perrault, scholar and park service tour guide Nick DeLuca, university lecturer Susan Johnson, retired journalist Robert Chipkin, the Rev. Christopher Carlisle and small-town clerk Grace Bannasch.

Nearly every week, we aired conversations with Massachusetts Statehouse reporter Chris Lisinski about legislation under consideration in Boston in a "Morning Edition" segment called "Beacon Hill In 5," which is also distributed as a weekly podcast.

NEPM is a founding member of the New England News Collaborative, a partnership among nine public media stations to coordinate radio and digital news coverage, share reporting, and advance best practices in all aspects of journalism. This partnership allows NEPM to broadcast more news relevant to our audience, and to share our content with other stations in the region.



"Renters rally outside Holyoke City Hall calling for Mayor Garcia to support tenant protections" by Nirvani Williams was published on March 23, 2023.

[Read the story on our website](#)

the fabulous 413

Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2023 marked the premiere of "[The Fabulous 413](#)," a live one-hour radio show that airs weekdays on 88.5 NEPM. Co-hosted by longtime local radio personality Monte Belmonte and Kaliis Smith, "The Fabulous 413" focuses on the unique voices and stories of western Massachusetts. Listeners learn about the people, culture and history of our region with a focus on arts and agriculture, cuisine and colleges, history, happenings and whatever the people of the 413 are talking about today. Recurring segments include Mr. Universe with Hampshire College astronomer Salman Hameed; Word Nerd with resident wordster Emily Brewster from Merriam-Webster Dictionary; McGoverning with McGovern, a weekly political discussion with U.S. Rep. Jim McGovern; CISA Local Hero Spotlight, showcasing local farmers and agriculture; and others. During FY23, the show produced 93 episodes, created over 280 segments, and welcomed over 300 diverse [guests](#).



'Salud'

In January 2023, NEPM broadcasted "Salud," a pilot of a new Spanish language series on the topic of health. The program complemented NEPM's Sunday night lineup of Latino programming that included "Latino USA," NEPM's "Tertulia," and the Latin classical music program "Fiesta."

"Salud" highlighted underreported health issues affecting U.S. Hispanics, with a special focus on Massachusetts. Each episode featured people telling stories of how their lives are impacted by a specific condition, as well as healthcare leaders and experts answering questions on prevention, treatment and the big-picture view of how these conditions affect the wider population.



[Read the press release on our website](#)

Music & Cultural Programming

IN FY23, 88.5 FM WFCR, NEPM's flagship radio station, featured a wide range of music including classical, jazz, opera, world, and Latin music. We are committed to providing high quality music programming, producing 2,500 hours of local music programming each year. The station is also actively engaged in promoting the region's vibrant music scene including broadcasting Boston Symphony Orchestra concerts from both Tanglewood and Symphony Hall.

In 2022, NEPM partnered with the Massachusetts International Festival of the Arts (MIFA) and GBH Music to present new music inspired by Puerto Rico in a series called "El Puerto Rico." Following successful projects in 2021, NEPM produced a series of videos featuring performances by the Victory Players, a sextet of some of the finest young musicians from around the country, performing new compositions by nine Puerto Rican composers. In addition, a nine-episode podcast series was released in September 2022.



Television

'As Schools Match Wits'

"[As Schools Match Wits](#)" (ASMW) is an academic quiz show for high school students from schools across western New England. The program celebrated its historic 62nd season this year. Over 150 students and teachers from 36 schools participated, and 25 matches were broadcast on NEPM TV from December 2022 through June 2023.

ASMW is produced by both NEPM and Westfield State University (WSU), which provides the production facilities and student production crew. ASMW offers a real-world learning environment for the television production students in WSU's Department of Communication. Questions for "As Schools Match Wits" are written in accordance with Massachusetts and Connecticut state high school curriculum guidelines. The program won a 2023 New England Emmy nomination for Outstanding Education/Schools Program.



Lenox Memorial High School team members pose with the Collamore Cup after winning the championship match of "As Schools Match Wits" Season 62. The match was broadcast on NEPM TV on June 24, 2023.

'Connecting Point'

In March 2023, "Connecting Point" concluded its 13th and final season. The digital-first magazine program and its weekly half-hour television broadcast focused on the stories of the creativity, culture, and community that make up western New England. We remain committed to covering local arts and culture in the most impactful ways for our audiences and to growing our coverage of those subjects. While we made the difficult decision to stop producing "Connecting Point," we launched "The Fabulous 413" to help us continue this important work. We plan to invest further in that show, among other local efforts.

Podcasts

In response to its growing streaming and smart speaker audiences, NEPM expanded its on-demand offerings on nepm.org, on the station's app and through the NPR One app. Listeners can hear locally produced podcasts including "Jazz Beat," "Valley Voices," "Beacon Hill in 5," "Word Matters," "El Puerto Rico" and, most recently, "The Fabulous 413." These podcasts are available on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts and many other platforms.

"Word Matters," NEPM's collaboration with Merriam-Webster Dictionary, came to a conclusion after 100 episodes in August 2022. A podcast about the history and meaning of words featuring Merriam-Webster lexicographers, it reached over 2 million downloads in the two years it was in production.

Newsletters

NEPM has a robust newsletter portfolio that has a large and loyal readership. It consists of three weekly publications and one monthly that keep readers connected to what's happening at NEPM and throughout the region. Sent on Monday, **Watch / Listen** provides viewing, listening and streaming recommendations for the coming week. Western Massachusetts has a vibrant arts scene with well-established museums, orchestras, choruses, theater companies and college performing arts departments. Wednesday's **Culture to Do** pulls it all together to give subscribers information on events, in all genres of artistic expression, that are happening each week. On Friday, **Newsroom** provides readers with the top local stories produced by the NEPM news team. In addition to these three weeklies, we have our monthly **NEPM Book Club** newsletter.

Both Culture to Do and NEPM Book Club newsletters have public-facing authors. Every issue of Culture to Do begins with a personal preamble by editor Carey Larsen; NEPM Book Club is shot through with humorous recommendations and opinions from host Erin O'Neill. The weekly newsletters are sent to approximately 32,000 subscribers, are read by over 11,000 contacts and have an open rate of 35%. The monthly NEPM Book Club newsletter has close to 800 subscribers and touts an open rate of 60%.

Grants & Awards

On Nov. 1, 2022, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting announced that New England Public Media was awarded a planning grant to develop a Learning Neighborhood plan to engage local partners and extend the reach and impact of PBS Kids early learning resources in the community. Members of the NEPM Education team have been participating in training, research, and development with the goal of becoming well-versed in the community engagement model of the Ready to Learn (RTL) Learning Neighborhoods. Training has focused on the RTL project learning priorities, including functional literacy, critical and computational thinking, executive function and career readiness, with an emphasis on intergenerational learning and accessibility. The NEPM team has developed a stronger understanding of the RTL audience: children ages 2 to 8 from low-income communities, along with their families, caregivers, and educators.

In May of 2023, NEPM TV garnered two Boston/New England Regional Emmy Award nominations. An "As Schools Match Wits Season" 61 episode was nominated in the Education/Schools category. It featured an exciting match between two local high schools — [Gateway High and Agawam High](#), with the outcome determined by just one answer in the final seconds of the game. NEPM was also nominated in the Arts/Entertainment News category for "[The Imagination and Innovation of Douglas Trumbull](#)," a segment produced, directed and edited for NEPM's "Connecting Point" by NEPM Content Director Tony Dunne. It followed the career of legendary Hollywood special effects wizard, filmmaker, and inventor Douglas Trumbull, who died in 2022.



Ben James' story, "'Flying on strings and cloth,' high above western Massachusetts" won the National Murrow Award for excellence in sound in small market radio stations in August 2022.

Also in May, NEPM won a 2022 regional Murrow Award for Excellence in Sound from the Radio Television Digital News Association. The award was given for "'[Flying on strings and cloth,' high above western Massachusetts](#)," a profile of paragliders in western Massachusetts by freelance reporter Ben James. He captured the sound by making a tandem paragliding flight — microphone in hand — off Mount Tom in Holyoke, Massachusetts. The story shared a detailed look into a tight-knit paragliding community that flocks to Mount Tom to take advantage of favorable wind conditions and beautiful views of the valley below. The story went on to win the National Murrow Award for small market radio stations in August 2022.

NEPM won three first place awards at the Public Media Journalists Association conference in San Antonio, Texas, in June 2023. The awards recognized the best in public media journalism produced in 2022 from across the country. Stations competed against others with similar-sized newsrooms; NEPM competed in "Division A" representing stations with 8–15 full-time staff. Karen Brown's ["Some mental health advocates in Massachusetts want a new name for schizophrenia"](#) won first place in the Feature category; Jill Kaufman's ["Issues of tribal membership and curator experience in complaint over Springfield museum exhibit"](#) won first place in the Special Feature Category for Underrepresented Communities; and ["We are clerks; we make it work': The increasingly stressful duties of local election officials"](#) by contributor Grace Bannasch and edited by NEPM's Tema Silk won first place in the Commentary category.

Education

The NEPM Education department provides learning opportunities and works closely with the community to improve outcomes for youth, families, educators, students, and community partners. Many of these efforts require personal representation while others require support and planning services, volunteer organization, materials and resources, or intellectual leadership and guidance.

Educator Ambassadors

A distinguished cohort of GBH-NEPM Educator Ambassadors for Massachusetts form our local leadership group that advises us on a broad range of topics and provides feedback on our educational content development and teacher engagement each year. The ambassadors span the state geographically, and are diverse in the subjects, grades, and students they teach. We are committed to supporting teachers in using our resources and to handing the mic to educators so that we and their peers can learn from their expertise.



NEPM and Homework House co-hosted a read aloud in Holyoke.

Nature Cat

In partnership with Springfield Museums and the [Nature Cat: Backyard and Beyond](#) bilingual interactive exhibit, the education team hosted NEPM Days at the Museums in August 2022. Families were invited to tour the exhibit and take photos with Nature Cat and hands-on science themed activities were offered with activity booklets. Nature Cat branded stickers, binoculars and swag items were provided for families to take home. Everyone had the opportunity to learn more about NEPM/PBS Kids educational offerings. A great addition to these NEPM Days at the Museums was having NEPM PBS Kids Early Learning Champion Arbely Mejias join us to share how she is integrating PBS Kids in the classroom.

Ready to Learn Learning Neighborhoods

As an extension to NEPM's listening tour, NEPM received a [CPB/PBS Ready to Learn grant](#), and the education team connected with a variety of educational organizations, after-school educators, home-base child-care providers, and families with children ages 2 to 8 in low-income areas, to conduct a community assets and needs assessment.

The team reached out to at least a dozen families in our community, and at least 10 community organizations to connect with their families and educators. The community assets and needs conversations highlighted the need for recovery services, social emotional learning, and media literacy for families as well as educators. A partnership was formed with Clarendon Early Educational Services, Square One, and NEPM PBS Early Learning Champion Arbely Mejias, to write a plan to support these needs. Unfortunately, NEPM layoffs affected the education team and this project was unable to move forward.

Interactive Graphic Novel: ¡Ciencia Juntos!

The education team collaborated with GBH as an advisor in the production of 2Gen Science Stories, a series of interactive comics that supports intergenerational science learning among Spanish-speaking, English-learning families with children in kindergarten to second grade. In the graphic novel, readers learn along with the Pérez family, who recently moved to Massachusetts from Mexico, as they investigate the world around them in English and Spanish.

As part of this partnership, NEPM received 2,000 family bags that included a prototype of the graphic novel "[Exploring a Tidepool](#)." The bags were distributed throughout the Pioneer Valley, in Springfield, Holyoke, Northampton, Easthampton, Westfield, and Turners Falls. NEPM and Homework



House co-hosted a read aloud in Holyoke. This resource was also shared during school open houses at Brunton Elementary School and the YMCA of Greater Springfield. Among the recipients were Springfield Public Schools, Westfield Public Schools, Holyoke Public Schools, and nonprofits supporting English learners.

NEPM Media Lab

The mission of the NEPM Media Lab is to introduce youth to a career pathway that explores journalism and media production. The Media Lab team delivered several learning opportunities for students throughout the year.

As one of the employers who partners with the YouthWorks Initiative offering a hybrid workplace experience for students, the NEPM Media Lab taught high school youth a variety of media skills and trained additional college mentors to assist with facilitating and planning weekly media challenges for the high school students throughout the summer.

During the fall semester, the education team developed a curriculum modeled after Media Lab's "Fresh Music Out of the Crates," and teamed up with the NEPM Newsroom to produce content for the local elections. In the spring semester, the team partnered with Elms College's experiential learning program where honors students learned how to produce a podcast. During February school vacation, high school youth were recruited to produce content remotely.

All of these sessions were designed for students to learn from professionals as they produced their own news articles, podcasts, and video projects. Youth producers are featured on [Media Lab's Instagram feed](#), and you can watch their [Summer Showcase here](#).

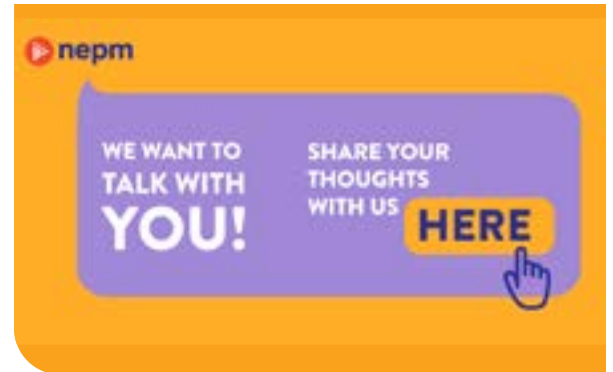


Audience Engagement Outreach & Events

Listening Tour

Thanks to a grant from CPB we were able to take a deep dive to learn about the people in our community and the media landscape. In the summer of 2022, MassINC Polling Group (MPG) conducted eight virtual and six in-person focus groups with residents in NEPM's audience reach.

In the fall of 2022, MPG conducted a telephone poll of 550 residents within NEPM's audience area: 100 each from Berkshire, Franklin, and Hampshire Counties in Massachusetts, 125 from Hampden County, Massachusetts, and 125 from Hartford County, Massachusetts. We invited our local audience via email, on-air promos, the NEPM website, and social media, to participate in an online survey that was offered in both English and Spanish; 624 people participated.



The Listening Tour yielded a wealth of narrative information that resulted in a number of key findings that will help us with strategic planning. The telephone and online surveys provided a more detailed picture. Key findings were:

Connecting a disconnected region. While participants loved many things about where they live, a common theme was feeling disconnected, be it politically, geographically, or culturally. Bridging this divide would serve NEPM's mission as public media while also expanding its reach into new communities in the region.

People are eager for positive coverage. Participants complained that local media often portrayed their communities in a negative light. People want to see the everyday life of their communities, small businesses, advocates, restaurants and events covered.

Tackling common issues. Key issues facing communities varied across groups, but a lack of public transportation, food insecurity, housing costs, racial segregation, and a lack of political power and representation came up frequently.

A sea-change in media habits. Listeners and viewers are time-shifting, streaming, listening to podcasts, and watching content on many devices. NEPM needs to position itself as rooted in broadcast media by growing into digital platforms.

Marketing NEPM's current offerings. NEPM already offers a lot of what people want to see and hear more of, but many don't know this content exists or where to find it. Increasing promotion of NEPM's current content on multiple platforms will likely pay dividends.

Valley Voices

NEPM's [Valley Voices](#) invites people to perform live at story slams in comfy venues throughout the region. The audience hears outrageous, funny and heartwarming stories all told in under five minutes, and then votes for their favorite. The winners of each slam go on to compete at the Best of Valley Voices show at the Academy of



Music. Season 8 slams were held at Gateway City Arts in Holyoke, The Drake in Amherst, Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center in Greenfield, and Marigold Theater in Easthampton. Stories captured at Valley Voices Story Slams are presented in the program's accompanying podcast and video shorts hosted on YouTube.

The NEPM Book Club

Hosted by NEPM's Erin O'Neill, the [NEPM Book Club](#) is a quarterly virtual meet-up dedicated to bringing NEPM friends together to chat about new, diverse and interesting fiction. In July 2022, the group dug into "Telephone" by Pervical Everett, which tells the story of perpetually dissatisfied geologist Zach Wells, who returns home from a desert field trip to find his world crumbling. In October, just in time for Halloween, the club read "We Ride Upon Sticks" by Quan Barry. Set in Danvers, Massachusetts, home of the original 1692 witch trials, it follows the 1989 Danvers Falcons who will do anything to make it to the state finals in field hockey — even if it means tapping into some devilishly dark powers. In January 2023, the club kicked off the new year with multi-award-winning author Zadie Smith's exuberant novel "Swing Time." And in July 2023, the group tackled the first book in the new Sister Holiday mysteries, "Scorched Grace," by western Massachusetts local Margot Douaihy, who joined the book club event as special guest, appeared on The Fabulous 413, and signed books at the NEPM Asparagus Festival.



Hiding in Plain Sight: A Film Screening and Discussion

In October, NEPM partnered with Behavioral Health Network and the Gándara Center for a community event on the subject of youth mental health. It started with a screening of a 30-minute portion of the PBS documentary [“Hiding in Plain Sight: Youth Mental Illness.”](#)

The film, presented by Ken Burns, featured first-person accounts from young people who live with mental health conditions, as well as parents, teachers, friends, healthcare providers in their lives, and independent mental health experts. The screening was followed by a discussion with the film’s co-directors Erik Ewers and Christopher Loren Ewers, and Enrique Vargas Gonzalez, an outpatient psychotherapist at Springfield’s Gándara Center. The discussion was moderated by Katherine Cook, Behavioral Health Network’s chief operating officer.



NEPM Kids Day!

NEPM’s signature event for young children was held on Saturday, Oct. 22, 2022. In an effort to provide easy access to Springfield families, the event was held for the first time at Court Square in the center of the city’s downtown district. Children, many in costume, lined up for meet and greets and photo ops with PBS Kids characters Daniel Tiger, Curious George and Rosie from the new PBS show, “Rosie’s Rules.” Families enjoyed music, dance and science demos by local performers,



and visited local community partner stations filled with interesting and educational things to do. South Hadley’s The Odyssey Bookshop provided a pop-up book shop that hosted local kids author and illustrator signings, and the NEPM Education team offered PBS Kids themed activities and screenings of Rosie’s Rules. There was a rag shag costume parade, and everyone received a cup of Friendly’s ice cream. Approximately 1,200 people attended.

[Learn More about NEPM Kids Day](#)

We are grateful to the following community partners who spent the day with us!

Community Music School of Springfield
 Springfield Education Association
 Springfield Federation of Paraprofessionals
 Springfield Symphony Orchestra
 Children's Learning and Development Lab at Amherst College
 Tick Report / MedZu, Inc.
 Arts in the Community, Springfield College
 UMass Center at Springfield, Healthy Development Initiative
 Springfield Cultural Partnership with TrustTransfer Project
 The Odyssey Bookshop
 City of Springfield, Department of Parks and Recreation
 Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Mass Audubon Society
 The Springfield Armory
 Peoples Bank

Charlayne Hunter-Gault in Person

Emmy Award-winning journalist Charlayne Hunter-Gault started her career at The New Yorker, joined The New York Times where she established the Harlem Bureau, and eventually joined the PBS Newshour as its first substitute anchor and national correspondent. In October 2022, Hunter-Gault came to our region to present her new book, "My People: Five Decades of Writing About Black Lives." She was joined in conversation by Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, interim president of Mount Holyoke College. The event was held at the MHC Community Center in South Hadley, and was co-sponsored by NEPM, The Odyssey Bookshop, the Mount Holyoke College Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the Weissman Center for Leadership.

[Learn more about this event](#)



NEPM Wine & Food Lovers' Weekend

The 36th [Annual Wine & Food Lovers' Weekend](#) was held March 10-11, 2023 at MGM Springfield. The Wine Beer & Food Tasting was on March 10 with over 200 wines, beers and ciders curated by our partners at Provisions along with specialty foods from Jackalope, Center Square Grill, Spoleto, Corsello Butcheria, Holyoke Hummus Company, Student Prince, Osteria, Monsoon Roastery, Elegant Affairs, Jay's Bed & Breakfast, Log Cabin & Delaney's Market, Storowton Tavern, and the HCC Culinary Arts Institute, and others. Celebrity guests included Amy Traverso of "Weekends With Yankee," PBS cooking show host Sara Moutlon, and Christine Tobin, the food stylist behind HBO Max's "Julia."

Guests at the Saturday evening Wine & Food Lovers' Dinner enjoyed a unique foodie experience inspired by Julia Child with a multi-course menu paired with wines expertly chosen by Provisions sommeliers. The dinner was co-hosted by Amy Traverso of "Weekends With Yankee" and NEPM's Monte Belmonte, with special guests David Leite, host of the podcast "Talking With My Mouth Full," and Laurie Donnelly, executive producer of lifestyle programming at GBH.



Native Memories: Recovering Pocumtuck Histories in Franklin County

A collaboration between NEPM, Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the town of Montague's RiverCulture, the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, and Montague Public Libraries, the exhibit "Crossroads: Change in Rural America" was on view at the Great Falls Discovery in Turners Falls, Massachusetts from Feb. 5 to March 18, 2023. It was part of "Museum on Main Street," a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and Mass Humanities. NEPM's Valley Voices Story Slam was invited to partner on the opening celebration, curating a set of stories from local people on the theme "Crossroads."

In conjunction with the exhibit, NEPM presented “[Native Memories: Recovering Pocumtuck Histories in Franklin County — A talk with Dr. Margaret M. Bruchac](#)” on March 4, 2023 at the Shea Theater Arts Center in Turners Falls. Dr. Bruchac (Nulhegan Abenaki), is professor emerita of anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania. In her multimodal career as a performer, ethnographer, historian, and museum consultant, Bruchac has long been committed to critical analyses of colonial histories and recoveries of Indigenous histories.



NEPM Asparagus Festival

Once known as “the asparagus capital of the world,” western Massachusetts is still home to hundreds of working farms and many more locally-owned restaurants and breweries. The popular [NEPM Asparagus Festival](#) returned to the Hadley Town Common on a somewhat chilly but nonetheless beautiful June day to celebrate the region’s legacy of agriculture and community. Over 8,000 people attended to enjoy asparagus dishes, local craft beer brewers, music, entertainment, a maker’s market, agricultural displays, kids games, a performance by MISTER G and the Global

Citizen Ensemble, and visits with PBS Kids characters. New this year: a taping of The Fabulous 413 from the Rooted in the Valley Stage.



'Antiques Roadshow' at Old Sturbridge Village

A beloved PBS institution, "[Antiques Roadshow](#)" is part adventure, part history lesson, and part treasure hunt. Specialists from the country's leading auction houses and independent dealers offer free appraisals of antiques and collectibles, revealing fascinating truths about family treasures and flea market finds. Old Sturbridge Village was selected as a stop on the "Antiques Roadshow" 2023 Tour, and NEPM was the presenting station. Working closely with the Roadshow production team from GBH, we facilitated an exciting day of appraisals on June 13, 2023. The three "Antiques Roadshow" Sturbridge episodes will be broadcast nationally on PBS starting in late January 2024.



NEPM Board of Directors

Officers/Executive Committee

Matt Abramovitz, President, NEPM

Susan Fentin, Chair of the Board

John Kennedy, Director (UMass Amherst)

Evie Kintzer, Director (Susan Goldberg, GBH Designee)

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YoungHee Chudy

Liza Hernandez-Henson

Lydia Martinez

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Sarah Pfatteicher

Liz Roberts

NEPM Community Advisory Board

The NEPM community advisory board was established by the board of directors in 2021 to reflect the tremendous value we place on the aspirations of our community. The CAB serves in an advisory role, offering an outside perspective on the diverse educational and cultural needs and interests of the local communities served by NEPM.

Hugh Barrett

Chrissy Campos Howard

Sheila Damkoehler

Lorelei Erisis

Andrew Fisk

Janine Fondon

Chris Fournier

Keisha Green

John Henson

Jonah Keene

Calvin Hill

Frances Jones-Sneed

Suzanne LoManto

Nicholas McBride

LaTonia Monroe-Naylor

Jim Olsen

Gillian Palmer

Diane Troderman

Beth Ward