



207 North Main Street, Concord, NH 03301-5003
Tel: (603) 228-8910 Fax: (603) 224-6052 www.nhpr.org

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Contact: Scott McPherson
603-223-2425
603-496-3518 cell

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NHPR'S PRESIDENT TO RETIRE IN OCTOBER AFTER 15 YEARS Handley presided over station's growth and development

CONCORD— Mark D. Handley, president and general manager of New Hampshire Public Radio (WEVO-FM in Concord) for the past 14 years, announced that he will retire in October 2005. A nationwide search has been launched for his successor.

Handley presided over a period of tremendous growth at NHPR, leading the station to significant increases in audience, membership, financial support, and reach. The station has earned widespread acclaim for its news coverage and interview programs. NHPR's corporate underwriting and membership efforts are among the most productive in public radio and have won numerous national awards.

"Mark has served the listeners of New Hampshire Public Radio very well," says Sylvia McBeth of Keene, chair of the NHPR Board of Trustees. "He has helped to build a strong and vital source of news and information for New Hampshire, and this legacy will continue well after his retirement."

Handley started at NHPR in May 1990, after helping to start a public radio station in Maryland. Since then, NHPR's weekly audience has grown nearly 170 percent, from 59,300 in 1990 to 160,000 in 2004. The growth was fueled, in part, by an aggressive expansion of NHPR's signal throughout New Hampshire. Service was added in Keene, Hanover, Dover, Nashua, Berlin, Jackson and Littleton. Future expansion is in the works for Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Colebrook.

Handley helped craft the station's mission statement, which begins: "To create a more informed public....."

"My goal when I arrived in New Hampshire was to interpret what the community wanted from its public radio station," Handley says. "And what I heard time and time again was the enormous need for high quality, unbiased news and information about New Hampshire. Gradually we've moved in that direction. So it's been a matter of finding where our listeners wanted to go, and helping to get there."

The number of individual members has grown 85 percent, from 7,839 in 1991 to 14,500 today. Total station revenue has increased 400 percent to almost \$4 million in 2004. NHPR does not receive funding from the state of New Hampshire.

Coinciding with the revenue and audience growth has been a significant investment in news and information programming about New Hampshire. The station has won 120 national and statewide journalism awards during Handley's tenure. NHPR's news staff of 21 is one of the largest in the state, and produces more than 3 hours of New Hampshire news each day. In 1995, NHPR launched "The Exchange" with former NPR reporter Laura Knoy. In 1999, NHPR aired more than 250 hours of live coverage of the impeachment and trial of former NH Supreme Court Chief Justice David Brock.

"I've grown to have great respect and understanding for the enormous importance that an unbiased source of information can have on a free and democratic society," Handley says.

Steve Reno, the chancellor of the University System of New Hampshire, is heading the search committee for Handley's replacement. Tom Ewing, publisher of the Keene Sentinel, and Sally Crawford, a member of the NHPR Board of Trustees, are also members of the search committee.

Handley recently completed his second term as chair of the NPR board of directors. He is the past treasurer and past chair of the board of the World Media Foundation (producers of Living on Earth); past chair of the board of Leadership New Hampshire Associates; a member of the board and past vice-chair of Leadership New Hampshire; a member of the advisory board of the New Hampshire Music Festival; past member of the board of the Station Resource Group; and a past member of the board of overseers for the Mary Hitchcock Hospital. He is the recipient of the 1996 Walter J. Dunfey award for Excellence in Management.

Handley is married with two grown children. His son, Justin, is a musician and works for a small theatre company in western Massachusetts and his daughter, Heather, has her Ph.D. in marine oceanography and is doing post-doctoral work at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute. His wife, Judy, coordinates professional development for the Concord School District.

NHPR serves more than 150,000 listeners each week through a network of seven stations and transmitters. NHPR is the only statewide source of news, information, and entertainment on the radio in the Granite State, striving to earn the respect of its listeners by offering in-depth and unbiased reporting of the issues facing New Hampshire residents. NHPR views the importance of providing a comprehensive information source for New Hampshire as one of the station's highest priorities. Contributions from listeners and businesses in New Hampshire make up more than 90 percent of the revenue necessary to operate NHPR.

NHPR broadcasts in Concord and Manchester at 89.1 FM; in Nashua at 90.3 FM; in Dover at 104.3 FM; in Hanover and Littleton at 91.3 FM; in Keene at 90.7 FM; in Berlin at 107.1 FM; in Jackson at 99.5 FM in Jackson; and on the internet at nhpr.org.