



For Immediate Release

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**Northeast Cultural Coop Announces receipt of federal grant for The Big Read
To be held in seven local communities**

**Amherst, Bedford, Brookline, Milford, Mont Vernon, New Boston, and Wilton will come
together to read and celebrate Amy Tan's Award-Winning Novel**

The Joy Luck Club

With cultural connections between Chinese and other immigrant populations

(Amherst, NH) Northeast Cultural Coop in partnership with Amherst Town Library, the Friends of the Amherst Town Library and libraries in Bedford, Brookline, Milford, Mont Vernon, New Boston, and Wilton are pleased to announce that they have received a federal grant from the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) for a national program called The Big Read.

This two-month series of public and school events will begin in September with a special multi-community family event to celebrate the Chinese traditional Moon Festival on Sunday, September 23 from 2 to 4 at Souhegan High School in Amherst. Other programs will include book discussions, lectures, arts and crafts from China, photographic exhibits, art exhibits, a film festival, Chinese language workshops, mah jong lessons, Tai Chi on the town commons, storytelling, music, Chinese cooking, and more. All are welcome to attend.

Programs will be held in various locations throughout the seven participating communities.

The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) designed to restore reading to the center of American culture. The NEA presents the Big Read in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and in cooperation with Arts Midwest.

Northeast Cultural Coop and its partners represent one of nearly 200 communities nationwide participating in the Big Read in 2007. From September 18 through November 9

our community will celebrate *The Joy Luck Club* with a full calendar of events that will center on themes in the book. Local schools, clubs, businesses and organizations are invited to be part of this exciting initiative. Discussion guides, audio CDs of interviews about the book and teaching guides will be available from the NEA and distributed in all of the seven towns as part of the grant.

Watch for announcements on programs and check the websites of the seven libraries and Northeast Cultural Coop www.NortheastCulturalCoop.org as well as the website of The Big Read at www.neabigread.org for details on this national project.

Join the Big Read today by reading *The Joy Luck Club* and attending a book discussion or program that interests you this fall.

*The **Northeast Cultural Coop** is an organization based in Amherst, NH that celebrates cultures near and far through programs for teachers and the general public.*

Visit www.NortheastCulturalCoop.org for more information.

*The **National Endowment for the Arts** is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts -- both new and established -- bringing the arts to all Americans, and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Endowment is the nation's largest annual funder of the arts, bringing great art to all 50 states, including rural areas, inner cities, and military bases. For more information, please visit www.arts.gov.*

*The **Institute of Museum and Library Services** is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 122,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute's mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas. The Institute works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development. For more information, please visit www.ims.gov.*

***Arts Midwest** connects people throughout the Midwest and the world to meaningful arts opportunities, sharing creativity, knowledge, and understanding across boundaries. Arts Midwest connects the arts to audiences throughout the nine-state region of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin. One of six non-profit regional arts organizations in the United States, Arts Midwest's history spans more than 25 years. For more information, please visit www.artsmidwest.org.*