## NEPPA's Fall Expo Was Sensational

NEPPA members came together on October 5th and 6th for the annual Fall Expo, and this year's theme said it all: Sensational. For the third year in a row, the DoubleTree in Andover hosted our trade show. The Annual Meeting and Dinner returned to the Autograph American Tavern.

The Annual Meeting and Dinner kicked things off with 57 members and a night full of good food, laughter, and great conversation. The NEPPA Cares raffle supported our President's charity, the Village Food Hub. Thanks to the generosity of our community, we raised $1,000 for this important cause. We also welcomed the incoming 2027 Board, a group ready to keep NEPPA moving forward. It was a truly fun night.

The trade show sold out of exhibit booths again this year, and the floor buzzed from open to close. Members leaned into the Sensational theme in a big way. A special thank you goes to the exhibitors who had fun with their booths and shared social content before the show. You helped build excitement before the doors even opened.

The giveaways and the product pavilion were a huge success. We owe that to our sponsors and the exhibitor partners who donated product to the pavilion. Your generosity made the day memorable for everyone who walked the floor.

Shows like this take a team. We want to recognize the amazing volunteers on the Fall Expo Committee: Anthony Abatzis from PCNA, Julia Borelli from PromoCentric, and Nicola McLeod from Charles River Apparel. Your time and hard work made this show a success.

Next up is our Holiday Party on December 10th at Reunion Tap & Table in Grafton. We hope to see you there as we close out a sensational year on a festive note.

*Co-chairs:*
*Jessica Casaubon, Gemline*
*Nick McAlley, Hit Promotional Products*

## NEPPA's Annual Meeting

NEPPA's Annual Meeting was held on October 5th, the evening prior to the Fall Expo, at The Autograph American Tavern in Andover, MA. Led by President Ben MacDonald, elections for NEPPA's 2027 Board of Directors took place.

Nominating Committee members were announced: NEPPA President Ben MacDonald of The Ad King, NEPPA Vice President Jessica Casaubon of Gemline, Loren Cayer of SnugZ USA, Nick D'Eramo of Triple Stitch and Christie Miselis of PCNA.

The Nominating Committee proposed the following slate:
President: Jessica Casaubon, Gemline
Vice President: Emily Codner, iPROMOTEu
Treasurer: Sarah McMahon, BAMKO

Secretary: Todd Wallace, SourcePromo
Immediate Past President: Ben MacDonald, The Ad King

Directors:
Abby Burke, Walker-Clay
Lisa Fosdick, The Promo Playbook
Kathy Lojacono, Halo Branded Solutions
Nicola McLeod, Charles River Apparel
Halle Moore, Bay State
Tom Zuliani, Edwards Garment

The 2027 Board will take office on January 1st.

Ben recognized Past Presidents in attendance: Nancy Bercovitz, Loren Cayer, Dale Johnson Cornell, Lori Donovan, Christie Miselis and Heather O'Neill.

The Fall Expo Committee was introduced. Co-chairs: Jessica Casaubon and Nick McAlley. Committee members: Nicola McLeod, Anthony Abatzis and Julia Borelli.

Ben presented an overview of the successes that NEPPA has experienced this year including membership growth, networking event at F1 Arcade Boston, Spring Expo and Awards Dinner, educational sessions, factory tour at PrimeLine and our volunteer philanthropy event supporting veterans in New England. We also experienced tremendous growth of our Young Professionals Group bringing young and new to-the-industry together through virtual and in-person meetings.

Ben thanked his wife Kim, dubbed "NEPPA's wife," for her support at several NEPPA events over the years. He also thanked Tim Fox and Nick McAlley for their hard work and dedication over the past four years as directors. He gave a huge shout out to Immediate Past President Lori Donovan, whose time on the board after nine years will be coming to an end. We know that she will be a valued contributor, supporter and sounding board for future presidents and board members.

Ben introduced Jessica Casaubon, NEPPA's Incoming President and expressed that since coming on the board, her passion, hard work, dedication and organization have truly been an asset to NEPPA. Jessica has been one to be quick with an idea, quick to volunteer and quick to think on her feet about how we can make improvements or simply take an idea and bring it to life.

Ben stated, "She is fun to be with and always makes others feel welcomed! NEPPA is truly fortunate to have her as its 2027 president, and I'm truly honored and excited to work with her for another year on this board and see where her leadership takes NEPPA into 2027!"

About eight years ago Jessica was a brand-new regional sales manager for Gemline and met with Ben at his office on a sales call. Ben was kind and immediately made her feel comfortable, and that is what she remembers about that meeting. A few years later both Ben and Jess joined the NEPPA board, and it wasn't long before they became close friends.

She stated, "That's what this community does. People go from strangers, to customers, to real friends. In an industry this busy, it's rare to find people you trust, people who truly get what you do. Ben is one of those people for me, and I know he's one for many of you."

Jessica thanked Ben for his leadership, kindness and friendship and commented, "As I step into this role, I hope to lead with the same grace you've shown us. I want every member to feel as welcome as you've made all of us feel."

Ben chose the Village Food Hub as his charity of choice for the NEPPA Cares fundraiser and introduced his father-in-law, Glen McLeod, founder of the Village Food Hub. Glen spoke more in depth about this organization and how they are disbursing 25,000 pounds of food a month to those in need in the greater Merrimack Valley area.

All who attended enjoyed tasty food, drinks and mingling with our NEPPA community.

## NEPPA Cares Raffle Raises $1,000 for the Village Food Hub

A heartfelt thank you to the entire NEPPA community for coming together to make this year's NEPPA Cares Raffle a resounding success! Held during our Annual Meeting at The Autograph Tavern, the event showcased the incredible generosity and spirit of our members and industry partners.

Thanks to your enthusiastic participation, we are proud to announce that we raised $1,000 for the Village Food Hub.

Supporting a Cause Close to Heart

The Village Food Hub was selected as the charity of choice by NEPPA President Ben MacDonald; a cause deeply personal to him and his family. Founded in 2022 by Ben's in-laws, Glen and Shari McLeod, The Village Food Hub works tirelessly to combat hunger and eliminate barriers to food security.

Through an innovative blend of a 24/7 accessible pantry, community fridge, secure locker program, and active food rescue efforts, the Hub ensures that fresh, nutritious food is always available to those in need, all while reducing local food waste and promoting environmental sustainability.

Highlights & Fan Favorites

This year's raffle featured over 20 fantastic items, made possible by generous contributions from our industry suppliers and community members. Highlights of the raffle included:

- A highly sought-after Dunkin' Cutting Board
- A stylish Sea Bags Wine Bag (complete with wine!)
- An array of top-tier products donated by our supportive industry partners

The Power of Community

Year after year, the NEPPA community steps up to support vital causes, and this year was no exception. Your willingness to give back strengthens not only our industry network, but also the broader local communities we serve.

Thank you to everyone who donated items, purchased tickets, and participated in making this year's raffle such a meaningful success!

*Co-chairs:*
*Todd Wallace, SourcePromo*
*Lori Donovan, NC Custom*

## Government Relations in Action

NEPPA was excited to welcome Laura Byman, Regional Director for Andover in Senator Elizabeth Warren's office, to our Fall Expo! Her visit was a great opportunity to showcase our industry, connect with local businesses, and highlight the impact branded merchandise has on the Massachusetts economy.

This visit is another example of government relations in action! Through PPAI's LEAD program, industry professionals meet with elected officials and their staff to share our stories, advocate for our businesses, and demonstrate the value our industry brings to the economy.

By opening our doors and building these connections here at home, NEPPA helps bring greater visibility to the people and businesses behind branded merchandise. Thank you to Laura for joining us and learning more about our industry!

Interested in joining the effort? Complete the LEAD 2027 Interest Form and take the first step toward advocating for our industry!

*Government Relations Co-chairs:*
*Emily Codner, iPROMOTEU and Todd Wallace, SourcePromo*