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## Local Author Jane Yolen To Read from Her Book *My Uncle Emily* at Emily Dickinson Museum May 2

AMHERST, Mass. – As part of its emphasis on the town of Amherst’s 250th anniversary in 2009, the Emily Dickinson Museum will host a reading and signing of the children’s book *My Uncle Emily* by award-winning author Jane Yolen on Saturday, May 2, at 10 a.m. The program, which is part of the museum’s Big Read spring events celebrating Emily Dickinson’s expansive and enduring legacy, is free and open to the public.

In *My Uncle Emily*, Yolen spins an imaginative story of Emily Dickinson’s young nephew Gilbert as he struggles through a difficult day at school and at home. Gilbert calls his aunt “Uncle” because it is a family joke, but it is just the beginning of his problems as he attempts to defend his creative and unusual aunt to his schoolmates. Through his battles and his aunt’s poetry, Gilbert learns a lesson in what matters most. Yolen and illustrator Nancy Carpenter bring to life 19th century Amherst and the Dickinson family homes, the Homestead and The Evergreens, in this beautiful and charming children’s book.

Yolen is a poet, a teacher, reviewer and author of hundreds of much-loved children’s books. Her works also include young adult novels, nonfiction and collections of poetry. Her books have won many awards including the Caldecott Medal, two Nebula Awards, two Christopher Medals and Golden Kite Award.

The Big Read: The Poetry of Emily Dickinson is part of a pilot initiative created by the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Poetry Foundation to celebrate great American poets and the nation’s historic poetry locales. Free copies of a reader’s guide and a teacher’s guide to the poetry of Emily Dickinson will be available to attendees at all The Big Read events. For more information about The Big Read programs please contact Nan Fischlein, Program Coordinator, at 413-542-2034 or [nfischlein@emilydickinsonmuseum.org](mailto:nfischlein@emilydickinsonmuseum.org).

The Emily Dickinson Museum, comprised of the Dickinson Homestead and The Evergreens, is devoted to the story and legacy of poet Emily Dickinson and her family. Both properties are owned by the Trustees of Amherst College. The museum is overseen by a separate Board of Governors charged with raising its operating and capital funds. The Homestead was the birthplace and residence of the poet (1830-1886). The Evergreens was the 1856 home of the poet’s brother and sister-in-law, Austin and Susan Dickinson.

The Emily Dickinson Museum is located at 280 Main St. in Amherst, Mass. The official museum website is [www.emilydickinsonmuseum.org](http://www.emilydickinsonmuseum.org). Beginning March 1, hours are Wednesday through Sunday, from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m.; the museum is closed on major holidays.

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