

**Interlochen Public Radio**  
**Issues/Program narrative – 2023, Q3 (July, August, September)**  
By Ed Ronco, news director  
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This quarter saw the addition of a full-time climate reporter in concert with Grist.org, and a new hire to fill a vacant environmental reporter position. This is reflected in greatly expanded coverage on that issue, as you'll see in our issues list.

We also were busy covering the Antrim County trial of three men accused (and ultimately acquitted) of aiding the kidnapping plot against Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

### **Arts, Entertainment and Recreation**

Joe Beyer and Dan Wanschura contributed greatly to this area, with pieces on a dance project, an indigenous sculptor, a baseball team hype man, and an upcoming music festival.

We also heard about community art projects in Interlochen and Manistee.

### **Law and Justice**

Coverage here was dominated by the August-and-September trial of three men accused in the kidnapping plot against Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. IPR's Michael Livingston covered the proceedings extensively for both IPR and national listeners via NPR.

Other stories included accusations against MSU's football coach, gun control efforts in Lansing, and a scuffle at a protest in Petoskey.

### **Environment and Agriculture**

Extensive expansion of this topic, thanks to the hiring of two new reporters to cover environment and climate change. Most notably, our coverage of agriculture has picked up, with renewed attention on Michigan's cherry crop from environment reporter Ellie Katz. She also knocked out a great story about how grape growers are using lasers to keep birds off the fruit.

Our new climate change reporter, Izzy Ross, covered solar energy on boats, farm fields and beyond.

Both reporters started work within this quarter, and we expect their contributions will remain strong in months to come.

Points North also sent us a number of interesting stories, from invasive species to jellyfish to stone skippers on Mackinac Island.

And a fire in downtown Cheboygan turned out to be an environmental story, as responders rushed not only to put down the flames, but to keep pollution-filled hosewater from draining into the nearby Cheboygan River.

### **Medicine and Health**

A sample of this topic includes news-you-can-use about a new, permanent free dental clinic, political wrangling on a local board of health, hospice concerns, and big changes for a major local health system.

### **Business and Economy**

A lot of our business stories relate to the support systems that keep the economy ticking, rather than businesses themselves. We heard about financial aid for people who want training in shipping careers, revenue drops for short-term rental owners, and how childcare needs are impacting local employers.

### **Politics and Government**

We continue to receive routine and excellent coverage from the Michigan Public Radio Network's two correspondents in Lansing.

Within our own newsroom, this quarter brought stories about the high cost of a bridge over the Boardman River, a public records fight over Camp Grayling, and transportation funding issues.

### **Race, Identity and Culture**

More often than not, these conversations take the form of interviews. That includes a salon owner's anti-trans comments, an author interview about dealing with difficult family, some moments of repose with an Orthodox priest, and a conversation with the president of Up North Pride.