

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TWO BRISTOL HILLS CEMETERIES JOIN NATIONAL ‘WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA’ CAMPAIGN TO HONOR VETERANS

To honor local military veterans during the holiday season, the Bristol Hills Historical Society has joined the National Wreaths Across America Day to lay a wreath on every veteran’s grave at two local cemeteries this December.

The Historical Society is seeking sponsors to pay for the fresh evergreen wreaths that will be delivered shortly before ceremonies at both cemeteries on Dec. 17. Volunteers also are needed to help lay the wreaths.

A total of about 45 veterans, whose service dates back as far as the Revolutionary War, are buried in the Bristol Center Cemetery in Bristol and Coye Cemetery in South Bristol. These two cemeteries will be among more than 3,100 nationwide where wreaths will be placed and each veteran’s name will be read aloud. Sponsoring one wreath costs \$15, with a portion of the proceeds benefiting the work of the volunteer-run Historical Society.

The local organizer of the Historical Society’s events is Society board member A.J. Magnan, Commander, U.S. Navy (Retired), who said he hopes this year’s events in Bristol and South Bristol lead in future years to wreath-laying on all veterans’ graves at more local cemeteries. “For centuries, Bristol Valley families have spent the holiday season privately remembering their own sons and daughters who left home to serve our country in times of war and peace,” Magnan said. “We hope the entire community will join them in this gesture of solidarity and respect.”

The Historical Society researches the military service of the people buried in our many local cemeteries. This summer, Historical Society volunteers cleared heavy brush from one of the oldest and most significant cemeteries locally, Wilder Cemetery in South Bristol, where town founder and Revolutionary War veteran Gamaliel Wilder is buried.

The 30-year-old Wreaths Across America project places millions of wreaths on veterans’ graves in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and overseas. The wreaths are hand-crafted in Columbia Falls, Me., of all-American balsam and hand-tied with a red velvet bow.

The local Dec. 17 ceremonies will take place at noon at Bristol Center Cemetery, 4471 State Route 64 next to the historic Bristol Center Church, and at 2 p.m. at Coye Cemetery on Route 21 at Bopple Hill Road in South Bristol. The events are free and open to everyone.

To sponsor wreaths and volunteer to help lay wreaths, go to bristolhillshistory.org/honoring-our-veterans. Once all 45 veterans' wreaths are sponsored, additional wreath sponsorships help Wreaths Across America place wreaths at sites nationwide.

Wreaths Across America is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded to continue and expand the annual wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery begun by Maine businessman Morrill Worcester in 1992. Wreaths Across America is on the web at wreathscrossamerica.org and on Facebook at facebook.com/WAAHQ

The Bristol Hills Historical Society is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that was formed in 2020 through the merger of the historical societies of Bristol and South Bristol, N.Y. It cares for two of the region's most distinctive historic buildings, the 1923 Grange Hall in Bristol Springs and the 1846 Methodist Episcopal Church in Bristol Center, both of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The society's website at bristolhillshistory.org and Facebook page at facebook.com/bhhistorical provide calendars of upcoming history presentations and other events, articles on local history, and a convenient way to become an annual donor at levels starting at \$15 for individuals and \$30 for families.

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ATTACHED: Photos of Bristol Center Cemetery, Coye Cemetery; Wreaths Across America logo

For more information:

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