

WELCOME TO THE  
**CHOOSE FRAMINGHAM NEWSLETTER**



*Choose Framingham Newsletter*  
February 29, 2020 - In This Issue:

[Quilling Card](#)

[Commercial Real Estate Workshop](#)

[Village Hall on the Common](#)

[Harmony Grove Welcome Arch](#)

[Lifebox Foods](#)

[Stay Connected in Framingham](#)



## Harmony Grove Welcome Arch

### Cultural Trellis Coming in May

Downtown Framingham, Inc., a non-profit dedicated to revitalizing downtown Framingham, celebrates Black History

## Quilling Card

**Don't just send a card, send art!**

Quilling Card is a greeting card company based in Framingham. They exemplify the kind of creative economy company that is attracted to Framingham. Choose Framingham caught up with the company's Chief Executive Officer, Huong

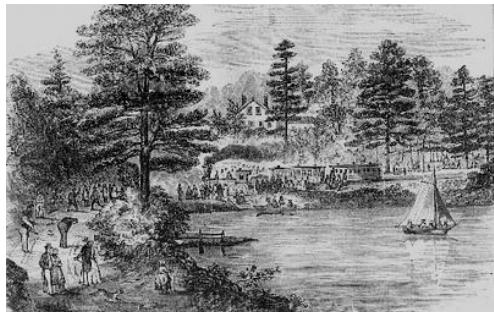
Month every year by remembering the gatherings at Harmony Grove, an important site for the abolition movement in our country. According to the book *Rites of August First: Emancipation Day in the Black Atlantic World* by Jeffrey Kerr-Ritchie, "on August 1, 1834, a mile and a half long procession consisting of a crowd four-deep with men and women, black and white, clerical and lay, rich and poor, marched from Fountain Square to Harmony Grove. Once this large crowd reached the grove, some six thousand to eight thousand listed to several speakers including twenty-six year old fugitive and rising abolitionist star Frederick Douglass." They used Harmony Grove as a place to gather to discuss the abolition of slavery and promote a vision for a better humanity.

Henry David Thoreau described Harmony Grove in his [Lecture 43](#), "Harmony Grove was located on the shores of Farm Pond in the southern section of Framingham.



Harmony Grove located between Farm Pond and Union Avenue. County Atlas of Middlesex, F. W. Beers, 1875.

It had boating facilities and areas for strolling, for playing games, and for holding large outdoor meetings—a combination making it a popular spot for gatherings of temperance, abolition, and other social reform societies active at the



Harmony Grove, 1852

Nguyen Wolf, to find out a bit more about her company and why they chose Framingham.

### Tell us a little about your company and products you offer.

Quilling is the art of rolling, coiling and shaping small strips of paper to create a cohesive three-dimensional design. The history of quilling can be dated back to Egyptian times where crafters would use a bird's feather (quill) as the tool to coil the paper upon. We are proud that Quilling Card—a woman owned business—has become the premiere source of preserving and sharing this beautiful art form as it is our mission to keep it alive and flourishing. Quilling Card is truly a one-of-a-kind company, we are the only business commercially producing products using the art of quilling on a mass scale. Although we started as primarily a greeting card company, our passion for this art has led us to explore quilling all kinds of gifts such as journals, sticky note covers, jewelry, hair accessories, decorative wall art, DIY quilling kits, and custom designs. We place great importance on practicing responsible business practices which is why Quilling Card is a certified member of the Fair Trade Federation. All of our designs are handcrafted by one of over 400 artisans in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam—my native country.



CEO Huong Wolf and Dream Team

### When you decided to start this company, what services did you plan to offer and what were your goals?

Since the beginning my goal was, and still is, to share and preserve this lost ancient art. Offering greeting cards adorned with quilled designs was the perfect vessel to start placing this art in the homes of admirers all over the globe.

### What differentiates your company from your competitors?

Greeting cards are a way for us to remind people that they are thought of, cared about, appreciated and loved. Receiving a card makes people feel special, even more so with a Quilling

## Images of America, Framingham

time. From 1846 to 1865 the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society celebrated the Fourth of July with a picnic and rally at this spot, also referred to as Island Grove and Framingham Grove. In 1909 a local shoe manufacturer named Moses N. Arnold affixed to a boulder on the site of the speaker's stand a bronze tablet commemorating Garrison and the abolitionists."

With support from Mayor Spicer and the Framingham Cultural Council, this African American heritage site, which was once a natural amphitheater, will now house a welcome arch at 166 Franklin Street, commemorating the important events which have taken place at this location. The groundbreaking for the cultural trellis took place on February 21.



(L-R): Jennae Herbert (FSU student), Diana Byakuleka (FSU student), Courtney Thraen (Executive Director, DFI), and Reyad Shah, Out-of-School Time Coordinator at Framingham High School

The trellis will host six engraved illustrations that depict historical scenes and nature at Harmony Grove. All are encouraged to [upload](#) sketches online, which will be judged by several local student groups.

To learn more about the archway and Harmony Grove in general, visit their [website](#).

Card® as this is not the type of card that is bought last minute- it is a card that was selected with a specific person in mind because it reflects something important to them. Most of our cards are blank on the front as they are often framed and displayed as the art which they are. Additionally, all our cards are blank on the inside with a separate paper insert that one's own message can be written on. Where most cards are thrown away after several weeks, our cards are truly cherished keepsakes.

### How did you choose Framingham?

The unbeatable commute! In addition to running a rapidly growing business I have two children at home. Having our offices/warehouse less than two miles away from home makes it possible for me to juggle both roles as mother and CEO throughout each day.

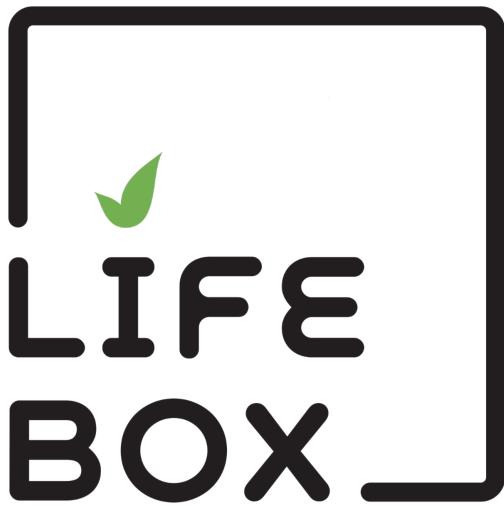
### Would you describe one of your most exciting projects?

One of our most exciting projects has been developing our new collection of quilled braille greeting cards. We currently employ over a dozen deaf artisans who directly inspired my vision of using this tactile art form to create braille, forming a special connection from the hand to the heart. Using the sense of touch to engage with every quilled design creates a special shared experience between the deaf artisans who use their skilled hands to craft each card, and the blind recipients who will have the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of quilling beneath their fingertips. Creating an interpretation of braille from quilled paper is something that has never been done before. While working closely with local braille experts, this project required substantial research, extensive testing and meticulously planned designing in order to develop a successful translation of the very standardized braille language. The current market for braille greeting cards lacks diversity and we hope to provide an exciting new way for the blind to celebrate occasions and special moments while also having the accessibility to experience this ancient art form. Quilling is truly an art for all the senses. [The Braille Collection](#) offers a uniqueness in the way that every design is equally beautiful to experience by sight or touch, making the cards an ideal gift for anyone!



### How is your company involved in the community?

We strive to give back to the community whenever possible. Often this is in the form of donations and support to local charities and organizations which have included Jewish Family Service of Metrowest, MetroWest Jewish Day School, Framingham Police Association, and Framingham Rotary Club. Just less than two years ago we donated over 3,000 cards to Advocates for use in activities across their wide range of day programs.



HEALTHY FRESH FOOD

## Lifebox Foods

Delicious healthy food everyday

[Lifebox Foods](#) is now open in downtown Framingham, providing people with meal plans that offer a healthier lifestyle, without worrying about preparing the food. Whether their clients are looking to lose weight, gain muscle, find a balanced diet or a detox plan, their clients select a meal plan on the Lifebox website, pick their own start date, and enjoy their food delivered directly to their doorstep. The



mission at Lifebox is to help their clients achieve a quality of life by having all meals delivered daily, whether their clients

choose a 1-day option, the weekly plan or a whole month.

"We chose downtown Framingham because of the need for healthy food and self-care in this area," said Founder & CEO Danielly Garcia. "While Framingham continues to grow, our mindset is changing towards a quality of life. The people in our community work long hours and do not have time to enjoy themselves and their family. Lifebox Foods wants to minimize the number of

### Where can we find your products to purchase?

All products can be purchased directly through our [website](#). Our line is also sold in over 2000 stores nationwide. Quilling Card can be found in a large variety of stores including bookstores, gift stores, florists, garden nurseries, museums, Fair Trade boutiques, national parks and conservancies, brick and mortar gift shops.

Stay connected and follow them on social media: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), or [Pinterest](#).

## Commercial Real Estate Workshop

Presented by [Downtown Framingham, Inc.](#) and [Alta Union House/Wood Partners](#)

[Downtown Framingham Inc.](#) co-hosted a commercial real estate workshop with [Wood Partners](#) in early February at the [Alta Union House](#) in downtown Framingham. Commercial real estate professionals met business experts and municipal leaders to learn more about local business resources and understand local incentive programs. Mayor Yvonne Spicer welcomed everyone to the event and spoke about the fastest-growing urban center in the MetroWest.



Kevin Shea (center), Director of Planning and Community Development for City of Framingham, described his goals for stakeholder partnerships in commercial sectors

City staff, including Planning & Community Development Director Kevin Shea and Licensing Coordinator Diane Willoughby spoke about how to get things done in City Hall and encouraged businesses to [reach us](#) if they have questions. Attendees were also able to learn more about the overall business inventory in downtown Framingham and hear first-hand experiences from Jack Hendler, co-owner of [Jack's Abby Craft Lagers](#), and Jim Lambert, Director of Wood Partners, developer for Alta Union House on the site selection and permitting processes.

"Demonstrating confidence in our urban core starts with extending invitations to investors excited to grow our downtown by transforming vacant buildings into their bold

tasks that our clients have when they arrive home. We want them to have free time not only on the weekends, but also Monday through Friday."

Their company serves the

MetroWest area, and plan to expand their delivery area shortly. Check out their [website](#) for more information and stop worrying about washing dishes or going to the market every week. This is not a sit-down restaurant, only an on-line order and delivery option.



## Stay Connected in Framingham

How do I...

### stay connected and engaged?

Sign up for [email updates](#) about Framingham. Enter your email address and subscribe to one of many notify me lists to stay up to date on information from emergency notifications, municipal news, traffic alerts, and more.

### contact a City Official?

[Click to view](#) contact information for key offices, including website information and social media.

### sign up for Mayor Spicer's biweekly newsletter?

potential, including 74 Concord Street and 428 Waverly Street sites" said Courtney Thraen, Executive Director of Downtown Framingham, Inc. "The vibrancy of the intersection at routes 126 and 135 reflects the spirit of our community; bringing downtown to full activation is key for the diversity of growing urban community, making downtown more accessible and enjoyable for all." Planning & Community Development Director Kevin Shea added that "our goal is to create a one-stop-shop for land use permitting in Framingham. Our team has worked hard to make it as clear and simple as possible and to reduce the time it takes to open a business."

To learn more about events in downtown Framingham, visit Downtown Framingham's [website](#). Also, check out the City's new [Planning & Community Development](#) website.



Jack Hendler, co-owner of Jack's Abby Craft Lagers

## Village Hall on the Common

Available for Booking Now



The beautifully renovated [Village Hall on the Common](#), located at 2 Oak Street in Framingham, is available for booking. The building celebrated with a grand reopening last September. The 1834 building, which serves as a venue for weddings and other functions, is managed by the [Framingham History Center](#), a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and sharing Framingham's history, including the City's most historic buildings in the newly approved [Framingham Centre Common Cultural District](#) and the collections housed at the History

Sign up to start receiving the [Framingham Today Newsletter](#)!

**register for emergency communications and other information via text message and email?**

Enter your email at [Alert Framingham](#).

**submit for an application?**

Many [applications](#) are available for online submission and payment.

**learn more about the real property values for fiscal year 2019?**

Visit the [Assessors Database](#).

**make maps of Framingham with the interactive MapGeo, Geographic Information System (GIS) based online tool?**

Visit the [GIS Mapping tool](#).

**see gavel-to-gavel coverage of various government meetings and events?**

Visit the [Government Channel](#) online.

**find out when board, committee, and council meetings occur?**

Visit the [Public Meeting Portal](#).

**see how Framingham compares to other communities with similar demographics?**

Visit the [Transparency Center](#) to review budgets, open data information and more.

**learn about trash and recycling?**

Visit the website for the [Sanitation Division](#).

**request birth, death, or marriage documents?**

Visit the [City Clerk's office](#).

Center. Village Hall on the Common was originally designed by Solomon Willard and built by Dexter Esty as the Town's second town hall. The Greek Revival building with a commanding presence on this iconic New England town Common, is on the National Register of Historic Places and offers a classic venue for rent. Up to 180 guests can enjoy the new improvements, including second floor access and new handicap accessible bathrooms. Renovations also included an update to the catering kitchen, new air conditioning, as well as new wood floors, and new carpeting.

For more information about Village Hall on the Common, contact Patsy Green, Rental Coordinator, at 508-308-9291 or [by email](#).



Damianos Photography



Gleb Budilovsky Photography





Gleb Budilovsky Photography

Framingham EDIC

[chooseframingham@framinghamma.gov](mailto:chooseframingham@framinghamma.gov)

The Framingham Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC) was established in 1995 to stimulate economic development and expand employment opportunities in the Town of Framingham in accordance with the town's approved economic development plans.

**STAY CONNECTED**

