



The Rare Edition

Whiskey Barrel Meats — Mapleton's Most Distinguished Publication Since 2025

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JUNE FED A CROWD. JULY KEEPS WATCH.

(AND PETE HAS APPOINTED HIMSELF TO THE FRONT WINDOW)



I will say this plainly. June was the busiest month this place has had, and it had very little to do with the case.

It was catering. Retirement parties and graduations, one after another, in quantities that would have alarmed me a year ago and did not alarm me in the slightest this time.

Pulled pork and ribs carried the season. Alongside them, the pasta salad and the coleslaw went out the door at a rate that surprised even the people making them. I have been feeding groups long enough to know that the sides are what people argue about in the car on the way home, and ours held their own.

What I most want to say is to the people who called us in June: thank you for trusting us with the day. A graduation happens once. A retirement happens once. Handing a day like that to someone else takes a certain amount of faith, and none of us here took it lightly.

And I want to be clear about something, because I think people worry about it. There is no wrong time to ask. Early, late, or the morning of — we would far rather hear from you and work it out together than have you quietly decide on your own that we were too busy. Nobody in this building has ever minded being asked. That is the job, and it happens to be the part of the job we like best.

A word on quantity, because it comes up often and it is a fair thing to wonder about. People tend to underestimate how much a graduation crowd will eat, and overestimate how much they will eat themselves. Plan for the crowd. Leftovers are not a miscalculation. They are lunch.

June is finished. The pans have been washed and put away. I am reliably informed there is another graduating class next year.

Yours in feathers & forthrightness,
HENRIETTA
Head of Poultry & Public Relations

THE BUTCHER'S RESERVE

A STANDING ARRANGEMENT, AND THE END OF THE WEEKLY QUESTION

There is a question that arrives in most households at roughly the same hour every week, and it is: what are we eating. The Butcher's Reserve exists to have answered it already.

It is a recurring monthly subscription. Cuts are selected here, set aside under your name, and ready for you each month without a further word from anyone. You do not assemble it. You do not choose it. That is not an oversight — the selecting is the service, and it is done by people who handle these cuts every day of the week.

What a membership removes is not the cooking. It removes the deciding, which is the part most people actually dread, and it replaces the weekly scramble with premium meat already waiting.

Two items have distinguished themselves this month. The Philly cheesesteak brat has acquired a following I can only describe as committed, and has been ordered by name with increasing frequency.

The beef brisket has found its own following. What is pictured is what happens when one is given the hours it asks for. There is no shortcut to that bark.

Membership is arranged at the counter, or at www.whiskeybarrelmeats.com.



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

July in Mapleton is a month of long evenings and short patience, and this year it has produced a development I am not at liberty to confirm, chiefly because nobody has confirmed it to me.

There are rumblings. Another building is said to be coming to Maple River Town Square this autumn, with doors opening in the spring. I have heard it from more than one direction, which in a town of this size is either corroboration or an echo. I have not yet determined which.

Porkchop Pete has taken up a position at the front window and has not meaningfully left it in some days. He reports movement. He reports vehicles. Yesterday he reported a man with a clipboard, which he regarded as conclusive. I have declined to print his findings, though I concede the window is his to occupy.

What I will say is that this establishment has never been troubled by company. A square with more in it is a square more people have reason to visit. We have been here since November with the lights on and the case full. Whoever arrives will find us already open.

The Corona is inked. The edition is pressed.

Yours in Smoke & Style,
MR. FOXWORTH, ESQ.
Editor-in-Chief, The Rare Edition

