



Portland Elks

The 188 News

February 2026

Dear Members and Officers,

Our Grand Exalted Ruler's motto for his term this year is "Be the Difference". And I could not be any prouder of how our State of Maine has embraced this and made a difference!

At our State meeting on January 11 it was announced that Maine was currently in second place for donations made to the Elks National Foundation (ENF) behind Utah. The ENF donations are distributed back to the states in the form of grants, scholarships, veteran programs, Hoop Shoot, Drug Awareness and others. This is what we are all about, building stronger communities through our programs.



I will be attending the District Hoop Shoot State competition on January 25 at the Bath Middle School. One of our own contestants from Portland has advanced from the District Hoop shoot this past January 10 by completing a total of 19 out of 25 shots. Benny Lamour also had to shoot for a tiebreaker by completing 3 of 5 shots in order to advance. Congratulations Benny!

In addition, the Portland Elks lodge will be hosting the regional Hoop Shoot breakfast on Saturday, March 7. We anticipate well over a 100 kids and family members attending this breakfast before they head to Deering High School for the competition. If you are interested in helping with the breakfast, please contact Martha Binette at 671.3133.

Finally, I have nominated Margaret Poulin as the Elk of the Month for February. She is currently a volunteer on the Activity Committee in which she assists in many projects and events throughout the year. Margaret was instrumental in bringing our successful Basket Raffle Extravaganza fundraiser to our Lodge. And she is often volunteering in the Lounge to help when needed whether its serving buffet lines, selling Queen of Hearts tickets, or clearing tables throughout the night. She is a rock star! Congratulations Margaret!

Fraternally yours,

Joseph Winschel
Exalted Ruler

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2025—2026 LODGE OFFICERS

Joseph Winschel
Exalted Ruler

Martha Binette
Esteemed Leading Knight

Paul Poore
Esteemed Loyal Knight

Brenda Farris
Esteemed Lecturing Knight

Victoria Doughty
Secretary

Charleen Durgin
Treasurer

Lorraine Taylor
Chaplain

Stephanie Ingraham
Esquire

Sandra Smith
Tiler

Robert Pomerleau
Soloist

Tim Smith
Trustee (1 year)
Kimberly Toppi
Trustee (2 years)
Gary Rairdon
Trustee (3 years)
Joan Harmon
Trustee (4 years)
Barbara Hebert
Trustee (5 years)

TIME TO ORDER A BRICK!

If you want to remember a loved one or honor a family member, or a friend who has done a good deed, an engraved brick at Lodge 188 leaves a lasting legacy.

Bricks are \$50 each and are placed around the Elk at the main entrance to the Lodge.

Applications are on a table in the hallway leading to the Lounge. Completed forms and a check may be turned in to Joe Winschel. Bricks will only be ordered when there are at least 5 new bricks to be engraved.

Our sincere thanks to all those who have placed an order.

LODGE 188 MONTHLY MEETINGS

House Committee: February 2, 5:30 pm

Trustee Committee: February 9, 4:30 pm
February 23, 4:30 pm

General Meeting: February 9, 6 pm
February 23, 6 pm

Veteran Committee: February 23, 5 pm

Any member, in good standing, is welcome to attend any meeting held at Lodge 188. To attend the General Meeting, please bring your member ID card.

NEWS FROM LODGE SECRETARY, Victoria Doughty

April 1, 2026, is the beginning of Portland Elks Lodge #188 new Fiscal Year. You will soon be receiving your dues applications for the new year. Dues for regular members are \$97.00 and for Life Membership it is \$59.50, as stated in the January newsletter. There is a mailbox outside of the Secretary's office for you to drop off your payment if you wish, or you can mail it to: Elks Secretary, 1945B Congress Street, Portland Maine 04102.



To date, we have 500 members, an increase of 45 and we continue to receive requests from others to become members. These are great numbers, but we also have 29 members who have not paid their dues for fiscal year 2025-2026. The Secretary's Office will soon be making telephone calls to ascertain if they are still interested in staying members of Portland Elks Lodge #188.

We recently initiated three new members, Lisa Cummings, Barbara Charlton, and Diana Maxfield. Please welcome them.

Here's to a warmer February!

Happy Valentine's Day.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



Welcome to our new members installed at the January General Meeting (l-r): Diana Maxfield, Barbara Charlton, and Lisa Jean Cummings.

MANAGER'S MESSAGE from Kim McDonough

Happy February!

It has been a busy year. We have established meetings and events that come back quarterly, and yearly, which was my long-term goal for the business side. I want to thank the members and guests who use and recommend our catering department. It is you who are our best advertising. The staff have been troopers and do an excellent job; we are very lucky to have a dedicated and hardworking staff. Customers rave about our crew, so I know we are doing everything right!



We have had requests for sandwich platters, lasagnas, and of course our home-made meatballs for outside catering pick-ups and deliveries. We will have a full-service catering menu up and running early Spring and are excited to see how it goes.

I would like to thank our House Committee and Trustees, who believe in reinvesting and improving our building. The new hood system creates clean air quality and temperature regulation for the cooks and kitchen crews, which is much appreciated. To be frank, I am quite happy the building no longer smells like a large order of fries.

We love to create new items on the menu for the lounge; your suggestions are always welcome.

We have a very special menu for Friday, February 13 and a great band, Misspent Youth, following the 3 Card Challenge. Please pre-order if you can as we want everyone to get their preferred meal and dessert. ***I'm also excited to announce that on Friday, March 6, we will have The Andi Fawcett Duo following the 3 Card Challenge, more great entertainment. We get requests to mix in a band now and then so please stay after the games and invite your guests to support this. We would love a packed house on both February 13 and March 6 for the bands!***

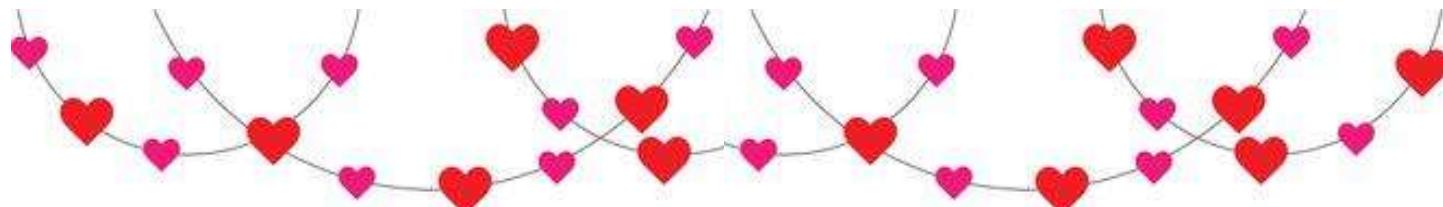
TRUSTEE UPDATE from Gary Rairdon, Chair

Happy February!

As the Trustees start gearing up for next year's budget, I have asked that all committee chairs please start creating budgets for 2026/2027. We will be meeting twice a month until the budgets are submitted in April. As we have asked in the past, please think about any fundraisers that we can do in each of our committees to help offset our bottom line. If you should have any questions, please feel free to ask.



As we head into the final stretch of this year's budget, I am very proud of all the work that the committees have done as well as our members for all the support you have shown each other.





CONGRATULATIONS Benny Lamour....The
Maine Hoop Shoot Coastal District finals were held in January, and Benny Lamour, representing Portland Lodge 188, was one of the contestants who will advance to the state finals.



Benny is pictured here with Elk State President Corey DeWitt.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY DOT!!!



Forty year Elk member, and 35 year Bingo volunteer, Dot Petty, turned 94 in January. Much to her surprise, all of those at Bingo on a cold snowy day, were part of the celebration.

Paul Poore praised Dot for her dedication and long-term commitment to Lodge 188—always being there on Tuesday mornings reporting to work.

The crowd serenaded Dot with a rendition of Happy Birthday, and all 94 patronsYES, 94 Bingo players for her 94th birthday....were treated to cake.

Happy Birthday Dot from Portland Lodge 188!!



February 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 House Com 5:30 pm 	3 BINGO Opens 9 am Games 12 N 	4 Card Games 5:30 pm 	5	6 Card Games 6 pm DJ Queen 	7
8	9 Trustees 4:30 pm Gen Mtg 6 pm	10 BINGO Opens 9 am Games 12 N 	11 Card Games 5:30 pm 	12	13 Card Games 6 pm DJ Queen 	14 
15	16 	17 BINGO Opens 9 am Games 12 N 	18 Card Games 5:30 pm 	19	20 Card Games 6 pm DJ Queen 	21
22	23 Trustees 4:30 pm Gen Mtg 6 pm Vet Comm 5 pm	24 BINGO Opens 9 am Games 12 N 	25 Card Games 5:30 pm 	26	27 Card Games 6 pm DJ Queen 	28

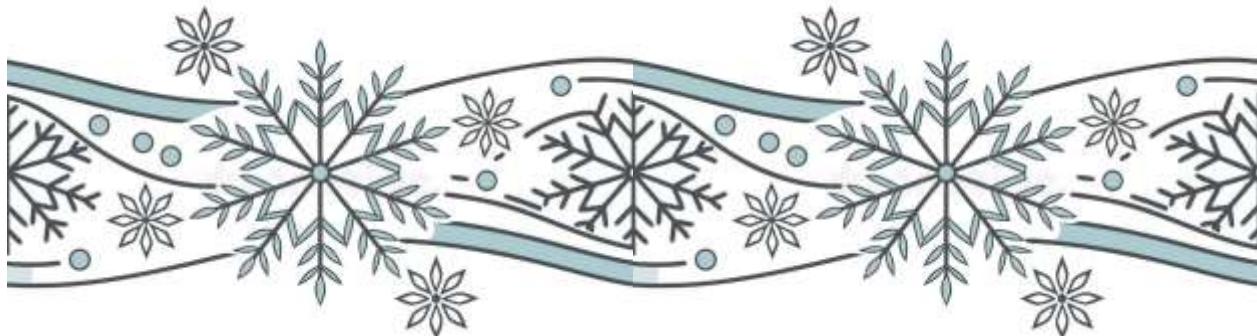
MEET OUR VOLUNTEER....MARY TOPPI

Mary Toppi joined the Elks two years ago after her husband Rocco had joined, as well as many of her friends. Since joining, Mary has become a member of the Bingo Kitchen Team, and the Activity Committee. She enjoys Friday nights playing cards, as well as the company of friends.

Mary was brought up in Brewer, one of three daughters, graduating from Brewer High School in 1978, and went on to graduate from the University of Maine Orono. She began her career as a buyer at Porteous, Mitchell & Braun and went on to work as a sales representative for Nabisco Brands, retiring in 2023 after 40 years of service. Not being one to sit still, Mary now works part-time at A T Hutchins Funeral Home.

Mary has been married to Rocco Toppi for 43 years and they reside in Portland. They have two sons, Rocco IV and Anthony, and two grandsons, Enzo and Nico. Mary is also a member of the Italian Heritage Center.

Mary enjoys helping at Elk events, ENF grant projects the Activity Committee takes on, and working Tuesdays in the Bingo Kitchen. Mary also enjoys playing cards, mah jong, and traveling with Rocco and friends.



February Cold

Poet: Catherine Pulsifer

February, cold and still,
Snow surrounds us, an icy chill.
The days are short, the nights are long,
winter prevails, its grip so strong.

Yet, we're glad this month is brief,
March brings a sense of relief.
But for now, we endure the frosty air,
and hope that Spring will soon be there.





VALENTINE'S DAY

#Dinner

FEBRUARY

13

4:30 - 6 PM

Bistro 188 Dinner Menu

(please call to pre-order 207.838.4386)

Braised Beef Shortribs	\$26.00
Seafood Stuffed Haddock	\$24.00
Prosciutto, Provolone and Fresh Basil	\$24.00
Stuffed Chicken breast with a white wine cream sauce	\$23.00
All entrees come with garlic mashed potato, fresh green beans, homemade rolls	
Wedge Salad with Grilled Chicken	\$14.00
Side Wedge Salad	\$ 7.00
Dark Chocolate Cake w/Raspberries	\$ 7.00
New York Cheesecake with Cherries	\$ 7.00
DANCING TO MISSPENT YOUTH - 7:30-10:30 PM	
3 CARD CHALLENGE WITH CASH AND BASKET RAFFLE	
ROUNDS INCLUDING SCRATCH BASKET AND MYSTERY CASH BASKET, AND MORE!	

Portland Elks Activity & Veteran Committees

FOOD DRIVE

**DROP OFF MARCH
1-18**



With funds from the ENF Gratitude Grant we are hoping to **stuff 300 grocery bags** with non-perishable items to help feed those facing food insecurity in our community. We are accepting donations of **NON-PERISHABLE, NON-EXPIRED** food items from **March 1 - March 18** at the Lodge. **Please NO GLASS!!**

The bags have been purchased with ENF funds, now we just need to stuff them!

300 OF EACH NEEDED

- ▶ Rice, Beans
- ▶ Canned Veggie, Meats
- ▶ Pasta, Tomato Sauce
- ▶ Soup, Peanut Butter
- ▶ Dry Cereals, Juice
- ▶ Crackers, Cake Mix

For Additional Information or to make a cash donation, see Margaret Poulin at the Lodge, or VENMO to Kim-Toppi. A member of the Committee will shop for you.



Honor a friend, secret Valentine or family member with a Heart for a \$5 donation. Martha Binette will be selling hearts until February 13 with all proceeds going to the Maine Children's Cancer Program. Help fill the board, and remember, Elks Care, Elks Share this valentine season.

Shout out to Charleen Durgin and Leeanne Ladd for cutting out all of the Valentine cards.



The **Maine Children's Cancer Program** (MCCP) was created to provide comprehensive medical and psychological services to Maine's children with cancer and their families. The program is based in Scarborough, but serves infants, children, and adolescents from across the state.

MCCP is the only comprehensive cancer treatment program for children in Maine. A subsidiary of Maine Medical Center, the program is linked to research centers throughout the country and beyond, to provide children with treatments here in Maine. Because of this, there is rarely a need to send the children and families elsewhere for treatment.

Because Elks Care and Elks Share, the **Maine Elks Association** adopted the program as a major project in 1985, and since that time, the association has donated over \$5 million dollars to the program. All monies raised for MCCP stays here in Maine, for Maine kids with cancer.

At Portland Lodge 188 here is how we contribute:

- *money collected one week a month from our 50/50 sales goes to MCCP
- *cans collected at Bingo each Tuesday in our CLYNK box goes to MCCP
- *CLYNK bags are available at the Lodge for members to take home, fill, and drop off at any Hannaford
- *two nights in August are Make Your Own Ice Cream Sundae with all sales going to MCCP
- *several times a year, Martha Binette, MCCP Chair, sells Elks Care cards for MCCP

Just ask for a CLYNK bag next time you are in the Lodge, and show your Elks Care!



2025 Year in Review

Throughout 2025, the Veterans Committee remained committed to supporting and honoring our local veterans through a variety of meaningful initiatives.

The committee assisted 14 veterans with Welcome Home Kits. Each kit required a committee member to purchase items which were later reimbursed through ENF. The total reimbursed amount was \$3,894.56, reflecting both the generosity and dedication of our members.

In addition, the committee hosted an annual Veterans Breakfast, serving approximately 35 veterans. During the summer, we organized a highly successful outing for 35 veterans and their assistants to a Portland Sea Dogs game. This event was reported by the Veterans Home as one of their best outings of the year and was greatly appreciated by all who attended.

The Veterans Committee also applied for and received the Freedom Grant, which must be used for a veteran-focused program. The approved grant was allocated to the VAST program at Pineland.

In November, the committee prepared and hosted the annual Thanksgiving Dinner for veterans and their guests. We served approximately 75 people a traditional Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings. And each veteran received a small gift bag.

To conclude the year, the committee assisted the Veterans Home by providing men's sweatpants and men's pajamas, a much-needed donation. With support from our lodge members, the committee supplied over 80 pairs in various sizes, ensuring comfort and warmth for many residents.

Additionally, the committee adopted four veterans and five children in need at Christmas, helping to make the holiday season brighter for these families. To complete the remaining gift tags from the tree, \$212 was used from restricted funds.

It is estimated that committee members contributed more than 200 volunteer hours, with an additional 40 or more hours donated by non-members. These efforts reflect the compassion, dedication, and teamwork that define the Veterans Committee.

MAINE ELKS ASSOCIATION RAFFLE WINNERS.....

Each year, every Lodge in the State, sells Maine Elks Association calendars as a fundraiser. Participants are eligible to win a monetary prize for 365 days—and may win multiple times throughout the year. Cost is \$20. If interested, see any Lodge officer before they are sold out.

Our Lodge's winners to date:

December Gary Rairdon



ELK OF THE MONTH....FEBRUARY



Congratulations, Margaret Poulin for being selected as Elk of the Month for February. The award, selected by the Exalted Ruler, is given to a member of our lodge who either goes above and beyond in their duty to our lodge or exemplifies Elkdom in their actions.

Charity Friendship Community

Newsletter submission: if you have info to share or if you attend a Member Event and take photos that could be included in an upcoming newsletter, please email to Kim Toppi, Newsletter Editor, ktoppi@maine.rr.com for consideration. Thank you!

Lodge/Lounge Hours

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	Bingo ONLY
Wednesday	3pm—9 pm
Thursday	Closed
Friday	3pm—11pm
Saturday	Closed
Sunday	Closed

Lodge Phone

207.773.7396

Lodge Fax

207.773.3582

Secretary

Vickey Doughty, 207.773.6939

General Manager

Kim McDonough, 207.838.4386



Lifetime Boosters

In Honor/Memory Of Elk "Booster"

Ronald W. Allen	Natalie Armstrong
Lester Armstrong	Mary Augur
Jim Augur	George Anderson
Don Bodin, Jr.	Pauline Murphy
Ken Carle	Mary Distasio
Dominic Distasio	Doughty Family
Henry "Skip" Doughty	Victoria and Skip Doughty
John Paul Dumas	Carlene Farr
Percy Farr	Linda Lincoln
Arlene Fenderson	L'Heureux Family
Archie L'Heureux	Millie McDonough
Catherine McDonough	Beth Milton
John Milton	Irene Mulkern
Will Mulkern	Pauline Murphy
Don	Elliott Nathanson
Seymour Nathanson	Janice Parker
Sterling Parker	Carl Paquette
Kathryn Paquette	The Smith Family
Elizabeth Smith	Timothy Smith
William Smith	Tim & Liz Smith
Allen "Bud" St. Pierre	Gladys Stokinger
Bob Stokinger	Carole Gillespie
Harold Tucker	
Harry Winger	

Becoming a Booster is a way to recognize family members and friends that are important to you. The cost is \$10 for one year, or become a Lifetime Booster for \$100. If you would like to become a Booster, fill out form below and return with check to: Portland Elks Lodge, 1945B Congress Street, Portland, ME 04102, attn: Lodge Secretary.

NAME _____ In Honor/Memory of: _____

Booster type: Yearly (\$10) _____ Lifetime (\$100) _____