



Portland Elks

The 188 News

January 2026

Dear Members and Officers,

Hope that you and your family had a very Merry Christmas! And to the beginning of a new year filled with joy and pleasant memories.

As we wrap up another year here at the Portland Elks Lodge, I reflect back on all that we as a volunteer group have accomplished. This would not have been possible without the support and commitment of time donated by our members. We were able to secure a total of \$10,000 spread over 4 ENF grants which supported veterans, senior citizens, foster children and schools. We supported Wreaths across Summit Project, ENF, Scholarships, Drug Awareness, Hoop Shoot, Flag Day, Memorial Service, Mothers Day, Maine Children's Cancer Program, Veteran Home Care kits and many more. I am proud of what we as Elks can do to make our community a better place for those in need.



In addition, we have increased our membership from 456 as of 4/1/25 to the current membership total of 498. A huge thank you to all who have reached out to friends, family and acquaintances and invited them to join the best fraternal organization in the country. Please continue to spread the good word on what the Elks do. Elks Care, Elks Share. Let's be the difference.

Lastly, I will be attending the District Hoop Shoot competition on January 10 at the Bath Middle School. The contest will begin sharply at 10:00 A.M. The Portland Elks Lodge advanced three boys and one girl to the District competition. Please feel free to attend and cheer our kids as they try to advance to the State competition and hopefully all the way to the Nationals in Chicago.

We will be holding nominations for officers positions at our February 9 meeting and elections for these positions during our February 23 meeting. Please consider running for a position and become involved with our lodge. You can make the difference!

Finally, I have nominated Dennis Ricket as the Elk of the Month for January. You may have seen Dennis at Bingo every Tuesday selling tickets and greeting players. Dennis is always there to assist when needed, has a pleasant attitude, and will work till the end when others have left. Dennis is also an active member of the Veteran's committee helping veterans in need. Congratulations to Dennis Ricket.

Fraternally yours,

Joe 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 Dougherty
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: January 5, 5:30 pm

Trustee Committee: January 12, 4:30 pm

General Meeting: January 12, 6 pm

Veteran Committee: January 26, 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.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR Fiscal year April 1, 2026 – March 31, 2027

April 1, 2026 starts the beginning of Portland Elks Lodge 188's fiscal year. Before that date you will be receiving a notice from the Elks Grand Lodge reminding you about your dues for the new year. The letter breaks down what your dues covers and allows you to donate to ENF, MCCP, and Elks scholarship funds. Please **DO NOT TEAR OFF** the bottom of the form when you are submitting your dues payment.

If you want your 2026-2027 membership card mailed to you, please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope, and when cards are ready, yours will be mailed to you.

If you are dropping off payment at Lodge 188, and I am not in the office, there is a beige metal mailbox outside of the Secretary's Office, and you can put your payment in it. Please remember to include the remittance form and put payment in an envelope, if possible, before dropping them in the mailbox.

One more request, when you fill out the payment form, **PLEASE** update any information that may have changed such as address, telephone number, email address, etc. There may be times when the Secretary's Office may need to contact someone on your behalf, so please add their names, address, phone number and relationship on a separate sheet (this request is not on the form the Grand Lodge sends). Thank you!

Sending you happy thoughts and wishing you all a happy and prosperous New Year!



MANAGER'S MESSAGE from Kim McDonough

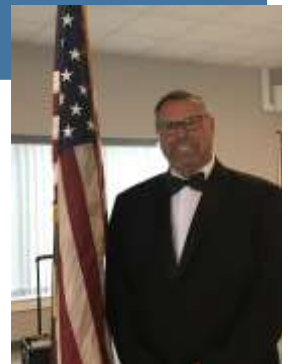


As I look back on 2025, I have much to be thankful for—my health, my family, my friendships, and most thankful for the amazing staff I work with every day at Lodge 188.

We have an amazing staff that is dedicated, hardworking, and always here when I need them. My job as general manager has many responsibilities and I am pulled in many directions on any given day. Knowing that I have a staff that I can depend on makes all the difference to me, to our clients, and to our members.

Wishing everyone at happy, healthy New Year. See you all in 2026!

TRUSTEE UPDATE from Gary Rairdon, Chair



Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a joyful and happy holiday season to end 2025.

We have so much to be proud of, and so many people to thank. I would like to extend a thank you to each and every one of our members for their continued participation in this great organization.

As we head into the near year, I'd like to remind our committee chairs that budget season is just around the corner. I'll be following up with additional information and dates soon as we prepare for another successful year in 2026.

Thank you again, and Happy New Year!!



Change is the way of life. Challenge is the aim of life. This New Year take up the challenge to bring about great changes into your life. Happy New Year.

MESSAGE

FROM THE G.E.R.



Be The Difference

To start off, Sue and I would like to thank everyone for giving us the honor and privilege of serving this great Order as its Grand Exalted Ruler and First Lady for the 2025-2026 Grand Lodge year. The magnitude of this honor has not sunk in entirely, but we will travel this great country promoting our programs with enthusiasm, dedication, and dignity, and we will be counting on your help in making this a successful year.

Our theme this year is Be The Difference, and Sue and I have already begun spreading the message during our state visits that each of us can and will Be The Difference. We can do this by communicating to others what our lodges are doing in their communities. We do a great job of serving others, but we need to make sure our community members know who is behind these good works and how they can get involved and become members of the BPOE Elks themselves. We are constantly reminded that membership is the lifeblood of our Order, so whenever you go out into the community, be sure to take a membership application or two, plus other literature about our programs. Think of the potential members you will encounter while you are out and about running errands, visiting with friends, or just helping out in the community. You may just spark an interest in someone who would be a great member and asset to your lodge and our Order. You can also Be The Difference by remembering to recognize and thank all our members who represent the BPOE by demonstrating the cardinal virtues of the Order: Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love, and Fidelity.

Sue and I are looking forward to traveling our great nation and meeting as many Elks as we can. We want to hear from you about everything you are doing to demonstrate in your community that you can Be The Difference as you work to show that Elks Care—Elks Share.

Fraternally and Sincerely,

Bryan R. Klatt

January 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 	2  LODGE CLOSED	3
4	5 House Com 5:30 pm	6  Bingo Open 9am Games 12 noon	7  Card Games 5:30 pm	8	9  Card Games 6 pm DJ Queen	10
11	12 Trustees 4:30 pm Gen Mtg 6 pm	13  Bingo Open 9am Games 12 noon	14  Card Games 5:30 pm	15	 Card Games 6 pm DJ Queen	17
18	19 	20  Bingo Open 9am Games 12 noon	21  Card Games 5:30 pm	22	23  Card Games 6 pm DJ Queen	24
25	26 Veteran Committee 5:30 pm	27  Bingo Open 9am Games 12 noon	28  Card Games 5:30 pm	29	30  Card Games 6 pm DJ Queen	31



Thank you to our Elk Elves who dropped off these two large containers of Pop Tabs. They were delivered recently to the Ronald McDonald House in Portland. And were very much appreciated!

Keep them coming, as they are turned into cash for the House and in turn helps support families in our community with children being treated at area hospitals.

WELCOME TO LODGE 188 NEW MEMBERS



Welcome to our newest members, initiated at the December General Meeting. Please welcome them to our Lodge. As of December 12, our Lodge has 498 members.

Front (l-r): Kenenth Johnson, Taylor Hedrich
Back (l-r): Stacey Visser, Robert DiDonato, Marie Wiley-Melcher, Christiana Keating, ER Joe Winschel

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:

November: Joe Winschel



ACTIVITY COMMITTEE NEWS, Kim Toppi, Chair



As we close out the calendar year, it is always a good time to reflect back on the year and what was accomplished. The Activity Committee has a lot to be proud of for all that we did for our members, as well as the community.

This past year the Committee was able to secure three ENF grants, the Beacon Grant for \$4,000 and for the fourth year held a very successful School Supply Drive; the Spotlight Grant for \$2,000 and undertook a project to fill 100 Comfort Case backpacks for Adoptive & Foster Families of Maine, and the Gratitude Grant for \$3,000 and a food drive project which will be undertaken in February. And we held an impromptu food drive to support St Vincent de Paul Soup Kitchen this past holiday season.

The lounge got a fresh paint job using the Lounge Designated Fund, and just approved, a new dishwasher to be purchased and installed behind the Bar.

Our May Shopping Spree brought in shoppers on a Thursday night with 25 vendors present, as well as bourbon, beer and vodka tastings for shoppers.

The Trustees approved expenses for two Member Appreciation Events—the June BBQ and the most recent Christmas Celebration. This is just one way for our Lodge to thank members for their continued support throughout the year.

This year our Harvest Craft Fair topped \$10,000 for the first time and thanks to an amazing team of volunteers held another successful Chicken Pot Pie sale, and spent the week leading up to the Fair baking breads, cookies, cakes and making candy.

Our second Kid's Halloween Party proved to be a huge success! As was our Holiday Paint Nite where 35 participants all took home their creations, led by Paul Cyr. Yes, we'll do it again!

Wednesday and Friday nights continue to be popular for everyone who enjoys our card games.

Please save the date for our 1st Spring Basket Raffle fundraiser—Friday and Saturday, May 8-9. We made the decision to move this event away from the holidays and into the Spring—just in time for Mother's Day!

As we begin a new year, please continue to share ideas for the committee to consider.

Kim Toppi, Activity Chair

Patty Amico
Martha Binette
Pam Charles
Pamela Dill
Vickey Doughty

Karen Emerson
Lori Grassi
Julie Morin
Debbie Noble
Margaret Poulin

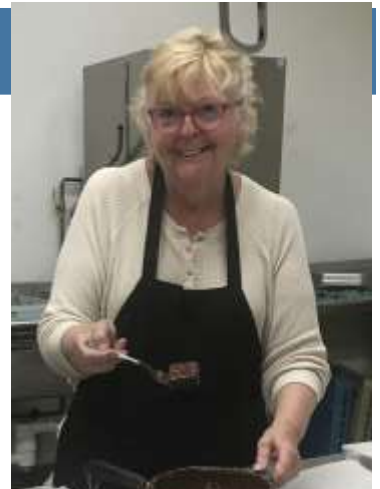
Susan Smythe
Mary Toppi

Joe Winshcel
Ex-Officio



MEET OUR VOLUNTEER....COLLEEN HILTON

Colleen Hilton joined the Elks five years ago mainly because some of her siblings were members and had invited her to attend and she enjoyed the good times to be had on Friday nights. She quickly volunteered as she will tell you her parents instilled in her that belonging to a community means you participate and give back – so she did. She has served on the Audit Committee for five years and also volunteers regularly in the kitchen on Bingo days. She shares that working in the kitchen reminds her of when she got her first job working at McDonalds in high school. Colleen will also step up to work at any event where volunteers are needed to help the philanthropic efforts of the Elks.



Colleen has been married to Bill Hilton for 43 years. They have three adult children, John and William, both recent Elks members and Emily who is the proud mother of their dear granddaughter Colleen or CoCo who is 12 years old. CoCo has even volunteered to help out at the various craft fairs!

Colleen recently retired after 26 years serving as the President of Northern Light Home Care & Hospice. In her role with Northern Light, she also served as the Senior Vice President for Continuing Care which means she oversaw the health systems long term care facilities. She is a registered nurse and remains on active status in case she decides to return to work at some future date.

Getting back to her family roots, of growing up in Westbrook along with her six siblings, she served for ten years on the Westbrook School Committee and followed that public service with being the first female in the city's history to be elected as Mayor. She has served on numerous boards and committees, was appointed by Governor Mills to serve on two State Boards and in retirement continues to serve on the Intercultural Community Center Board, which is an afterschool program to help at risk immigrant and refugee children to improve their success in school. She has also serves as the Chair of the Cumberland County Jail Board of Visitors.

It is often said, if you need something done, ask a busy person as they will often be the first to volunteer. Colleen greatly enjoys getting to know the other volunteer Elks and is appreciative of the camaraderie of her fellow Elks.



Congratulations, and Happy Anniversary to Shirley and Ed Libby who celebrated their 50th anniversary on Saturday, December 27! Our best wishes for many more years to come.





Shortly before Christmas, members of the Veteran Committee delivered gifts donated by our Lodge members, for five children from three different families. Although it was short notice, each child received clothing, coats, and at least one fun item. The gifts were delivered to our contact, who then distributed them to the families on Sunday, December 14.

Gifts were also delivered to the Scarborough Veterans Home. We had four specific names, along with a special request for various sizes of men's pajamas and men's sweatpants. In total, we were able to provide close to 80 much-needed items. And the four Veterans received their special requested items.

During this season of giving, our Lodge members, once again, came through to help those less fortunate in our community, and remembered our Veterans. Thank you!





Portland Elks Lodge 188
1945 Congress Street, Portland



TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30

Doors Open 8 am

Paper Sales 8:30 am

Kitchen Open 8:30 am—1:30pm

Games start at 12 noon




**SUPER Bingo with
larger payouts**


**\$40 New Year's
Package**



**More than \$5,000 in
Prizes....what a way to
start the New Year**



**Pull Tabs for Sale
50/50 Raffle**

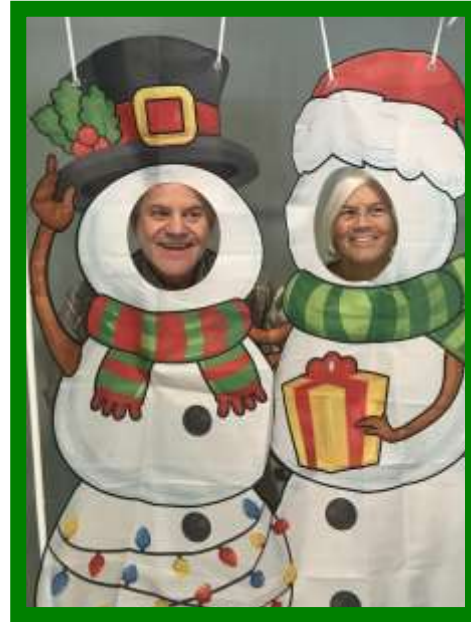


**Kitchen opens at 8:30 am with
breakfast options; lunch menu
10-1:30 pm....all homemade items**



**Happy
New
Year!**





**BINGO CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION.....A GOOD TIME
WAS HAD BY ALL**



ELK OF THE MONTH...JANUARY



Congratulations, Dennis Rickett for being selected as Elk of the Month for January. 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

TAMMY MUNSON RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS AWARD



Tammy Munson, Gray's director of code enforcement and planning, received the 2025 Code Enforcement Officer of the Year Award from the Maine Building Officials and Inspectors Association.

"The award reflects not only Tammy's exceptional professionalism and expertise, but also the deep respect and admiration she has earned across multiple communities," said interim Town Manager Denise Clavette at the award ceremony.

In his speech during the ceremony, Myles Block of the MBOIA Board of Directors called Tammy a "refreshing presence in our field" who sets "the highest standard for what a Code Enforcement Officer should be."

Tammy is a member of Portland Lodge 188. Congratulations Tammy on a well-deserve award!



Lifetime Boosters

In Honor/Memory Of

Ronald W. Allen
Lester Armstrong
Jim Augur
Don Bodin, Jr.
Ken Carle
Dominic Distasio
Henry "Skip" Doughty
John Paul Dumas
Percy Farr
Arlene Fenderson
Archie L'Heureux
Catherine McDonough
John Milton
Will Mulkern
Don
Seymour Nathanson
Sterling Parker
Kathryn Paquette
Elizabeth Smith
William Smith
Allen "Bud" St. Pierre
Bob Stokinger
Harold Tucker
Harry Winger

Elk "Booster"

Natalie Armstrong
Mary Augur
George Anderson
Pauline Murphy
Mary Distasio
Doughty Family
Victoria and Skip Doughty
Carlene Farr
Linda Lincoln
L'Heureux Family
Millie McDonough
Beth Milton
Irene Mulkern
Pauline Murphy
Elliott Nathanson
Janice Parker
Carl Paquette
The Smith Family
Timothy Smith
Tim & Liz Smith
Gladys Stokinger
Carole Gillespie

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) _____



Portland Elks Lodge 188
1945 B Congress Street
Portland, ME 04102

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Organization
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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