



**January 2026**

**Club News**

**Rotary**

District 7780



# Bethel

## Working at Breakneck Pace and Having Fun!

Our holiday activities continued at a breakneck pace - bell ringing in Bethel Village to raise funds for gifts for area children, organizing to prepare boxes of Christmas dinners for families, and serving an annual holiday Senior Luncheon for older residents (shown in photos, with Kevin & Scott carving the meat). We will conclude the year with a holiday social to celebrate our work. It's great to be able to serve the community and have fun doing it!



# Biddeford-Saco

## Delivering Holiday Kindness Across the Community!

The Biddeford-Saco Rotary Club embraced the spirit of the season with a month full of service. On December 13, members joined partners for Wreaths Across America, placing wreaths on veterans' graves at St. Joseph's Cemetery to honor their service and sacrifice.

The Club also played a major role in the Adopt-A-Family Program, helping sponsor 200 children and supporting 91 families in Biddeford, Dayton, and Saco. This effort showcased the Club's deep commitment to lifting up neighbors during the holidays. Special thanks go to Rotarians Shelley and Jane for their outstanding leadership in coordinating the project.

The Club also assisted two veterans settling into new homes, thanks to the efforts of Joe and Cynthia and the generosity of members who donated or purchased needed items.

Together, these initiatives reflect the Club's dedication to spreading warmth, dignity, and hope throughout the community.



# Boothbay Harbor

## Boothbay Harbor RC & Interact Make a Big Impact!

The Boothbay Region High School may be small in numbers, but the Interact Club is anything but. After hearing from State Representative Holly Stover, nearly 40 students sprang into action—launching a pet food drive to support families affected by the government shutdown, followed by a canned food drive to assist the 283 local households whose SNAP benefits were at risk.

The Boothbay Harbor RC is also celebrating major recognition. In December, the Mildred H. McEvoy Foundation awarded the Club \$6,000 for its “amazing work and continued positive impact on the community.” The Club was additionally named a Top Three 2025 Lincoln County Non-Profit Organization by BusinessRate. *(Editor’s Note: I wonder how many clubs are receiving foundation funding and being rated by an outside organization like this? Maybe worth looking into!)*

Much of this community support is made possible by the Club’s weekly Barn sales, where donated goods are transformed into essential funding. This year, the effort is on track to raise an impressive \$80,000.



# Bridgton-Lake Region



**LAKE REGION**  
*MIDDLE SCHOOL*

## **Celebrating LRMS Citizens of the Month!**

The Bridgton-Lake Region Rotary Club is proud to support Lake Region Middle School's "Citizen of the Month" program, a partnership between our Youth Committee and LRMS faculty that recognizes students who consistently demonstrate kindness, respect, and community-minded leadership. Each month, one student from grades 6–8 is honored as a "Good Citizen" and receives a \$25 Bridgton Books gift certificate to encourage both character and a love of reading.

October's honorees—Lennon Smart-Damon (8th), Harper Russo (7th), and Briggs O'Connell (6th)—were celebrated for their empathy, integrity, positivity, and strong engagement in school and community life.

As Club President Dr. Lisa Ryan notes, "Owning a book can spark a lifelong love of learning."

We're proud to recognize these young leaders.



# Damariscotta -Newcastle

## Damariscotta-Newcastle Celebrates The Season!

We had a great evening at the warm and welcoming home of Past President Bill and Polly Vaughan, celebrating the holiday season at our annual holiday potluck.

Then we were back to Service Above Self with our annual holiday kettle collection raising money to combat food insecurity here in Lincoln County. Club members, assisted by local business and organizations, braved the record cold temperatures, warmed by smiles and holiday greetings.



# Dover

## Spreading Holiday Cheer with Hands-on Service, Fellowship & Festive Spirit!

The Rotary Club of Dover embraced the season with creativity, service, and song. Members kicked things off by decorating their Festival of Trees entry at the Greater Dover Chamber of Commerce, crafting a beautifully detailed tree that reflected tradition and community spirit. The club also gathered 32 Rotarians, family, and friends for a mitten-making day with Seacoast Sweet Stitches, creating warm, handmade mittens for neighbors in need. Rounding out the month, Dover Rotary joined the Garrison Players for a joyful holiday sing-along, with Rotarian Kathy Fink accompanying on piano as members filled the room with classic carols and good cheer.

A month of hands-on service, fellowship, and festive spirit.



# Freeport

## Freeport Rotarian Finds New Calling in Service!

After retiring from Wilbur's of Maine in 2018, longtime Rotarian Tom Wilbur traded chocolate making for hands-on community service. Inspired by Harpswell's Aging at Home initiative, he helped launch Freeport Rotary's home-repair program in 2023. Since then, more than 20 volunteers have completed over a dozen projects—ramps, stairs, doors, siding, and other small but essential repairs that help older residents remain safe and independent in their own homes. At 80, Wilbur is focused not on recognition but on building a sustainable effort that will outlast today's volunteers. "It's especially good to help a vet," he says, reflecting the spirit that keeps him showing up. For the full newspaper article, got to:

[https://newspaper.pressherald.com/infinity/article\\_popover\\_share.aspx?guid=cdcd7075-52f2-4836-9f00-1edf28b119cc&share=true](https://newspaper.pressherald.com/infinity/article_popover_share.aspx?guid=cdcd7075-52f2-4836-9f00-1edf28b119cc&share=true) For more info about this program, contact Tom at [tom@wilburs.com](mailto:tom@wilburs.com).



# Hampton

## An Annual Tradition: Feeding the Hungry!

The Saturday after Thanksgiving, the Hampton Rotary Club continued its annual tradition of supporting our community by spending \$10,000 on food for eight local pantries and kitchens. Nearly 50 Rotarians and Friends shopped and delivered the items, and each organization has since expressed heartfelt appreciation. We're proud to uphold this yearly effort and strengthen our commitment to serving the Hampton area.

Photos (In truck: Dave Considine & Dave Anderson. Shopping: Jim Doherty and family)



# Kennebunkport

## Frigid Weather Doesn't Chill Enthusiasm for Giving!

The Kennebunk Rotary Club & Kennebunk High School Interact Club raised a record-breaking \$6205 for the Salvation Army during December. This impressive fundraising feat occurred during a month of unusually frigid weather, yet the cold did nothing to chill the enthusiasm for giving.

In spite of the record low temperatures throughout the month, both the Interact Club members and Kennebunk Rotarians showed unwavering spirit for service. Our commitment to “Agape” not only provides crucial support to the Salvation Army, but also instills a sense of service and generosity in our young leaders. The funds will support local Salvation Army initiatives to help families in need, ensuring that the holiday spirit reaches those who need it most.



# Kittery

## Rotary Clubs Collaborate To Sponsor Food Pantry Fundraiser

An “evening of music, dance, and giving” was held recently to benefit the Footprints Food Pantry in Kittery and the South Berwick Community Food Pantry. Many thanks to the band Undercover for donating their talents, to the local businesses that contributed auction items, and to the event sponsors: the South Berwick–Eliot Rotary Club, the Rotary Club of Kittery, and the Kittery After Hours Rotary Club. Proceeds from the event were shared between the two food pantries. Photo (L-R): Andy Glazier, Rotary Club of Kittery President; Megan Shapiro-Ross, Footprints Executive Director; Clara Perron, Footprints Development Coordinator; Patti Bond, Kittery After Hours Rotary Club President.



# Ogunquit

## Sharing Light and Community Through Holiday Traditions! *When we share light, it grows.*

December has been a season of light for the Rotary Club of Ogunquit, thanks to three meaningful Christmas trees that brought people together in powerful ways. In Perkins Cove, the Club's remembrance tree invited residents and visitors to hang ornaments honoring loved ones lost to suicide or supporting those facing mental health challenges—a quiet but moving symbol of hope. At the Club's annual holiday lunch, Ogunquit senior citizens and local schoolchildren shared a meal and songs, creating a joyful multigenerational tradition cherished by many. And at the Wells Rotary Festival of Trees, Club President Rick Barber added an ornament to Ogunquit's "Beautiful Place by the Sea" themed tree. Each tree reflected the same message: when we share light, it grows.

Happy Holidays from Ogunquit!

Photo credits: Susan DeQuattro and Rick Barber.



# Oxford Hills

## Spreading Holiday Cheer Across the Community!

Oxford Hills Rotary donated 250 pillows to the Christmas for Teens program, with Walmart assistant, and Rotarians Beth Abbott, Patty Rice, Val Weston, Curtis Cole, and George Rice helping make the delivery possible.

The Club also welcomed members of the OH Chorale, who performed several of their Christmas selections before joining Rotarians for breakfast. The Chorale has been invited to sing at Carnegie Hall this summer—the only high school group to receive the honor—and the Club contributed a donation to support their fundraising efforts.

Meanwhile, the OH Interact Club baked cookies, brownies, and sweet treats for the OH Christmas Concert to benefit Christmas for Kids and Teens. Guided by Beth Abbott and Tina Fox, the students had a wonderful time pitching in for a good cause.

For more information, visit [www.oxfordhillsrotary.org](http://www.oxfordhillsrotary.org) or find the Club on Facebook.



# Portland

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## Preparing Food, Stuffing Backpacks & Ringing Bells!

Portland Rotarians were busy with Service Above Self community programs during the Thanksgiving holiday and into December. On November 26, volunteers served Thanksgiving dinner at the St. Vincent de Paul Soup Kitchen, in Portland. This is an annual tradition for Portland Rotarians who volunteer on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving to cook the meal, serve and clean up after the dinner, so the regular staff can have a day off with their families. In December, community services volunteers with the club's Recovery Task Force participated in stuffing 75 backpacks for clients who are at the Portland Recovery Community Center, where they receive support, education, resources, advocacy and hope while recovering from addiction. Volunteers also rang bells in Portland's Monument Square for the Salvation Army. In Photo Rotarians David Small (left) and Bruce Moore help prepare Thanksgiving dinner at the St. Vincent de Paul Soup Kitchen in Portland.



# Portsmouth

## Wrap Up to a Season of Service and Celebration!

The Portsmouth Rotary Club closed out its busiest season with a festive year-end meeting featuring musicians Ben Baldwin and Kent Allen. Holiday spirit was strong at the Club's annual Christmas tree sale, where members staffed three-hour shifts to help sell nearly all 1,200 trees—raising more than \$80,000 for community programs. Traditions continued with the auction of the #1 Christmas ornament, won again by Mort Schmidt and gifted to Marlene Jones in honor of her late husband, Ray, who launched the ornament program years ago.

The Club also delivered one of its smoothest Thanksgiving dinners yet. More than 50 volunteers prepared and served 120 meals, while drivers delivered another 350 from Cape Neddick to Seabrook. Rotarians donated 64 pies, and Portsmouth Hospital provided pre-cooked food.

Additional service projects included a major landscaping effort at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and an \$8,000 donation to Operation Blessing. The Club also welcomed new member Greg Monaco.



# River Valley

## Welcoming Engaging Community Leaders!

The River Valley Rotary Club hosted two informative speakers in December, highlighting local progress and community impact. Roger Arsenault, co-owner of Community Energy and Community Quik Stop and a board member of Black Mountain of Maine, shared encouraging updates on the mountain and the nearly completed Community Quik Stop in Peru—a new 43×90-foot store with expanded parking that will replace the smaller North Main Street location. Members were excited to hear about the growth and investment happening close to home. Photo at Bottom Right: Arsenault with Rotarian of the Day Curtis Smith.

The following week, the club welcomed Joleen Bedard, Executive Director of the Tri-County United Way, who outlined the organization's expanded regional role, ALICE data, and the importance of local giving—reminding members that donations made in Oxford County stay in Oxford County. Photo Bottom Left: Club President Dave Duguay, Bedard and Rotarian of the Day Catherine Ross.



# Saco Bay

## A Cheerful Month of Service!

The Saco Bay Rotary Club had a cheerful month of service as we celebrated the holiday season with our community. Our club collected over 200+ hats/mittens/gloves/neck warmers that were distributed to 100+ children living in three Caleb Group complexes. Over 15 Rotarians helped with Salvation Army Bell Ringing duties at the Biddeford Market Basket. Several Rotarians purchased gifts for the Angel Tags organized by OOB Salvation Army. A group of Rotarians volunteered at St. Demetrios Cemetery with the Wreaths Across America event honoring our Veterans. And the month ended with the Saco Parade of Lights where a group of Rotarians built a float and participated in the annual parade.

Bell Ringers: Past President Dan Letellier and Rotarian Chris Bedard

Parade Float: President David Arenstam, Rotarians Phil Hatch & Phil Smith



# Sanford-Springvale

## Spreading Holiday Cheer!

Rotarians from across District 7780 gathered in Freeport on December 7th for a Holiday Social Event, where they created holiday cards and warming kits for individuals in need throughout Maine and New Hampshire. District Governor Emma Bodwell selected Summer Commons in Sanford as one of the recipients of cards, ensuring nursing home residents received a little extra cheer this season. President Bob Myott happily delivered the cards to the residents. (See photo labeled “Summer Commons.”)

Sanford-Springvale Rotarians also continued their annual tradition of bell-ringing in support of the Salvation Army—another joyful example of Service Above Self.



# Sebago Lake

## Christmas Bags For Our Seniors!

The Sebago Lake Club packed Christmas Bags for our Senior Citizens at the Raymond Food Pantry. To see us in action, check out our Facebook Page.



# South Berwick-Eliot

**Sharing Holiday Warmth and Community Spirit. New Members, SOM and Thanksgiving Dinner.**

The South Berwick–Eliot Rotary Club kicked off the season with another successful Thanksgiving Dinner for Seniors, thanks to dedicated volunteers—including the crew from the submarine Washington. More than 100 seniors enjoyed a home-cooked meal provided by First Federated Congregational Church, Harland Goodwin, and pies from York Hospital. Rotarian Deb DeColfmacker led the effort with her usual perfection.

The Club also welcomed two new members: Aram Guptill, Executive Producer of Hackmatack Playhouse and community advocate, and Khayyam Mohammed, a beloved retired Marshwood teacher and longtime Strawberry Festival organizer.

November's Student of the Month, Dayna Krummel of Marshwood Middle School, was honored for her drive, kindness, and leadership. She selected a charity to receive a \$100 Rotary donation in her name.

Finally, the Club celebrated raising over \$12,000 for local food pantries through its dance and auction fundraiser—an inspiring show of community generosity.



# Westbrook-Gorham

A big benefit of meeting in the culinary arts dining room at our local Westbrook Regional Vocational Center is the wonderful students and staff....and the food 😊 Just before Christmas we held our annual Holiday party during our regular meeting time. Chef Hernandez and the students outdid themselves with passed appetizers ahead of an amazing meal with a selection of delectable desserts.

Unfortunately, our tree sale fundraiser did not meet expectations. Not too surprising given our 5-year hiatus from selling trees. Our board will be discussing our return, or not, for 2026. We would love to share ideas with other “tree sale” clubs. Tips to improve results appreciated. We may be calling you!! Thanks to all of our members who worked shifts, helped with delivery and breakdown. It was truly a huge group effort.

We now look forward to celebrating our 100<sup>th</sup> year in 2026. Fun fact - formation of the club was confirmed on Christmas Eve day 1925 at Westbrook Tavern. Quoting from the journal of then club historian Granville C. Shibles, OD: “At 12:30 on this said December 24, 1925, fifteen business and professional men with a spirit of friendliness to organizations met in the main dining room and laid plans for the first service club in the city, The Westbrook Rotary Club.” Our Charter date is March 8, 1926.



## Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs Make It Headquarters for Their Meetings

The House, One of the Oldest in the City, Was Originally the Residence of the Late Alonzo Libby, Located on Main Street



By Staff Photographer, John A. Marshall

