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New Format - This edition of our quarterly newsletter is in a new format due to the older application we used to make it has been discontinued. Let us know if you like the new format.

Upcoming Upland Game Bird Hunt



Participants in the October 2025 Upland Game Bird Hunt

The woods are a changing panorama of Autumn colors; Woodcock are migrating and Ruffed Grouse are an elusive quarry in October when Pine Grove Programs conducts its Annual Upland Game Bird Hunt. If you are interested in participating in this event, be sure to respond to our forthcoming event announcement. The number of slots available will depend on the number of applicants we receive and how many volunteer dog handlers volunteer their services. A random drawing will be held to determine who gets to participate. If you are selected, you will have the opportunity of a lifetime to hunt over a dog whose business is to locate birds for you. There is nothing quite like watching a dog and handler work the covers in search of Ruffed Grouse or Woodcock. You will need a Maine Hunting License and a shotgun with appropriate upland game bird shotshells, two articles of hunter orange clothing (hat and Vest/Jacket).

Be Prepared



Mother Nature can be a hard task master!

While Pine Grove Programs takes care to provide participants with a safe and enjoyable outdoors adventure, it is incumbent on participants to do their due diligence and to properly plan for the experience. If you are new to the experience, do not be afraid to ask what you should equip yourself with and what you should expect. Our adventures occur year-round and you can expect all types of weather, so the selection of clothing, footwear, rain gear, etc. are important considerations. For many of our participants, the adventure we provide is something they have never done before. When we

provide a checklist of gear you should have, you need to have good gear suitable for the adventure. For example, if we require you to bring water shoes, they should be high-quality durable water shoes that can withstand heavy use in rocky stream conditions. A tent should be able to survive high wind and wet conditions. Rain gear must be high quality, or you will rue the cold wet conditions you will suffer through. Dressing in layers is always important. Keeping warm and dry can make your adventure so much better. Mother Nature is a hard task master, so it is best to be prepared. The only stupid question is the one you did not ask.



Rapala, Spoons, Spinners, Streamers and Flies

consider with a Woolly Bugger being a good one. He recommended spoons to include Speedy Shiners, Mooselook Wobblers, Weeping Willow and just about any spoon that mimics a Smelt. Other possibilities included Mepps Spinners and small Rapalas lures. Before our first outing, I purchased a limited supply based on his recommendations.

Jim has a 12-foot aluminum boat that he leaves in the woods pond side chained to a tree. He is not alone as there are dozens of boats and canoes similarly stored. We started out on that first outing at 6:00 AM and after driving 73 miles, 20 of which were on gravel logging roads, we arrived at the trail entrance to the pond. We carried in our gear and a small outboard motor from the truck to the pond edge about 150 yards through the woods over uneven

Trolling For Trout

A number of years ago, a Coast Guard Veteran friend of mine invited me to go fishing with him for Brook Trout at one of his favorite fishing ponds. Jim told me that we would be trolling for the fish and that I would need a rod configured with a bait casting reel loaded with Lead Core Line. Prior to his invite, I had never trolled for Trout, nor had I ever used Lead Core Line. Obviously, I was in for a learning experience. He recommended Streamers of different colors with the Gray Ghost as a very productive one. There are also flies to

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ground. We put the boat into the water, mounted the outboard, stowed all our gear and slowly paddled through the shallows to get to a depth where the motor could operate without hitting the bottom and rocks.



Basic Bait Casting Reel (Note Line Colors) - Bait Casting Reel with Counter

Now Jim has fished this pond over the years and is familiar with its bottom characteristics and relative depths. If you have not fished with Lead Core Line, it changes its color every ten yards and is designed to sink to get the lure to the depth you want to fish at. In general, every color out will give you about 8 to 10 feet of running depth depending on the type and weight of lure, streamer or fly being trolled. The Lead Core Line will have a monofilament or fluorocarbon leader of 8 to 15 feet in length to which the lure is attached. When using a basic bait casting reel, you keep track of how many colors

have been played out to determine the depth of the lure being trolled. The fancy reels come with a counter that lets you know how much line you have out.



Different Days, Different Fish

Trolling for Trout needs a motor that pushes the boat slowly through the water. Troll too fast and you will not catch fish. Jim would tell me as we moved along the number of colors to let out or reel in so that we would not snag the bottom.

He would describe what the bottom characteristics were as we went along. For example, out in the center of the pond, there was a hump that rose up that required us to bring in some colors. The edge of the hump where the depth changed usually produced fish.

Jim would traverse up one side and back down the other side as we tried different lures and changed the depths at which we were fishing. When trolling, the name of the game is to find the depth at which the fish were holding and the particular lure that they would hit on. Sometimes they wanted streamers, other times flies, spoons or Rapalas. Sometimes they hit everything we threw at them and sometimes they were not feeding. While there are some areas where we seem to catch fish with some regularity, every day is different. Sometimes the fish are shallow, and on other days they are deep. It is fishing not catching, after all. The fun is in working the pond till we get it right.

Jim's preference was always for an overcast day with light to no wind as ideal for fishing. On a typical trip we would catch and release between one and two dozen Brook Trout between us. Trout we caught would typically be between 15 to 22 inches in length. This pond is special in that it has a naturally occurring Brook Trout population and is not stocked. Only Artificial Lures can be used. The daily bag limit for this pond is 2 fish. All Trout less than 6 inches or greater than 12 inches must be released.



Jim With Nice Brook Trout

On a typical trip, we fish for 5 hours, taking a break on shore midway to have lunch and stretch our legs. Sometimes, if we catch keepers, we build a small fire and cook the Trout for lunch. I enjoyed fishing for Trout with Jim so much, that I bought an electric trolling motor and a Lead Iron Phosphate battery that allows us to troll at a slower speed and more quietly. Rarely have we seen other fishermen on the pond, and we relish the peace and quiet of a day trolling for Trout. Usually, the only company we see are the ever-present Loons.

Maine has hundreds of such ponds and lakes where you can troll for Trout. Remote ponds such as Jim's favorite one offers an unforgettable outdoor experience. Big lakes like Moosehead can be trolled for Brook Trout, Lake Trout and Salmon.

Pros and Cons of Handloading

I am fortunate to have a good friend, Chris, who enjoys handloading rifle and pistol cartridges as well as shotgun shotshells. He provides the ballistics research, recommends the proper powder, and performs all the labor. I provide him with projectiles, brass, primers and powder. For him it is a hobby and for me it provides the opportunity to tweak ammunition for my firearms so that I get improved precision/accuracy and sometimes lower cost. Each firearm tends to shoot some loads better than others and finding that sweet spot is an advantage of handloading.



**Lehigh Defense Xtreme Defense (XD)
Fluted Monolithic Copper 150 Grain
Projectile**

Chris produces a sample of rounds with different amounts of powder charge so that we can test each load in its respective firearm to determine which load performs the best. For us, this is a rewarding exercise. Chris enjoys the process to refine any given handload to produce a better performing cartridge. I enjoy the end result and how those refined cartridges improve the precision and accuracy of my shooting. Our goal is to produce lower cost ammunition that performs as well as or better than factory ammunition.

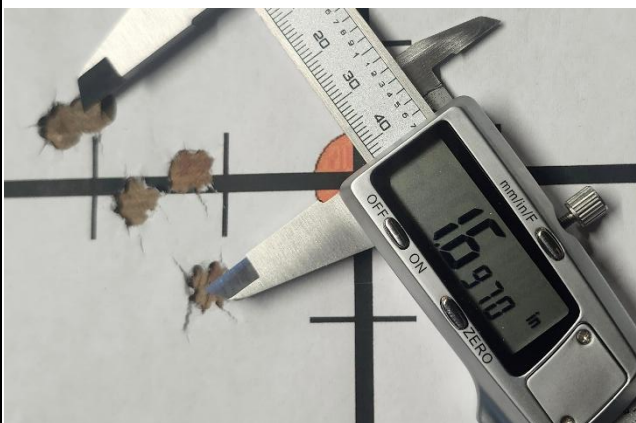
Let me give you an example of the process and result. I wanted to have some 150-grain Fluted Monolithic Copper projectiles reloaded for my 10MM pistol. One of the issues with Monolithic Copper projectiles is that they tend to be longer dimensionally than a comparable lead-based projectile to have the same grain weight. They therefore are seated deeper in the brass so that they will chamber properly. This reduces the amount of space in the brass for powder and can dictate what powders can be used. After doing some

research, we decided that the components for this particular evolution would include Lehigh Defense Xtreme Defense (XD) Fluted Monolithic Copper 150 grain projectiles, Hodgden Accurate 9 Powder, Small Pistol Primers and once fired mixed brass. Accurate No. 9 is a slow-burning, double-base spherical powder that is ideal for high-

Pine Grove Programs

power loads in traditional magnums (like .357, .41, and .44 Mag), as well as 10mm Auto and .357 Sig. It provides high velocities, excellent case fill, and meters perfectly in progressive reloading presses.

Chris did ballistics and handloading research and determined that we would try two different powder loads 11.9 grains and 12.0 grains of powder respectively. We then tested five rounds of each load at 25 yards using a Ransom Rest to test the precision of the different loads. It was truly amazing what a difference 0.1 grain of powder made in the results. The 11.9 grain load produced a group that was 5.1240 inches. The 12.0 grain load produced a group that was 1.6970 inches. To put those results in perspective, a group of 1.5 inches and below would be considered Match Barrel Grade at 25 yards from a Ransom Rest. We used a Garmin Xero C1 Pro Chronograph to test the rounds. The 12.0 grain load was the clear winner, and it produced the following results:

Pistol Bullet 150.0 gr Lehigh Defense XD Monolithic Copper Round				
Shot #	Speed (FPS)	Δ Avg (FPS)	KE (FT-LBS)	Power Factor (kgr·ft/s)
1	1,180.2	24.6	463.8	177.0
2	1,081.2	-5.5	389.3	162.2
3	1,078.6	-6.4	387.4	161.8
4	1,122.1	6.9	419.3	168.3
5	1,035.0	-19.6	356.8	155.3
AVERAGE SPEED	1,099.4			
AVERAGE POWER FACTOR	164.9			
STD DEV	48.9			
SPREAD	145.2			
Projectile Weight (GRAINS)	150.0			
AVG KINETIC ENERGY	403.3			
Session Note	Pistol - Rock Island Armory 1911 TAC Ultra HC (5 Inch Barrel) 10 mm			

So, what are the pros and cons of handloading? If you do a lot of shooting, handloading can lower your cost. But realize, it takes a lot of handloading to amortize the cost of the equipment. Your initial loads if you buy brass, projectiles, primers and powder will likely be comparable to the cost of similar factory ammunition. Reusing your brass reduces cost over buying new brass. Buying primers, projectiles and powder in bulk can likewise reduce your cost. If you want to refine your loads so that you get better than factory load performance and you shoot a lot, handloading may be right for you. If you only shoot a minimum number of rounds a year to check your sight-in and to hunt, handloading may not be a better option than buying factory ammunition. You may have noticed that each round in the test above resulted in different Feet Per Second (FPS) speeds. Factory ammo likewise will vary in speed. The better ammunition will have a smaller standard deviation in speed. Differences in speed can result in variance in where the round hits and thus there is spread in the group. In a perfect world, each round would produce a consistent speed, and all the rounds would go into the same hole.

Black Bear Hunt

Pine Grove Programs held its annual Black Bear Hunt starting August 31, 2026, into September 2026. The first group, Kris (USN), Tim (MEFS) and Troy (Army) met at the Lodge on Sunday, August 30, 2026. On Monday morning, they performed their rifle sight-in followed by some clay target shooting. This was followed by lunch and a safety briefing by their Guide. After lunch, they were taken out to their respective bait sites. Although they saw bears during their hunt, they took no shots as they deemed the Bear too small or the shot was not a good one. Week One, Bears 1, Hunters 0!

Week two saw Matthew (Marine Corps), Matthew (Air Force), and Brian (Army) for the second week hunt. On Tuesday, Matthew (Air Force) was treated to a Bull Moose walking past his stand which got his adrenaline pumping. Matthew

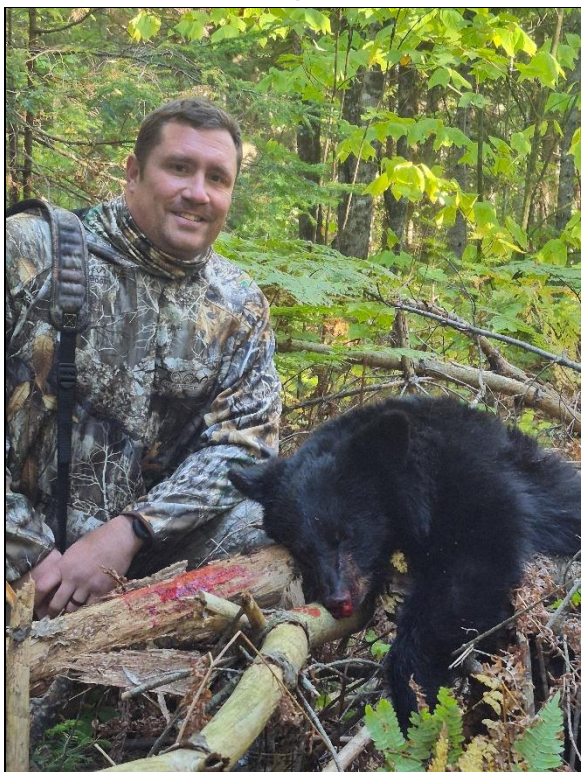
(Marine Corps) left his stand when it became too dark under the canopy to take an ethical shot and went out to the tote road where he unloaded his rifle. He turned around and lo and behold a Black Bear was standing on its hind legs looking at him about 25 yards away. The Bear dropped down and scooted away with Matthew standing there with an empty gun. Stuff happens, but Matthew will have a memory that he will never forget. Week two, Bears 2, hunters 0!

Week three saw Nate (Army) Brian (Marine Corps) and George (Army) on the hunt. There were bears seen, but none were taken. Sometimes it is all about memories.

Week 4, the last week of this year's hunt saw Mike (Army) and Greg (Fireman) on the hunt. There was one no show, which was unfortunate as it precluded another Veteran from having an experience of a lifetime. Greg harvested a Bear on Tuesday, and he was some excited as it was his first Bear. Greg is a fireman from Indianapolis, IN.



Pine Grove Programs



Greg with his Bear



Week Two Hunters

Wilderness Escape Outfitters provided two Veteran Bear Hunts on behalf of the program. Chris, one of the Veterans shown here with his nice bear and Charlie Taylor his guide. Our thanks to Randy Flannery for his continued support of Pine Grove Programs in providing these hunts for Veterans.



Upcoming Hunts, etc.

In addition to the Upland Game Bird Hunt described on page one, the fourth quarter of the year is a hunter's cornucopia of hunts to include Whitetail Deer hunt during Maine's Firearm Season in November, Whitetail Deer hunt using Muzzle Loaders

Dragging Out a Nice Buck



in the first two weeks of December, and the start of Coyote night hunting during the second half of December. Do not forget that a Black Bear may be taken during the November firearms season incidental to hunting Deer.



Coyote Night Hunt Shot

Additionally, depending on ice conditions, Ice-Fishing commences on some lakes in December. As Winter descends with its cold and snow, Pine Grove Programs continues to provide outdoors adventures for Veterans and First Responders.

Coyote Night Hunt

The Coyote night hunting season resumes on December 16, 2026, and runs to August 31, 2027, after a short hiatus from September 1 through December 15, 2026. Pine Grove Programs maintains several shooting shacks and Coyote baits starting in December and running through the end of March. The bait sites vary in that some have motion activated lights which allow the use of optical scopes and some sites are unlighted and require a night or thermal scope. A red or green spotlight can be used as well on the unlighted sites.



A Successful Hunter in Front of a PGP Shooting Shack.

hunt and come to appreciate just how smart and wary a Coyote is. They have keen hearing, eyesight, and an incredible sense of smell. If you make any mistake, they will detect it. They



Bobcat Harvested Prior To a Coyote Night Hunt

If you are interested in trying out Coyote night hunting and want to know more about it, check out our Coyote Night Hunting Primer video on our Pine Grove Programs website. You will find the video under the Media TAB. If you apply to participate and are selected for a hunt, you can begin by using your deer hunting rifle and optical scope if you are new to this type of hunt. As Bob Howe says, "We will put you out in a shooting shack, and you will learn as you go." No truer words were spoken. While we cannot guarantee that you will be successful in harvesting a Coyote, you will experience a first-class



Coyote on a Bait

are indeed a challenge to hunt. You might also have a shot at harvesting a Bobcat as the Bobcat season runs from December 1, 2026, to February 20, 2027. A Bobcat can only be taken during day legal hunting hours and are often seen when you are early on the bait. You may see Bobcat, Coyote, Fox, Fisher, Raccoon, Weasel, Ermine, Mink, Bald Eagle, and Crow during your hunt.

Lobster Bake on the Lake



The Pit

On Saturday, July 18, 2026, Pine Grove Programs held its annual **Lobster Bake on the Lake**. As in years past, this event was a major fund raiser for the program, and it was a huge success. This was the first time that we experienced rain at the event, but everyone was in high spirits and the rain dampened no one's

enthusiasm. The day featured a traditional Lobster Bake followed by a lively auction. The event started with a meet-and-greet period during which we enjoyed appetizers, drinks, and fun conversations. This was followed by a sit-down dinner featuring Lobster or Chicken, Onions, Sweet Corn, Potatoes, Rolls and Dessert. Once dinner was finished, there was a spirited auction. Our thanks to Ed Wheaton who was our auctioneer. Ed, a Viet Nam Army Veteran, kept the auction rolling with his wit and lively dialogue.

Our thanks to Laura and Tim Corbett for opening their home as the venue for this event and especially to Tim as the Pit Master for his skill at steaming the lobsters, onions and potatoes in the traditional Lobster bake method. Our thanks as well to everyone who helped to set up the venue, prepare food, and to all those who donated prizes or made donations to the program. A hearty thanks to Mike and



Boy, that Sweet Corn was Good!

Josselyn Belanger for donation of that wonderfully sweet corn, and to Jeff and Theresa Kenney and all the lobstermen from Hawkes Lobster who contributed Lobsters for the event. Finally, a big shout out to all who participated in our Lobster bake. It was a great day, and fun was had by all.



Ed Wheaton Our Auctioneer



Dig In



**This is what it is all about!
"MAINE LOBSTAH, AYUH!!!!"**

Pine Grove Programs

Maine Knows Howe Podcast

January 2026 –The Biology Behind Coyotes & Deer with Gerry Lavigne

February 2026 – Pajamas, Pigs, Snowshoes and A Maine Guide

March 2026 – Moosehead Majestic Monsters–Trophy Brookies

April 2026 – Maine Freshwater Underwater Exploration

May 2026 – Lifelong Friends Telling Stories with Jeff Zimba

June 2026 – Randy Cross, retired Maine Bear Biologist (Part 1)

July 2026 – Randy Cross, retired Maine Bear Biologist (Part 2)

August 2026 – Hattrick Charters Fishing Lake Ontario

September 2026 – Susanne Hamilton and Lindsay Ware – Blood Tracking with Dogs

October 2026 – Maine State Moose Biologist Lee Kantar shares where hunters should be looking for moose right now.



For over 40 years Bob has operated a lodge in Maine and has given away outdoor healing opportunities to veterans, first responders and law enforcement through Pine Grove Programs. Meet the real people of Maine who have given back to those who have given the most.

Would You Partner with US ?



Partnership Opportunities

What - Bi weekly podcast with over 33,000 views in the first year ! Take a look for yourself.

www.youtube.com/@MaineKnowsHowe

\$500/Month:

Billboard placement at the beginning & end of each episode.

Personal endorsement during the show.

Your branding / logo featured on all our print materials & event promotions.

\$250/Month:

In-show promotion of your brand or message.

Your Benefits:

By partnering with Maine Knows Howe, you're not only gaining exposure to an engaged audience but also supporting a cause that empowers our nation's heroes through outdoor recreation. Your sponsorship helps us continue to grow and share these meaningful stories.

Showcase your brand to a loyal audience of outdoor enthusiasts and community supporters.

Gain visibility across YouTube, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and at events in the Maine outdoor scene.

Email: maineknowshowe@gmail.com

Phone: 207-557-9022

Website: pinegroveprograms.org

**MAINE KNOWS
HOWE**

Outreach Coordinator Notes

I was reflecting the other day on how I have been involved with Pine Grove Programs now for over nine years. During that time, I participated in many of the program events to include the Tribute to Service Fishing Derby, Ice-Fishing Derby, Lobster Bake on the Lake, Black Bear Hunt, Coyote Night Hunt, Golf Tournament, Wild Turkey Hunt, Kayak River Float Trip, Allagash Wilderness Canoe Trip, Whitetail Deer Hunt, and Kayak Fishing. During this time I also met many Veterans, First Responders, and their families. I also served and continue to serve on the Board of Directors as your Outreach Coordinator. The most rewarding part of being involved in the program has not been the participating in the events, but rather serving my fellow Veterans and First Responders. I am fortunate in that I have made some new lifelong friends from those I met. My wife and I have hosted them in our home for Whitetail Deer Hunting, Wild Turkey Hunting, Coyote Night Hunting, Ice-Fishing and Kayak Fishing on behalf of the program. My service in mentoring and teaching these Veterans and First Responders during these activities has been most rewarding. I got the chance to share with them their first Turkey, Deer, Coyote, Salmon, etc. I gained friendship and I saw transformative results from the shared outdoors experiences. I witnessed healing, people gaining new faith in Jesus, and horizons expanded. For me personally, the rewards of serving far exceed anything mere participation in events can give.



A Navy and two Army Veterans with their first Turkey, Land Locked Salmon, and Whitetail Deer respectively.

If you have a skillset, do not be afraid to share that skillset with your fellow Veterans and First Responders. In giving service, you may find that rewards are many while the burden is indeed light. The Program can always use volunteers, contact us with what you might like to do.



Sportsman's Alliance of Maine Golf Tournament

Pine Grove Programs sponsored four Veterans for a day of golf at the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine (SAM) Golf Tournament held at the Augusta Country Club in Manchester, ME on July 13, 2026. The foursome consisted of Paul, our

program Outreach Coordinator (Army), Ray (Army), Dee (Army) and Greg (Air Force). The weather was perfect, the golf was fun. It was a great day.

Bullet Caliber Choice

There are an overwhelming number of choices available in cartridge selection for Deer or Bear Hunting. Many new and modern cartridges offer long range, enviable ballistics coefficients, flat trajectory and impressive speed and energy. Let us be realistic for hunting in Maine. Typically, a shot will be taken at 200 yards or less with most taken at less than 100 yards. So, do we need to go out and buy a new rifle that is chambered for one of these modern cartridges? The answer is no, unless you just want the newest and greatest cartridge being advertised. There are classic cartridges to include .30-06 Springfield, .308 Winchester, .270, .30-.30, and .243 Winchester which will kill a Deer or Bear. Since they are proven calibers and have been around a long time, they are readily available, offer a variety of projectile grain weights, and projectile types. They tend to be less expensive and more available than newer cartridges. Most importantly, they get the job done.

Age Old Smoking of Food



Old Offset Smoker

Brisket.

Recently, I took advantage of what modern technology offers to the home smoker enthusiast, and I purchased a Pellet Smoker. There are numerous pellet smokers available including Pit Boss, Traeger, Weber, Yoder, Flagship, Z-Grill, etc. The price range can range from under \$500 to several thousand dollars depending on the size and features. On completion of my research, I bought a Weber Searwood 600 XL Pellet Smoker. The appeal of the smoker is that it allows me to embark on overnight smoking of food without having to stay up all night feeding fuel and monitoring the temperature. It has Wi-Fi capability so that I can control the smoker from my phone.



New Pellet Smoker



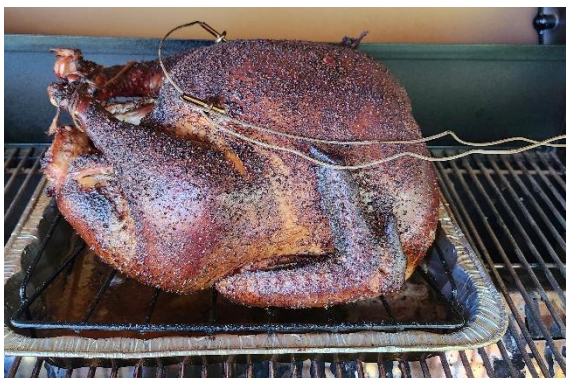
The Brine

My first foray into using my pellet smoker was to smoke a 27-pound Turkey that I had in the freezer. I took the Turkey out of the freezer on Sunday and let it defrost in the refrigerator until Wednesday. On Wednesday, I began the brining of Turkey. In a gallon of water, I added 1.5 Cups of Kosher Salt, 2 Cups of Brown Sugar, 5 Minced Garlic Cloves, 3 Tablespoons of Pepper, 3 Oranges cut in quarters, 3 Lemons cut in quarters, 4 Tablespoons of fresh Rosemary leaf, and 4 Tablespoons of fresh Thyme Leaf. I brought the mixture to boil to allow the salt, sugar, and citrus juices to dissolve. I let the solution cool before pouring it over the Turkey in a 5-gallon food grade bucket and then I added additional water so that the Turkey was completely covered.

I put a cover on the bucket and placed it into the refrigerator until Friday morning, the day our guests would be coming to dinner. I removed the Turkey from the brining solution at 7:30 AM and dried it with paper towels. I then coated the Turkey with Olive Oil to act as a binder for the *Holy Cow BBQ* dry rub seasonings with which I then coated the Turkey. At 8:00 AM, I started the Smoker in Smoke Boost mode at temperature of 180°F. By 8:15 the smoker had reached temperature, and I placed the Turkey in the smoker, inserted two temperature probes into the thickest part of the breast meat. I set the probe target temperatures at 155°F. I let the Turkey smoke at 180°F for two hours and then I raised the temperature to 325°F.



Seasoned Turkey Ready for the Smoker

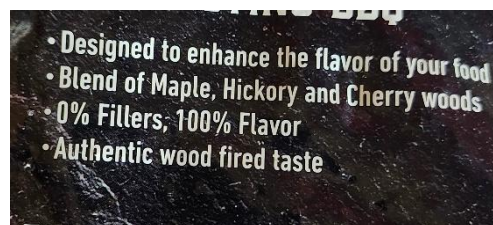


Turkey At Rest

The rest of the day, the smoker did its thing, and it alerted me when the internal temperature reached the desired 155°F. I shut off the smoker and let the Turkey rest until I was ready to carve the bird. During the rest period it continued to cook, reaching a temperature of 163°F. When carved. The meat was tender and juicy. The smoke and seasoning accented the flavor without being overpowering. Some of my guests opined that it was the best Turkey they had ever tasted. My first foray into smoking with a pellet smoker was indeed a huge success and a lot of fun.

A note about Pellet selection: Do not use heating pellets, be sure the pellets are Food Grade. Not all smoking pellets are the same in the way they are manufactured. Some are 100% hardwood,

while others include fillers and flavor additives. To get the best results, it is important to read the information on the package to ensure the pellets you buy contain real smoking wood instead of added flavorings or which are predominantly filler woods different from the desired smoke such as Hickory, Apple, Maple, Mesquite, etc. Smoking Pellets are typically a blend of wood and may also use fillers with labelling that can be deceptive. First, you want to select pellets that state that they are 100% hardwood with no fillers added. Better if they include the percentage of the wood flavor component. For example, a good ratio would be 60% Oak and 40% Hickory. Oak is a base wood component of a pellet; it provides for a consistent burn as woods such as Hickory, Apple, Alder, Pecan, Mesquite all burn at different rates. The Oak in pellets allows the manufactures to achieve consistency in performance of their pellets. Pellets brands such as Lumberjack, Bear Mountain, Weber, and "recteq" are high-quality pellets. Remember to check the label to ensure you are getting 100% hardwood pellets.



Veterans Appreciation Archery Shoot

Dear Pinegrove Programs

I wanted to personally thank you for the support you provided for Maine's first annual Veterans Appreciation Archery Shoot on July 25. I intentionally waited a little while before writing because I wanted to give the impact of the daytime to settle in the hearts of the Veterans... and on my own. After reaching out to many of the participants, I can say with complete confidence that this was far more than an archery event. It was a healing event.

The power of prayer opened the door to something truly special. Throughout the day I watched Veterans laugh together, hug one another, encourage each other, and build friendships that simply didn't exist that morning. I saw tears in grown men's eyes as we placed two bows into the hands of Veterans who needed them. I heard stories of families reconnecting after military service, and I listened as others quietly remembered brothers and sisters who never made it home.



Forty-two Veterans registered for the event, and forty attended! For a first-year event, those numbers spoke volumes. They confirmed something I have believed for a long time: our Veterans are hungry for community, and archery has an incredible ability to bring people together. This was the very first Veterans event I have ever hosted, but I truly believe it is only the beginning. None of it would have been possible without the generosity of people like everyone at Lancaster Archery. Your support wasn't simply a donation. You became part of

changing lives. Every smile, every conversation, every new friendship, and every memory made that day was possible because people like you chose to stand beside our Veterans. For those who never heard of Pinegrove I was honored to share the amazing times I have had with you guys and Andy was working very hard all day to share all you do for Veterans and first responders. Because of what happened that day, I have committed to growing this effort into a grassroots nonprofit called **Arrow & Armor**.

Over the past year I have built an archery range on the property I rent, and with more than 50 acres of woods and trails, I am creating a permanent place where Veterans can gather year-round. I have also built a complete archery workshop where I can help fellow Veterans with bow tuning, paper tuning, broadhead tuning, repairs, and general coaching. In much of rural Maine, professional archery services are hours away. My goal is to remove that barrier and provide those services completely free to Veterans. This is simply my way of taking something I love and giving it away to the people I love.

Thank you so much for believing in this mission. Thank you for believing in our Veterans. And thank you for becoming part of what I truly believe is just the beginning of something very special. I would love to talk about hosting a Veterans archery *retreat* at Pinegrove in 2027!

God bless,

Matthew Landis
Air Force Gulf War Veteran
Founder, Arrow & Armor

Annual Veteran's Award

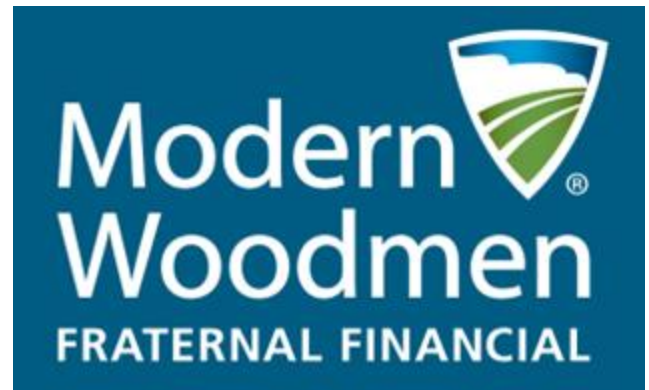
On Saturday, September 5, 2026, Bob and Andrea Howe made their presentation of Bob and Andrea Howe's Annual Veterans Award Veteran Volunteer Award. This year's awardees were a Husband and Wife Team of Amy and John Olivera. Amy is a traveling nurse for the Veterans Administration at Togus who serves homebound Veterans. John is a Navy Veteran and an active volunteer fireman. Both have been active in volunteering their services to Pine Grove Program events over the last few years.



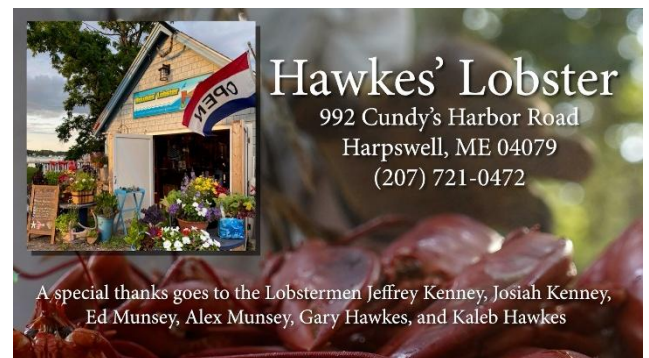
In his acceptance speech, John highlighted that he was not an outdoors sportsman before he became involved with the program. He experienced therapeutic benefits of his outdoors experience with the program, and now he takes Veterans out fishing. John was also the guest speaker of Pine Groves Program's first Maine Knows Howe podcast first aired on YouTube in January 2024. Check out that podcast if you would like to know more about how John became involved with the program and how the program has benefited him.

John and Amy epitomize the selflessness of Veterans, who, having benefited from the program, give back in service to other Veterans by volunteering. They are well deserving of this award, and we are happy to have them as part of the Pine Grove Programs volunteer team.

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Veteran of the Year Nominations

Each year Pine Grove Programs gives an award for Veteran of the Year. If you have a Veteran you want to nominate, please contact Andrea Howe.

almhowe71@gmail.com

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