



Strengthening Community Bonds: Highlighting the Busy Committees at Our Elks Lodge



This month, we are proud to shine a spotlight on three committees that have been diligently planning and executing initiatives to enrich our lodge and community throughout the year. From recruitment drives to veteran support programs and educational scholarships, these committees embody the spirit of service and camaraderie that defines our Elks Lodge.

Membership Committee:

At the heart of our community-building efforts lies the Membership Committee, tirelessly working to recruit new members and foster connections among existing ones. With ambitious goals to expand our lodge by 50 members this year, we're leveraging community investment projects to showcase our story and invite guests to experience the warmth of our lodge firsthand. By reinstating beloved youth programs and implementing a New Member Engagement Plan, we're empowering individuals from all backgrounds to become active participants in our shared mission.

Veteran's Services Committee:

Our commitment to honoring and supporting our nation's veterans is exemplified by the dedicated efforts of our Veteran's Services Committee. Through partnerships with local veterans and funding from grants and member contributions, we provide vital assistance with healthcare, housing, and employment opportunities. By standing in solidarity with those who have served, we reaffirm our pledge to never forget their sacrifices and contributions to our nation.

Elks National Foundation Scholarships Committee:

Education is a cornerstone of our lodge's mission, and our ENF Scholarships Committee is dedicated to empowering the next generation of leaders. Through outreach to local schools and youth agencies, we raise awareness of scholarship opportunities and select deserving recipients who embody the values of scholarship, leadership, and service. By investing in their educational pursuits, we're investing in the future of our entire community.

As we reflect on the vital work being done by our committees, we invite all members to join us in our efforts to make a difference. Whether it's through active participation in committee activities or driving projects that align with our lodge's mission, your involvement is invaluable. Reach out to the various committee chairpersons or any lodge officer to learn how you can contribute and make a meaningful impact in our community.

Ocala Elks #286 remains deeply grateful for the dedication and tireless efforts of our committees, as well as the unwavering support of our members. With your continued involvement and generosity, we look forward to building an even brighter future for our lodge and community.

The chairperson of each committee is listed on page 8 – please reach out to them to let them know your interest in serving as a volunteer.

From The Exalted Ruler



Firstly, I want to express my gratitude for your participation in the Member Satisfaction Survey. Your feedback has been instrumental in guiding the efforts of our house committee as they diligently plan new activities and events, with a special focus on enhancing our Saturday nights.

Given Ocala's renowned status as the "Horse Capital of the World," we have some exciting events lined up, including our annual Kentucky Derby Day on May 4th and The Preakness Day on May 18th. These events promise thrilling races and an atmosphere of camaraderie among our members.

In addition to our equestrian festivities, we are excited to invite you to bring your family and join us for our annual Mother's Day Breakfast on Sunday May 12th. Also on May 25th, remember to come out for the Birthday Bash to celebrate our May birthdays. It's a wonderful opportunity to connect, share stories, and enjoy each other's company, further strengthening our community bond.

Looking ahead to June, our calendar is already filling up with exciting events, so be sure to keep an eye out for updates.

I want to take a moment to address an important matter. As I mentioned in last month's letter, the Lodge officers, board of directors, and house committee are dedicated to maintaining a delicate balance between rising costs and minimizing the impact on our members. In our efforts to remain fiscally responsible, we have found it necessary to make some adjustments to our food menu and bar prices in the coming weeks. While these adjustments are necessary, I want to assure you that they have been carefully considered to ensure they are as minimal as possible.

The success of our lodge depends greatly on member participation and utilization of our facilities and services. I encourage you to join us, whether it's for a meal in our beautiful dining room, bringing along your family and friends, or participating in the fun activities planned by our house committee.

On a separate note, please remember that the Elks 2023 State Convention is fast approaching, scheduled for May 22nd to May 25th. As a result, there will only be one Lodge meeting this month, on May 9th.

I eagerly anticipate the opportunity to see you all at our upcoming events.

Cheers,
David Clayton
Exalted Ruler
DavidElk286@gmail.com



VETERANS



Good news is we received the Freedom Grant again this year. It helps with the pantry shopping. As we all know food costs are still going up and that makes what we can buy less every month. The Grant will help, but still need your support to meet the needs of the pantries. The gas card donations has been a big help, so thank you to those that have donated.

We took 4 Veterans shopping this past month. The Welcome Home Kits are great and starting April 1st they were increased to \$400.00 per trip with an allowance for some food and gas card. This will help to get more of what these Veterans need.

First we took Glenn P. (Air Force). He lucked out and managed to get quite a few items marked down almost half price. Kitchen items and appliances were among his items along with some hygiene products.

Next was, Terry W. (Navy). he had done some research and found a table with 4 chairs to use as a dining set. It was marked down and in the outdoor furniture. Something we need to remember for the future. Even with getting the table set, he got all the other items on his list. We had to enlist George Cooke to come help us get it to his apartment. Thank You George.

Rick T. (Army) was in need of a vertical blind for some privacy along with rugs and bathroom items, also the usual kitchen gadgets.

Last but certainly not least was Larry G. (Army). His wants were kitchen related. He likes to cook and bake. Also there were the usual bedding and bathroom items.

It's always different items that are important to each Veteran and we are glad we can help them get what they need and know a little about them.

The Flags for Fallen Veterans is right around the corner so we need to get volunteers lined up. The placement is on Sunday, May 26 and pick up is Saturday, Jun 1. We will meet at Sam's parking lot at 7:30 A. M. Please let me know if you would like to be part of this ceremony to honor our fallen Veterans at Bushnell National Cemetery. You can do one or both days. It is a very moving, emotional experience.

As always Thank you all that have supported our efforts to help and honor our Veterans.



Remember the Elk's Pledge, "So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them."

Pam Kinard - Veterans Service Chairperson



FLORIDA ELKS CHILDREN THERAPY SERVICES



Summer is right around the corner!! Soon it will be time for us to grab our sunscreen, pool floaties, and swimming gear! This month's client spotlight is on Gattis, age 5 years and 7 months. Gattis is a pleasant, energetic kiddo who is always on the go! Gattis is always ready to begin his occupational therapy session each week as he is the first one at the door greeting me and asking me to come inside to see what we will be working on that day. I have been seeing Gattis since last September working on fine motor skills like handwriting, hand strengthening, and

scissor skills. Gattis is also a very talented little baseball player, so we also work on his hand eye coordination skills, balance, and integrating his primitive reflexes to assist in improving his gross motor skills. Gattis has made tremendous improvements over the time we have spent together. Specifically in handwriting. At first it was a daunting task that he would avoid by hiding under the table, procrastinating the task by making small silly conversations, or asking to just play games. However, now he is willing to perform handwriting activities at the beginning of our session with noticeable motivation. Here are some pictures of Gattis working hard during our OT sessions. Thank you for your continued support of FECTS! Without you, I wouldn't be able to help kids learn and grow!



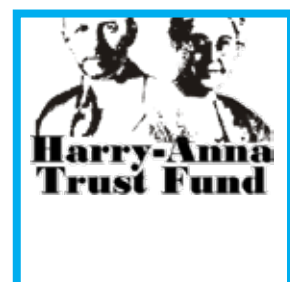
Pearl Johnson Henry, OTR/L
Occupational Therapist

m: (352) 789-9527

f: (352) 329-1210

w: <https://floridaelks.org/children>

e: pjohnson@floridaelkscts.org



ENF GRANTS

This year our lodge applied for and received a \$1000 Elks' National Foundation Freedom Grant. Freedom Grant projects must serve veterans and/or military members in need or support or services.

For the Freedom Grant Project, our Lodge will partner with Veterans Helping Veterans of Marion County, FL and with Volunteers of America/Ritz Veterans Pantry as we have in past years. These different Veteran Outreach programs notify our Lodge of items and services that are needed for various Veterans.

The grant will assist with funding monthly food and hygiene donations to their pantries which will be used by the organizations to assist with homeless veterans and to assist with low income and special needs Veterans.

While the grant will help cover some of the cost of the project, it will not cover it all. You can help by bringing canned goods, non-perishable food items, and hygiene products to the lodge and placing them in the box located in the lobby. The veterans committee collects the items on donation day and adds them to those purchased for the monthly donation. You can also help by volunteering to assist with shopping or participating in donation day.

If you would like to volunteer with this project, please reach out to Veterans Services Committee Chairperson, Pam Kinard.



HARRY ANNA TRUST



Of everything that the Florida Elks do, perhaps nothing is more important than our work with the state's youth. Sowing the seeds of accomplishment and commitment through our Florida Elks Children's Therapy Services and Florida Elks Youth Camp programs, children are given the opportunity to grow and learn beyond their dreams.

The trust fund started in 1951, was named after Harry and Anna Miller who donated land and a building to establish the original Florida Elks Hospital for Crippled Children. Its purpose was, and continues to be, the collection of donations and the acceptance of endowed gifts.

The trust fund is restricted, which means that only the income derived from it may be used to support our major projects: the Florida Elks Children's Therapy Services and Florida Elks Youth Camp programs.

An online donation is the quickest and easiest way to support our trust fund efforts. Click the button below to make your secured gift.

Federal Tax Savings

A contribution to the trust fund is a tax deductible donation to a U.S. tax code 501(c)(3) organization. Continuing changes in the federal tax code make the counsel of professional tax and legal advisors essential to a donor who may benefit financially from a well structured plan.

If you are interested in making an immediate change in the lives of others, please click the button on the right and make your donation today.



SUMMER CAMP



It's time again for summer camp registration! The Florida Elks Youth Camp serves close to 2,800 kids every year for summer camp. Some of the youth come from families that can't afford to send the kids to camp. No youth is turned away because they can't afford to pay. As a member of a lodge in Florida, you can sponsor any youth aged 9 - 13. Sponsoring does not mean you are required to pay. Because we are a private camp, every youth must have a Florida Elks sponsor.

If you would like to help with paying for a youth to go to camp, this year's fee is \$220. You can mail or drop off a check payable to the Harry-Anna Trust Fund to our Lodge Secretary, or mail it directly to FEYC (P.O. Box 49, Umatilla, FL 32784). In the memo line, please write FEYC Campership. Your donation does count as part of our Harry-Anna Trust donation.

OLEO



Greetings,

I was checking out the calendar and May is a full month of wonderful events. On the 4th we have the Kentucky Derby, the 5th we have Cinco de Mayo; the 12th is Mother's Day; the 18th is Armed Forces Day and the Preakness Stakes and Memorial Day are both on the 27th. So, this month

we can dress for fun, wear beautiful hats, honor our Mothers and then honor our men and women who serve the United States protecting our country. Many great reasons to be with family and friends and celebrate.

Our Spring Fashion Show turned out to be wonderful with Suzanne Ingrao chairing the event. Our models were beautiful, the luncheon was very tasty and everyone had a wonderful time. See attached pictures of our models with our ER David Clayton and also a picture of some that helped at the event.

Please try to attend our meeting on Thursday, May 9 at 5:30 PM as this will be our last meeting until August. I know everyone will be glad for a break to travel and relax during June and July.

But we still have our Variety Show coming up Saturday, June 22. Tickets of \$20 each are available. Contact Linda Crawford (352-572-978) or Adella Ashton (727-542-7114) for tickets or if you would like to show your talent. It's all for fun and a great cause.

Our meeting in August will be Thursday, the 8th at 5:30 PM.

When we get back from the summer break, we have Bunco, the Fall Fashion Show, the FLOE Conference and our Christmas Sweetheart Ball to look forward to attending.

Happy May birthdays to: Peg McWhirter (1st); Martha Z. Baker (3rd) and Carole Knight (16th).

Sincerely,
Sandra Harton, President



WHAT'S GOING ON AT THE LODGE & IN THE STATE

**MOTHER'S DAY
Breakfast**

MAY 12, 2024 9am-1pm

\$15 Adult \$8 kids 6-15 kids
5 & under Free

**FULL BREAKFAST
BUFFET**

**OMELET STATION
made your way**

COFFEE TEA AND ORANGE JUICE

**Mimosa or Bloody Mary
\$5 each**

WEDNESDAY

GAME NIGHT

STARTS MAY 15, 2024

CARD GAMES - BOARD GAMES

Game Night will be every other Wednesday.
Trivia will be the other Wednesday.

THE EVENT IS OPEN TO ALL AGES
FEEL FREE TO JOIN ALONE OR BRING ALONG YOUR FRIENDS
BRING GAMES TO SHARE

**Preakness
Stakes**

Saturday MAY 18th

Doors open @ 4:00



May 25th



**Ocala Lodge 286
May Birthday Party
6:00 - 9:00PM**

**Cake and Ice Cream Provided
No Bingo**

WHAT'S GOING ON AT THE LODGE & IN THE STATE



**Orlando, FL
May 22-25
Rosen Centre**



**May 31st – June 2nd, 2024
Ocala North RV Resort**

floridaelks.org/floe/rv-rally



PAINT PARTY

**SATURDAY
JUNE
15** 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

\$35
11x14 Canvas

LOCATION



702 NE 25th Ave, Ocala, FL 34470

EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT \$5 OFF IF SIGNED UP BY JUNE 5TH
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**SIGN UP
HERE**

**Happy
Father's
Day**

**FATHER'S DAY
Breakfast**

JUNE 16, 2024 9am-1pm
\$15 adult \$8 kids 6-15
5 & under Free

**FULL BREAKFAST
BUFFET**

OMELET STATION Made your way
COFFEE TEA ORANGE JUICE
Mimosa or Bloody Mary
\$5 each

YOUR LODGE OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

ELECTED LODGE OFFICERS



Exalted Ruler
David Clayton
404-409-9785
davidelk286@gmail.com



Leading Knight
Michael Saxe
516-732-5867
msaxe01@gmail.com



Loyal Knight
Keith Gage
352-673-0957
Kgage1@juno.com



Lecturing Knight
Pat Gilbert
352-355-0533
gilbertp1@cox.net



Secretary
Bobbi Kassick
352-732-7091
Secretary@elks286.org



Treasurer
Connie Davis
352-239-0711
treasurer@elks286.org

APPOINTED OFFICERS



Esquire
Debra Poole
309-85 5-9197
dspoole3@cox.net



Chaplin
Carlos Quiles
352-999-0592
asi924@aol.com



Inner Guard
David Breitenbecker
352-351.5618
tbirdallso@yahoo.com



Tiler
Kathy Barkley
352-237-0718
chatkat98@aol.com



Organist
Ken Sarsony
352-857-6441
tlv3@live.com



SPJ Judge
Dan Hicks
352-351-3353

TRUSTEES & LODGE ADVISOR

One Year
Vacant



Two Year
Alan May
352-239-0588
cmmay51@yahoo.com



Three Year
Kevin Gage
845-417-8808
sparky3274@msn.com



Four Year
Dan Hicks
352-351-3353



Five Year
Barbara Shepard
352-460-7209
Barbara@floridaelks.org



Lodge Advisor
Nick Miller
352-602-0441
nick@feyc.org

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Committee	Chairman	Email
House	Brenda Cornelius	bmsrichar@yahoo.com
Flag Day	Alan May	cmmay51@yahoo.com
Veterans	Pam Kinard	pammanella@embarqmail.com
Investigations	Ken DeVilling	sram814@aol.com
Co-Chairman	David Morrill	DLMRacing@gmail.com
Elks Memorial Day	Bobbi Kassick Carlos Quiles	bobbikass@yahoo.com asi924@aol.com
Entertainment	Kathy Barkley	chatkat98@aol.com
Sporting Clays	Ken Davis	kdavisauto@aol.com

Committee	Chairman	Email
ENF Grant Coordinators	Keith Gage George Griffin, III	Kgage1@juno.com
Elks National Foundation Fundraising	Emery Shepard	Emery@Elks286.org
Harry Anna Trust Fundraising	Emery Shepard	Emery@Elks286.org
Scholarships	David Renau	avidseek839@centurylink.net
Membership	Dina Gage	dinarella2@msn.com

CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS	
Secretary Phone	352-732-7091 Ext 1
Lounge	352-732-7091 Ext 2
Catering	352-732-7091 Ext 3
Treasurer	352-239-0711

[Click here to sign up now for Harry-Anna](#)



You can become an ENF sustaining donor, just click on the Elk or go to elks.org/enf
Our ENF goal this year is \$4.80 per member

OCALA 286's Goals for 2024-2025	
ENF	\$4,200.00
Harry Anna	\$32,000.00
Harry-Anna Sustaining	30 members \$7,200.00

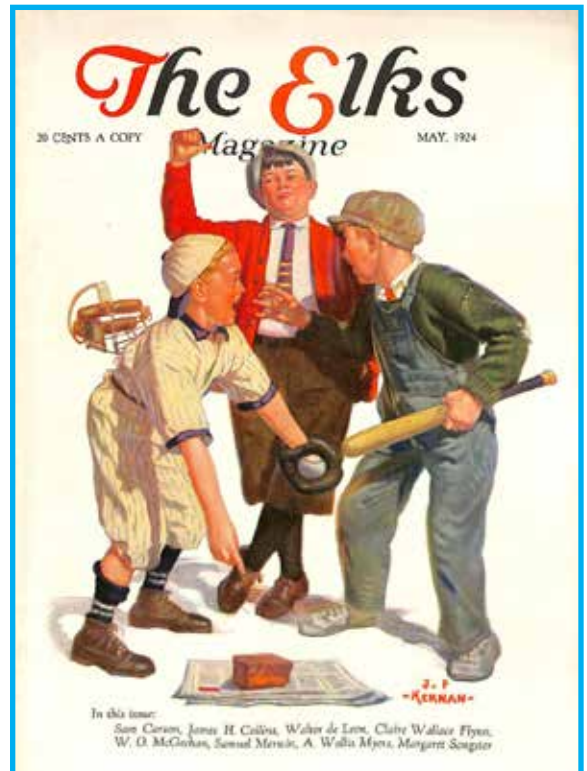
OCALA ELKS WEEKLY SCHEDULE		
Secretary	Monday-Friday	1:00-5:00PM
Catering Office	Monday-Friday	8:00AM-1:00PM
Monday	Closed	
Tuesday	Lounge Open Dining Room BINGO	4:00-9:00PM 5:00-8:00PM 5:30-8:00PM
Wednesday	Trivia or Games & Queen of Hearts	Lounge Open Dining Room 4:00-9:00PM 5:00-8:00PM
2nd & 4th Thursday	Meeting Nights Lounge Open	6:00-7:00PM and after the meeting
Friday	Lounge Open Dining Room	4:00-11:00PM 5:00-8:00PM
Saturday	Lounge Dining Room	4:00-10:00PM 5:00-8:00PM
Sunday	Closed	

Current Lodge Membership as of 4-24-2024					
Total	Life	Candidates	Associate	Delinquent	% Delinquent
577	108	15	3	124	21

To Our Absent Members

Benjamin P. Rich
Initiated 02/23/2006 Died 4/2/2024

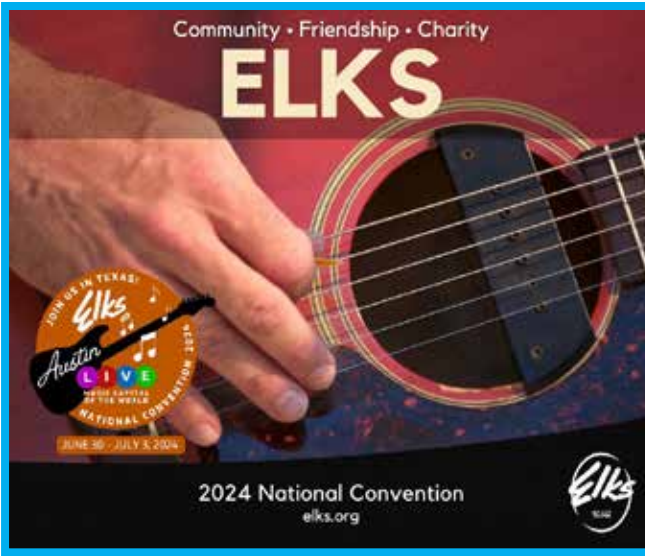
Below is the Elks Magazine cover of 100 years ago. The entire magazine and much more available at ELKS.org. Create your account today and see all the resources



This month's Famous Elk Will Rogers

Lodge #1 New York

"The only problem with Boy Scouts is, there aren't enough of them"



MAY BIRTHDAYS

Mary Elizabeth Olson	01	Denise Novales Welch	12	Dock A. Blanchard	20
Charles Rector	03	Guy McWilliams	13	Judith Karen Cozzino	20
Ludwig E. Dlouhy	04	Henry L. Lambert, PER	14	Mary Lou Majewski	20
Robert S. Lemasters	04	Richard Saltz	14	Robert Strom	21
Ruben R. Lamb, PER	05	James N. Gallaway	15	Ronald Eugene Gomillion	22
Hugh McNichols	07	Robert St Pierre	15	Susan F. Sands D C	23
Robert B. Parramore, III	07	Karl Blaha	16	James A. Eastin	24
Robert D. Picard, Jr.	08	Carole Knight	16	George Sevast, PDDGER	24
Wayne C. Curtis, PER	09	Thomas R. Wilder	16	John L. Alvarez	27
Harold G. Floyd, PER	09	Andrew H. Moniuk	18	Jonny Heath	27
James M. Lee	10	Robert Smith	18	Nova R. Martin, PDDGER	27
Frank Turner	10	Steven Weitlauf	18	Michael E. Melin	29
Julia M. Slaughter	11	Alexander Kopac	19	P. Bruce Pruitt	29
Carol Foltz	12	Arlie Tinder	19	Frank R. Wallace	29

It Pays to Attend Lodge Meetings

Date	Drawings	Amount	Member/Winner	
4/11/2024	Previous Meeting	\$100.00	Johnny Lazo, IV	Not Present
4/11/2024	50/50	\$87.00	Pat Gilbert	
4/11/2024	20/20 1st Drawing	\$150.00	Steven Westgate	
4/11/2024	20/20 2nd Drawing	\$100.00	Gus LiCari	
4/25/2024	Previous Meeting	\$125.00	Sarah Graf	Not Present
4/25/2024	50/50	\$82.00	Ken Backofen	
4/25/2024	20/20 1st Drawing	\$150.00	John Whitten, Jr.	
4/25/2024	20/20 2nd Drawing	\$100.00	Pat Miller	



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Warner Wilson	\$50.00
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Lounge	\$150.00
Lodge Room	\$150.00
Dining Room	\$150.00



Ocala Lodge Logo shirts are now available for you to order. These shirts are \$32 each for sizes small through extra large and \$34 for sizes 2XL and up. The net proceeds goes to our ENF donation. You can place your order by contacting David Clayton or Pat Gilbert. This is a great way to show your lodge spirit and benefit ENF at the same time.

We want to share your Elks stories whenever we can. If you have a story to share, please submit it and photos to: NEWS@Elks286.org

OCALA ELKS NO 286702 NE 25th Ave
Ocala, Florida 34470A FREE MONTHLY
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EARNEST MAIL**PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

May		
Thursday	2nd	Board of Directors Meeting 6:00PM
Saturday	4th	Kentucky Derby at the Lodge Cinco De Mayo
Thursday	9th	Lodge Meeting 7:00PM
Sunday	12th	Mother Day Breakfast at the Lodge
Saturday	18th	Preakness at the Lodge
Thursday	23rd	No Lodge Meeting
Saturday	25th	Birthday Bash

June		
Thursday	6th	Board of Directors Meeting 6:00PM
Saturday	8th	Belmont Stakes at the Lodge
Wednesday	12th	Flag Day at the Lodge
Thursday	13th	Lodge Meeting
Saturday	15th	Paint Party
Sunday	16th	Fathers Day at the Lodge
Thursday	25th	Lodge Meeting
Saturday	29th	Birthday Bash

Ocala Fundraising Events	
Sporting Clays at Blackjack Sporting Clays	10//05/2024

Florida State Elks Association	
State Convention Orlando Florida - Rosen Centre	5/23-25/2024

OLEOs	
Meeting	5/9/2024
Variety Show	6/22/2024

May Entertainment		
Friday 3rd	Lonnie	Songs from the 50s 60s 70s 80s
Friday 10th	Rocky & Michelle	Variety dance duo, music ranging from the 50's to current
Friday 17th	Lisa Coan	Music memories that will make you want to sing along,
Friday 24th	Tim Hargis	
Friday 31st	The John Dixon Band	Top notch classic, danceable, upbeat country music.