

American Values, Hometown Roots

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THE EMPIRE STATE GRANGER



Our Vision!

- Initiator of Community Action
- Facilitator of Leadership Development
- Advocate for Families
- Trusted Conveyor of Issues to Legislators



September October 2023

President's Column

Stephen C. Coye



RURAL BROADBAND – AN INCREASING REALITY

For well over a decade the Grange has been advocating for the expansion of broadband accessibility in rural areas. Companies providing this service have been reluctant to service areas with sparse populations due to the tremendous expense of stringing the necessary fiberoptic cable necessary to accomplish this purpose coupled with the relatively low number of available subscribers thus making it difficult to recoup their costs. This phenomenon is nothing new for rural areas. Over the last 100 years rural areas have seen this play out in relation to electric, telephone, and cable TV services.

Like it or not, internet access with broadband capability is becoming increasingly necessary to compete in today's world, and in some cases maintain a quality of life. For example, we all know what is happening with healthcare in non-metropolitan areas. Hospitals are all but gone, along with many local family physicians, thus the ability to be able to electronically connect with healthcare providers is becoming increasingly necessary. The pandemic demonstrated to us the importance of broadband in relation to school studies, and precision agriculture depends on

it.

A new program from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is attempting to solve the broadband communications problem in rural areas, and for it to be successful there needs to be grassroots "feet on the ground effort." This is where the Grange has the opportunity to be very visible and in fact be the key player in closing this communication gap. The National Grange, due to its intense lobbying on this issue over the years, has received a substantial grant to make this happen, however it is going to take the efforts of local Granges to make it happen, as after all, the local areas are where the connectivity needs to happen, and folks need to be able to afford it once it becomes available. The object of this program is to flood our local communities with information in relation to their ability to connect and learn of areas that presently do not have this service. The process is easy, the Grange just needs to sign up, and all necessary materials will be supplied free of charge. In addition, each Grange will be given a contact person to help determine the best approach for your Grange and community situation. This is definitely a "win-win" as the old saying goes, as it will be a win for the Grange and a win for the community. To sign up for the program, contact me to receive the log-in information. It is a simple process, and I'm sure that you will find that there are any number of simple activities that you can coordinate that have the potential to make a large impact on your community. Feel free to contact us to visit about this opportunity. There is no downside to this.



New York State Grange 151st Annual Session



A Treasured Tradition With The Future in Focus

Auburn Holiday Inn October 13 – 17, 2023 Hosted by Onondaga County with Cortland and Wayne Counties Program of Events

General Session
The 151st General Session of the New York State Grange will be held in the Finger Lakes Ballroom at Auburn Holiday Inn. Session Committee rooms will be available. NO meetings will take place while guest speakers are giving presentations.
Session Pianist ~ Irene Fassett

Friday, October 13
10:00am-5:00pm
Registration- Poolside Atrium
3:00pm - Hotel check-in (earlier as rooms are available)
1:00pm Session Committee Chairs - Fillmore Room
2:00pm Grange Issues Committee - Emerson Room
5:15pm Milk Punch "Meet & Greet" - Poolside Atrium Served by NYS Dairy Ambassador
6:00pm Annual Banquet NYS Dairy Ambassador NYS FFA President

Sesquicentennial Celebration Program



Saturday, October 14
7:00am Lecturer's Breakfast
Burger Theory Restaurant
Junior Projects check-in
Cayuga-Seneca Room
8:00am Registration
State Officer's Practice
8:30am Baking Entries
Emerson Room
9:00am **Opening of the 151st Annual Session of the NYS Grange in the Sixth Degree**
Finger Lakes Ballroom
Lower to Fourth Degree
Recognition of Past Masters, First Ladies, Honored Guests, Officials
Quorum Call
Report of the State Master
~ Stephen C. Coye
Five Minute reports
~ Ryan Orton, Secretary
~ Kenneth Smith, Treasurer
~ Richard Church, Chair
Executive Committee
~ Virginia Dehner, Chair
Audit Committee
11:00am Recess
Session Committee meetings, as needed, Locations to be announced
11:15am 5th Degree – Obligation
Sixth Degree Rehearsal
Finger Lakes Ballroom
1:00pm Committee Meetings
3:00pm Reconvene General Session
Five Minute Reports of Departmental, Project and Program
Chairs:
~ Jolene Pirrone, Lecturer
~ Cindy Benson, Legislative Director
State Fair Grange Building
~ Melvin Phelps, Community Involvement/Service
~ Brenda Noble, Family Activities
~ Barton Snedaker, Leadership/Membership
~ Roland Shea, Museum Board President
~ Sandra Green, Fund Raising Chair
~ Bruce Croucher, Grange Foundation, Information, Empire State Granger
~ Carol Bailey, Historian

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Legislative Column

Cindy Benson-Pollard



The fall season is here. We look forward to the changing colors of the leaves and the cool crisp fall air. Now, our Granges are planning their fall activities. I hope that you include telling your community what the Grange is doing for them in Albany and Washington.

By the time of this publication, our annual legislative conference will have been completed. A big thank you goes out to those who took the time to attend this important meeting. Thank you to Cuyler Grange for serving a delicious lunch to those who attended the meeting. The presenters shared valuable information that we could take back to our local Granges and share.

At this time, resolutions will have been emailed to your Delegates-at-large. This is a change from previous years. Delegates-at-large should have printed and/or emailed the resolutions packets to your delegates for review prior to the start of committee meetings. Included with the resolutions was a letter from me with the dates of the Zoom committee meetings. These meetings were very successful last year. The Zoom meeting links will be emailed to your delegates as their meeting date approaches. I ask that your delegates are prepared for these important meetings. Should you have any questions, please be sure to contact me.

Thank you to all the Granges who sent resolutions for consideration this year. Your work is very important in shaping Grange policy for the coming year.

I look forward to seeing you in Auburn.

Family Activities

Brenda Noble



Hello everyone! I hope you all had a great summer. Soon we will be seeing everyone at State Grange Session. The top 4 winners in each category of the Needlework and Craft Contests. I will also be asking for items to

display at the Showcase at National Grange.

The ones being sent to the Northeast Exposition are: Afghan – Roberta Hamilton, Onondaga Co.; Doilies – Helen Horth, Chautauqua Co.; Embroidery – Mindy Jo Eldred, Chenango Co.; 3-piece Baby Set – Cindy Pollard, Onondaga Co.; Counted Cross Stitch – Letitia Pickering, Monroe Co.; Adult Garment – Maryanne Campbell, Otsego Co.; Latch Hook – Marlene Utter, Chenango Co.; Quilted Wall Hanging – Cathy Stark, Dutchess Co.; Stuffed Toy – Charlotte Brenon, Jefferson Co.; Baby Afghan – Letitia Pickering, Monroe Co.; Sewn Garment – Karen Johnson, Otsego Co.; Decorated Tea Cup – Cindy Williams, Lewis Co. I will announce any awards at State Grange Session in October.

I thank everyone who sent items for the store table at the Northeast Exposition. There are towels, scrubbies, and mittens. I appreciate what everyone has sent. The items support the building and covers the cost of the judging. Also, do not forget for the Community Service at National Grange we will be collecting hats, mittens, and socks for charity.

The baking contest in October is Apple Pie: Regular and Diabetic along with raffling off the quilt from blocks that were sent in for celebrating the New York State Grange Anniversary. We will see you in Auburn.

State Grange Secretary



Ryan Orton

Over the past few months, five Granges were “Test Granges” for the new editable electronic quarterly reports. Developed by Ed Lawton of Chenango County, these electronic quarterly reports can tabulate the dues amount owed. It calculates for regular paying members and family plan members as well as subtracting the amount that would be charged for Golden Sheaf Members who joined the Grange prior to January 1, 1951. Just input the membership numbers in the correct spaces, and it does the rest for you! We all know I’m a History Teacher, not a Math Teacher, and this makes my life as a Grange Secretary a lot easier! Furthermore, with the cost of postage consistently increasing every six months, electronic quarterly reports can cut down on the amount of postage from both the State Grange Office and mine at home.

The tests were run, the kinks worked out, at least 2 quarters of electronic quarterly reports submitted by these five “Test Granges,” and they are now ready for use among our Grange Secretaries in the Empire State! Before I get a barrage of e-mails and phone calls from Grange Secretaries who may not have internet or would prefer to use paper copies, they aren’t going away! Recall the resolution from Chenango County at the last State Session: These electronic quarterly reports are an OPTION! It’s not the only option, but another option along with the paper quarterly reports. You as the Secretary of your Grange have the option to submit your quarterly reports electronically or through the mail with paper reports. You choose what’s best for you!

If you would like to complete the quarterly reports electronically, please contact me. State Grange will ensure that your reports will now be electronic, and you will no longer receive paper copies. However, if something changes and you need to submit paper copies once again, just let me know and you will start to receive paper copies of the quarterly reports. A couple things to keep in mind, though, if you want to use the electronic quarterly reports:

- 1) Dues checks must still be sent through the mail. We do not have an electronic payment method established...yet (this could be in the works if Granges would want to pay their dues electronically, too).
- 2) Once you receive the electronic quarterly reports via e-mail from me, you will have to save it to a computer and change it every quarter. Remember, this is an editable PDF, so sending it multiple times via e-mail isn’t necessary.
- 3) You may also have to set some sort of reminder, so you don’t forget to complete these reports every quarter as the next quarter’s reports won’t be sent through the mail.

Huge thanks to Ed Lawton for creating the electronic quarterly report as well as fielding questions from the “Test Granges,” and to the five “Test Granges” for being my guinea pigs for this project: Oxford Grange #894 (Chenango County); Stanford Grange #808 (Dutchess County); Marcellus Grange #464 (Onondaga County); Clifton Springs Grange #1042 (Ontario County); and Dryden Grange #1112 (Tompkins County).

Congratulations to the following Granges who took in new members since the last ESG:

15 New Members: Copake Grange #935 (Columbia County)

14 New Members: Ausable Valley Grange #973 (Clinton/Essex Counties)

8 New Members: Salisbury Center Grange #624 (Herkimer

County)

2 New Members: Cuba Grange #799 (Allegany County)

Almond Grange #1102 (Allegany County)

Colonel Harper Grange #1508 (Delaware County)

Butternut Valley Grange #1533 (Otsego County)

Plattekill Grange #923 (Ulster County)

Warsaw Grange #1088 (Wyoming County)

1 New Member: Elba Grange #783 (Genesee County)

Mount Pleasant Grange #349 (Oswego County)

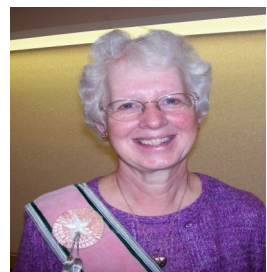
Putnam Valley Grange #841 (Putnam County)

Hoosick Grange #1127 (Rensselaer County)

Lincoln Grange #122 (Wayne County)

Rose Grange #1051 (Wayne County)

Chaplain's Corner



Virginia L. Conner

BRIDES AND BABIES

Roger and I will soon be recording new milestones in our journey as Grandpa and Grandma. A Granddaughter will be getting married September 9th. Also on that date our only grandson turns 30 years old! The clichés of “where does time go and how did these two babes become these ages” has suddenly become very real to us!

Then in October another Granddaughter will give birth to our first Great Grandchild! Wow and time marches on!

Biblically who do you think of when you hear “brides and babies”? **Bride** is mentioned several times in the book of Revelation but in Isaiah 62:5 it says, “As a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you”.

Probably the **baby** in the Bible we recall first is Moses. As a baby, Moses’ mother put him in a basket which floated on the Nile River to safety. (Read Exodus 2:1-10) God had a plan for Moses just as He does for each human baby born today.

A friend gave me a plant called, Moses in a Basket. It grows small canoe-shaped green baskets. Then very small white flowers bloom but only one or two at a time in a basket full of tiny buds. As each little flower opens up, it reminds me of Moses and how God used him to accomplish great things. Always be encouraged that God can use you too.

Pomona Chaplains: Please send to me the names of your members who have entered their Eternal Rest during this past Grange year (10/1/22 – 9/30/23).

Youth

Johannah Stewart

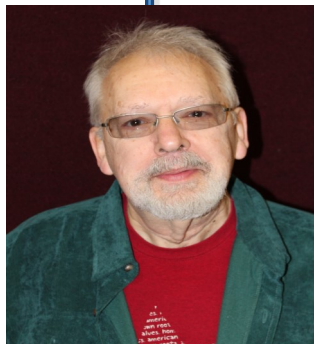


This summer has brought some interesting challenges for the youth department. Due to the record breaking flooding in Vermont, we did not make our scheduled trip to the North Eastern Youth Conference. Instead, our worthy state Pomona, and youth committee member, Sarah Barber opened up her home to host us for a long weekend jam packed full of fun and fellowship. The youth participated in the first (maybe annual) Grange Olympics. With a variety of competitive events from board gaming to archery and orienteering the youth learned skills and showed off those they already knew. As part of the fun the Barbers took us on a mini tour of their area with one of the most memorable stops being a farm themed miniature golf course and a really great ice cream place. Worthy State Secretary Ryan Orton joined us for the weekend and shared a memory of his first ever mini golf experience at a Mid Atlantic Youth Conference in New Jersey many years ago. In addition to this fantastic weekend, the youth have been busy helping at several events across the state. Elizabeth VanCleeck assisted with the regional Junior Camp event in Columbia county. Alyvia Fuchs helped to run the 150th Birthday Celebration event for NYS Grange in Phelps, NY. She also represented the Grange at the opening of the Wayne County fair and coordinated the youth and junior helpers at the Pomona food booth. Garret Phelps represented the youth department at the annual Old Home Day event South Rutland Valley Grange hosts. Both Alyvia and Garret will be helping in the Grange Building on Grange Day at the State Fair. They would love to shake your hand and chat about their time as youth ambassadors. As a department, we are currently gearing up for the fall which includes 3 big events for us. First we will have a fall youth weekend in Jefferson county. Please check our Facebook page for more details or see your subordinate or Pomona secretaries. Next, we will be participating in all the fun 150th anniversary events State is hosting at State Session in Auburn, NY. Finally, we will be heading to Niagara Falls for the National Grange convention. We can't wait!

*Support Grange
Youth*

Leadership Membership

Barton Snedaker



If you have witnessed the degrees or read them, you know there are frequent references to agriculture used to explain Grange positions. My reference for this column is to weeds. I know it may seem an unusual connection between Membership and Leadership and weeds. Bear with me and I'll see if I can make sense of it for you. I should clarify that my intent is to compare weeding with membership, NOT new members to weeds. Anyone who gardens knows that weeds are a constant issue. Some might say annoyance. The process of weeding is necessary, time consuming and ongoing - not a one time occurrence. It seems that once you get everything weeded it is time to start over again. The same is true for membership. It is not a one time event. It needs to be ongoing and constant. Do not consider finding new members an annoyance but a necessity. Many Granges are feeling the effects of not seeking new members while they were healthy and active.

Weeding sometimes, for me, is planned. Start at one end and weed your way to the other. On other occasions I may start in one place and end up on the other side of the yard. Still weeding.

Your membership plan may be very detailed or completely random. Does one way work better than another for your Grange?

I have found that weeding goes better when the ground is slightly damp. The idea may be to "wet" your membership initiative with an open house or a Get to Know the Grange event. Finding new members, like weeding, may be easier that way. Members of our Grange attended a new residents program and brought three new members to our fold.

If you are weeding in dry, hard soil you may find that the roots also pull up clods of dirt. Think of this as having to get new members to leave their impressions or ideas about the Grange taken off their roots. Walking into the house one day I spied a weed growing from a crack in the sidewalk. I bent down to pull it without much problem and easily kept on my way. Finding a new member may be as instant as that. Be prepared to ask them to your next meeting or find a way to get them Grange literature or better yet a membership application.

Sometimes you can pull a handful of weeds at one time. Think about that as finding Grangers whose Grange has closed. Or find members who could benefit from the family membership plan. Getting several new members at one time is not an unheard of possibility.

Some weeds, I have found, mimic the plant next to them. It seems to make them more difficult to find. (I think they know that!) You may have a new member right under your nose, or standing next to you. Make sure you have looked closely at your surroundings.

I have also found that little weeds may offer two opportunities to be plucked. Sometimes young weeds are very easy to pull. Sometimes you may need to give them a chance to grow. Think of this as finding young people as new members. You may, at times, need to give them the chance to be more ready to join. Sometimes you may not be sure it is a weed at all, and need to give it a chance to develop before making a decision on what is to be done.

I have some very difficult weeds to pull because they grow from spreading underground root systems. Likewise, new members may be connected to other people who could also become new members for your Grange.

I have on rare occasions enjoyed weeding. It is especially rewarding when you have accomplished clearing spaces around roses and other thorny plants. Can getting new members to join be thorny? Isn't it a relief when you finally get them in as members?

Some of my weeds are easily recognized as such. Other times I may not be so sure. Some new members may stand out immediately. Others may need to be carefully watched until you are sure they are good candidates for membership.

Occasionally it will behoove you to sit back and assess your progress. Are you going the right way? Do you need to reposition yourself for better or easier work? Does your labor show in what you are accomplishing? Have you made enough of a difference that your "garden" is showing improvement?

Sometimes weeding by hand is just not good enough. You may have to call in helpful tools. (Mine are the yellow handled digger and the purple handled trowel). These tools may include - The Grange Manual or The Digest. GOOD Day! magazine may offer help. Membership applications are always good to have in your toolbox. Available from National Grange are the Grange

Resource Binder which contains many helpful forms and hints, and The Grange Orientation Kit. It has seven brochures which may be helpful in recruitment as well as providing information to current members. If all else fails an excellent tool could be another Granger.

Best of luck with your weeding!

Sports

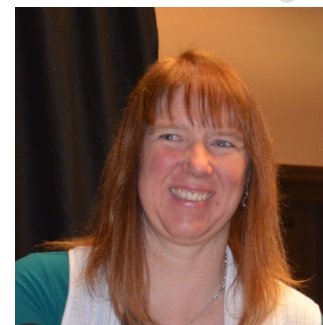
Director Bruce Dehner



We had 7 teams participate in the bowling tournament held on June 4th at Cort Lanes in Cortland. The results were: 1st place Saturday Night Grangers #1, 2nd - Mt. Hope Oddballs, 3rd - Cortland County Pomona #25, 4th - Cuba+1, 5th - Saturday Night Grangers #2, 6th - Saturday Night Grangers #3, and 7th - Stanford Grange # 808. Six teams participated in the golf tournament held on July 9th at the Pheasant Golf Course in Shortsville, NY. The results were: 1st place Par For The Course, 2nd - Cuyler Buzzards, 3rd - Mount Hope Hackers, 4th - A-Team (JG Camp 91), 5th - Best Team Ever, and 6th - Long Drivers. I hope everyone had a good time. It was great to have some new teams participating in each event. The next and final event for the year will be Corn Hole on Aug. 5th at State Headquarters in Cortland. Results in the next Granger. I am glad we had new people but we can still do better next year

Junior Grange

Sherri Horner



Grange Camp

The Kids Day Out Event at the East Chatham Fire Department was a huge success! Nineteen "campers" ranging in age from 6 to 14 had a wonderful time. Making play dough, filling goodie bags for children in the community experiencing some kind of trauma, writing letters to soldiers, a variety of team building activities, lunch and outdoor games and board games filled the day. New friendships were formed and some potential new

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3) Junior

Grange members resulted from this fun and exciting day! Thank you to all of the Granges that support that New York State Grange Camp Program. The next Kids Day Out Event was held at Smithville Valley in Chenango County. Seven “campers” attended this event. We had a beautiful day to do all of our activities outside. Not only did we do the craft activity, community service activities, team building activities, and games, the children also had the opportunity to play on the playground during the afternoon. We also have a potential new Junior Grange member from this event. We are very excited to see how many more new Junior Grange or youth members that we may get from the next two Kids Day Out Events.

Junior Grange

I have had the opportunity to visit a few different county fairs this summer. I always look to see what kind of displays the Granges in the county set up to teach the community about Grange. Some of the Junior Grange displays were very eye-catching. Kirkland Junior Grange set up a display celebrating New York State Grange’s 150th Anniversary. They had a beautiful layered “cake” set up and showed different aspects of Grange on each level. At the Allegany County Fair, Almond Junior Grange had a display set up showing information about Niagara Falls, New York. As the National Grange Convention is in Niagara Falls this year, Almond Junior Grange educated the public on some highlights of Niagara Falls. It was exciting to see these two displays at the County Fairs. This is a great way to introduce families to the Junior Grange. If your Grange does not have a Junior Grange program but have children interested in the Grange, they can become 1+ members. The process to start a Junior Grange 1+ Program is easy.

- The Junior Granger completes an application, submits it to a Community/Subordinate Grange, and receives the Junior Grange Obligation from the Subordinate President.
- At that point, the Junior member may participate in any and all of the age-appropriate contests and activities open to them.

As your Junior membership grows, make plans to charter a full Junior Grange in the future. All Junior Grange 1+ members will automatically become members in the newly chartered Junior Grange.

Junior Granges are organized by Grange Leaders associated with a Community or State Grange. A chartered Junior Grange requires a minimum of 13 children in a mix of girls and

boys to go through the organizational process.

To organize a Junior Grange, you must follow the By-Laws and Code of the National Grange – plus any requirements of your State Grange. The National By-Laws require the following:

4.3.2 Charters – Junior, Subordinate and Pomona Granges – Junior, Subordinate and Pomona Granges shall be organized by Charter in those States where a State Grange has been organized by Charter under the following procedure:

(A) The application for a Charter must be approved by the President of the State Grange having jurisdiction before it is filed with the Secretary of the National Grange.

(B) When the President of the National Grange determines that the organization of a Junior, Subordinate or Pomona Grange is completed, the President shall direct the Secretary of the National Grange to issue a charter on behalf of the National Grange for such Junior, Subordinate or Pomona Grange.

(C) When the Charter is issued by the National Grange, it shall be signed by the President and Secretary of the State Grange having jurisdiction and the Seal of said State Grange shall be affixed to the Charter. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me and I will be glad to help!

State Grange Historian

Carol Bailey



DID YOU KNOW ...

That in 1982 the headquarters building was transferred from the Patrons of Husbandry Inc. to the New York State Grange? The Patrons continued until the building was paid for. Also that year the first Leaders Conference was held at Eisenhower College. This conference was held for several years at various educational facilities around the state.

On April 30, 1983 the mortgage on the headquarters was burned with appropriate ceremony. Funds were being raised for the purchase of a computer and other necessary equipment.

Cookbooks were continued to be sold to help pay for the building. A program with the “American Agriculturist” was also used for fund raising. The delegates voted in favor of the

bottle bill and were against casinos.

We also opposed turning Eisenhower College into a prison.

The Grange received mementos from Louis Taber. Also there is mention of materials from Caroline Hall and Elizabeth Arthur. Where are these items?

During 1984 a conference on accessibility of credit was sponsored by State Grange. The Christmas and all occasion card sales were very successful.

By that same year the Grange was moved to the horticultural building at the State Fair. During state session that year of 1984 Master Bert Morse sold the shirt off his back for \$142. Fern Palmer in her report as historian dreamed of a Grange museum.

The Grange supported the prospect of a four year program at SUNY Cobleskill. There seemed to be a lot of typos in the 1984 journal. Was it typed on the new computer?

With the advent of National Grange in NY in a couple of years, an advertising booklet was proposed to help defray costs. A museum committee was appointed in 1985. That same year a ribbon cutting for the Grange Hall at the State Fair was held in the former Hall of Health. For the first time a church service was held at the Grange Hall at the State Fair.

New York hosted the Middle Atlantic Youth Conference with a performance by “Bert & Company.” He also told the “Rosebud” story that year.

After opposing the seat belt law for a few years, Grange finally supported it. We also supported the sale of Conrail to Norfolk-Southern Corporation.

In 1986 more than 2000 toys were donated to Ronald McDonald homes by Grangers. Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets asked for support of farm markets. Past Master Russell Curtis’ death was noted that year.

In the late 1980s the visioning program took off. Several programs were held around the state with Grangers and the public meeting together to solve local issues. The women’s tent at Empire Farm Days was a success also with many interesting programs during the event.

State Lecturer



Jolene Pirrone

State session is right around the corner. I look forward to meeting you all there and talking about programs coming up for the next two years.

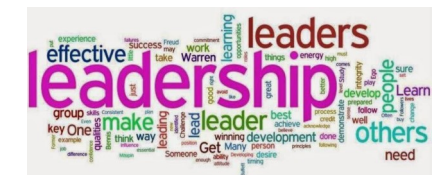
The banquet plans are underway and I think you can all look

forward to a “magical” performance. As always, it will be worth your time to come out for the banquet on Friday, October 13th.

Program spoiler alert: the Photography themes are Close ups (2023) and Grange Halls (2024), Art is Barn Quilts (2023) and Drawing (2024), Promotional contest is FFA (2023) and Facebook (2024), Writing is Worksheets, games or puzzles (2023) and Grange month (2024), Talent is any performance on the themes Growth (2023), and History (2024).

Featured topics include Family Safety (2023) and Community Education (2024). The Lecturers are going to be included in a fun fundraising program for next year that will be introduced at the Association Meeting in October. It will also be mailed out.

I am submitting the finalized program book so you should be able to access it via the website by the time you receive this. I’m not sure of the plan for paper copies, but if you need one, you can email me your address and I will send you a copy. jolene@advancedwebdesign.com



Sesquicentennial

A Treasured Tradition With The Future In Focus

Inviting and welcoming, that is the spirit Grangers have. We will continue as an organization with 150 years of history behind us and unlimited possibilities ahead of us. Keep up that welcoming spirit and bring candidates for membership, new members, and those who have not witnessed the Grange Degrees to the Degree Day on Saturday September 30. The Degree Day will be held at the New York State Grange Headquarters, 100 Grange Place, Cortland starting at 10:15 am. The First through the Fifth Degrees will be held that day. It is a special year to join because a new member may witness all seven degrees in three months in New York State. The inspiring State Degree - Sixth Degree will be held Saturday October 14 in Auburn. The beautiful and spectacular National Degree - Seventh Degree will be held Saturday November 18 in Niagara Falls. This is a rare opportunity. Prospective members are waiting for you to invite them to join the Grange.

The Degree Day schedule for Saturday September 30 at NYS Grange Headquarters is:

- 10:15am - State Officers Open the Grange in the Fourth Degree;
- 10:30am - First Degree conferred by Colonel Harper Grange #1508
- 11:15am - Second Degree conferred by Cortland County Pomona Grange #25
- 12 noon until 12: 45pm - \$10 lunch by Cuyler Grange includes Sloppy Joe Sandwich, Macaroni Salad, Green Salad, Beverage, and cookie
- 12:45pm - Third Degree conferred by Ontario County Pomona Grange #11
- 1:30pm - Fourth Degree conferred by Butternut Valley Grange#1533
- 2:15pm - State Officers Close the Grange in the Fourth Degree
- 2:30pm - break - Cupcakes provided by Sesquicentennial Committee;
- 3pm - Fifth Degree conferred by Dutchess County Pomona Grange #32

In order to help make plans for the sandwich lunch please call the New York State Grange Headquarters at 607-756-7553 or email nysgrange@nysgrange.org by September 18 to let them know approximately how many will be attending from your Grange.

“A History of The New York State Grange from 1980-2017” by Carol S. Bailey, Historian New York State Grange has been printed and will be available for purchase on September 30 and October 13-17 at the State Grange Session in Auburn. Books can then be purchased from the NYS Grange Headquarters in Cortland. The book includes two additional sections. One details the history of the NYS Grange from 1973-1989. The other was written by Past State Master William Benson and focuses on the struggles of early Granges in New York State.

The entire Sesquicentennial Committee wishes to thank all those who attended one of our seven Regional 150th Celebrations and made each one a success. The total attendance was over 300. Many cake kits were made up at these celebrations and donated to local food pantries. This was the NYS Grange Community Service Sesquicentennial Project and the State Committee provided the cake pans.

We invite you to the celebrations that will take place at the New York State Grange Session October 13-17 at the Holiday Inn in Auburn. The Sesquicentennial Program at the banquet on Friday October 13 and the special 150th Youth and Junior program on Sunday October 15 will be two of the special 150th events during the State Session.

Sesquicentennial Co-chairs - Roberta Halbert 607-783-2445, Susan Drake 607-264-3069



Sesquicentennial Photos





Washington Overview

Lawmakers in Washington are heading home (and abroad) for their traditional August recess and will return to the nation's capital on September 12. They leave with most of the heavy legislative lifting waiting for action. The majority of the annual appropriations bills are still in committee. The President has threatened to veto the House USDA/FDA appropriations bill if it cuts domestic spending to levels below those agreed upon with Speaker McCarthy in earlier budget negotiations. Xochiti Tores Small, a former congresswoman from New Mexico and the granddaughter of farm workers, has been sworn in as USDA's new deputy secretary. USDA plans to begin hearings in August on the conflicting proposals from milk producers and dairy processors for modifying pricing formulas under the federal milk marketing order system. The New Hampshire "first in the nation" presidential primary season has begun. Former Vice President Mike Pence held a town hall style meeting at the WicWas Lake Grange in Meredith, N.H. Look for President Biden and Vice President Harris to shift into campaign mode focusing on race, rights and the economy while Congress is on recess leaving the press looking for political news. Former President Trump's legal issues and the Biden family's influence peddling allegations are fueling speculation of third-party candidates entering the fray.

Agriculture and Food

USDA Targets Anticompetitive Acts

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has joined 31 states to target price-fixing and other anticompetitive behavior in the food and agriculture sectors. USDA's partnership with the bipartisan group of states attorneys general will focus on antitrust enforcement and concerns about price fixing and gouging.

Foreign Land Ownership Targeted

Senators Chuck Grassley (R-IA) and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) have introduced the Farmland Security Act of 2023 to further boost transparency in foreign ownership of U.S. farmland. The bill would require greater transparency for foreign purchases of U.S. ag land, impose stronger penalties for reporting non-compliance, and mandate USDA to audit a minimum of 10% of foreign land ownership reports annually. Then, just before adjourning for their August recess, the Senate overwhelmingly voted 91-7 to bar investors from China, Russia, North Korea and Iran from buying more than small amounts of U.S. farmland. The measure also adds USDA as an ex officio member of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U. S.

Conservation/Environment

USDA to Improve Greenhouse Gas Emissions Accounting

The agriculture community is applauding USDA's plan to improve greenhouse gas emissions accounting and reporting, including the launch of a national soil carbon monitoring network and updated conservation practice standards. The goal is to improve measurement, monitoring, reporting, and verification of greenhouse gas emissions. Producers support climate policies that are voluntary, market-based, and scientifically sound.

Health Care

Mental Health and Addiction Top the List of Rural Health Concerns

For the last 20 years, health care access has been the biggest concern of rural stakeholders, according to surveys conducted by the

Southwest Rural Health Resource Center. But the latest polling puts mental health as the top rural health issue and addiction ranks number two. Survey participants included health care workers, public administrators, educators and more. Surprisingly, the rankings were the same across all ages, races, occupations and regions of the country. Rounding out the top ten rural health care concerns are access to and quality of health care, weight and obesity, drug and alcohol abuse, nutrition and healthy eating, older adults, preventive care, diabetes, and economic stability. As Grange members have noted, the National Grange has partnered with Jeff Winton's Rural Minds to elevate the rural mental health movement, provide the platform to spotlight personal stories, raise awareness, share best practices, and engage participation and support. Grange members and guests can hear Jeff Winton and his staff at the National Grange convention this November in Niagara Falls, New York. In addition, the National Grange, Rural Minds and New York Farm Net will co-present a moderated panel featuring cross-generational participants from the Silent Generation to GenZ. The three organizations will also present a workshop about rural mental health first aid and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's "Talk Saves Lives" program.

Ag 24-Hour Crisis Helpline Needed

The National Grange is working with Senators Baldwin (D-WI), Ernst (R-IA) and Gillibrand (D-NY) as well as Representatives Caraveo (D-CO-8) and Finstad (R-MN-1) to establish a 24-hour crisis helpline staffed by trained and experienced professionals who come from rural communities or are familiar with Rural, farming and ranching culture. The helpline would be an expansion of the Farm and Ranch Stress Network first authorized in the last farm bill.

Support for Early Cancer Detection

A total of 1,592 letters went from the National Grange headquarters in Washington to members of Congress and their staff members in support of the Medicare Multi-Cancer Early Detection Screening Coverage Act in both the House and Senate. The Act would require Medicare to pay for a new procedure that is capable of detecting many types of cancers with a simple blood draw in the early stages of the cancer's development. In the letters, the Grange referenced its recent survey that found cancer deaths in rural areas are 14% higher than urban areas and late-stage diagnoses of lung and colon cancers are significantly higher in rural communities. Detecting cancer early means more treatment options and higher success rates.

Rural Health Caucus Launched

Representatives Dana Harshbarger (R-TN-1) and Jill Tokuda (D-HI-2) have announced formation of the Congressional Bipartisan Rural Health Caucus. It will provide a forum for members of Congress to advocate for legislation and action that that help increase access to quality, affordable health care and mental health services for all rural residents.

Telecommunications

Prioritize Broadband for Rural West Virginians

The Charleston Gazette-Mail published a letter to the editor from National Grange president Betsy Huber highlighting West Virginia's need for the Broadband Equity and Deployment (BEAD) Program and the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) to finally close the rural digital divide in the state. BEAD supports broadband accessibility and ACP ensures affordability for eligible families with a monthly subsidy. However, funding for the ACP is expected to run out by March 2024 and the National Grange is urging Congress to extend the program in order to reach the 30% of the state's rural households and businesses currently lacking adequate broadband access.

ACP Helps 21st Century Rural Communities Thrive

The Washington newsletter *RealClearPolicy* published an op

(Continued on page 8)

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New Grange Members

**Allegany Co.
Cuba #799**
Chris Jones
Julie Jones

**Chenango Co.
Smithville Valley #1397**
Shentay Eldred
Kayla Pickard

**Cortland Co.
Cuyler #449**
Judi Whittaker
Scott Whittaker

**Dutchess Co.
Stanford #808**
Austin Parsons

Freedom Plains #857
James Smyth

Mt. Hope #902
Roseann Leok
Matthew Ludwig
Gregory Napolitano
Angela Vala

**Essex Co.
Ausable Valley #973**
Andrea Baer
Amy Brelia
Nico Brossar
Mike Carter
Lindsay Eberhart
Mallory Finnegan
Holly Hillyer
Marion Inghish
Benjamin Shankwitz
Courtney Sutton

**Genesee Co.
Elba #783**
Jeanne Covington

**Herkimer Co.
Millers Mills #581**
Alissa Collins
Chad Collins
Kelsey Collins
Stacy Collins

Salisbury Center #624
Elaine Carlin

Jack Carlin
Kevin Dillenbeck
Marianne Dillenbeck
Vicki Hilts
Jeff Lanphere
Joseph Muncey
Lorie Pye
Sarah Sterusky

**Oswego Co.
Mt. Pleasant #349**
Duane Flint
Ricard #993
Rosalie Platt

**Putnam Co.
Putnam Valley #841**
Valerie Smith
William Smith

**Rensselaer Co.
Hoosick #1127**
Wallace Sheffer Jr.

**Saratoga Co.
Corinth #823**
Randy Dollinger
David Lockhart
Terry Towers

**Steuben Co.
Addison #854**
Krystina Booth
Eva Sue Cunningham
Francis Kane
John Lyons
Teresa Lyons
Bill Moore
Marge Smith
Kathy Snedeker

**Ulster Co.
Plattekill #923**
Roseann Bilatti
Gladys Figveroa

**Wayne Co.
Lincoln #122**
Bonnie Sonnevile

**Westchester Co.
Yorktown #862**
Andrew Frederick

**Wyoming Co.
Warsaw #1088**
Linda Kowtrowski
John Kowtrowski

Colonel Harper Grange Delaware County

Jeff Winton spoke on how he lost his nephew to suicide and why he started Rural Minds. He also gave statistics, Rural suicides are 68% higher than urban areas. Also 65% of counties in our country don't have a single psychiatrist. Elaine from Farm Net shared that they have 50 counselors that work with farmers. Mental health is a very private and prideful thing amongst farmers. They provide mental health, financial services etc. She too said it is challenging to find help in our counties. Cathy McKenna worked as a counselor for years in the school system and saw the need for mental health assistance. She started Stamford Wellness in 2022. They now have 10 counselors and are outgrowing their office. We set up displays from all 3 as well as the Grange, for people to mingle and find information. Of course we also had refreshments. With about 40 in attendance, from different counties, schools, ministers, the Grange got information out to the area communities. Plus with Jeff connecting with Cathy that gives them more input.

All in all a successful night!

Photos from Colonel Harper Grange



Beaver Falls Grange Lewis County

On June 1st Beaver Falls Grange #554 honored 3 members with their years of membership certificates. Phyllis Hanno received a 75 year certificate. Rita Carroll received a 65 year certificate. Ralph Williams received a 55 year certificate. All are active members. NYS Grange Special Deputy David Brass made the presentations.



Photo above L to R Ralph Williams, Rita Carroll, Phyllis Hanno and Special Deputy David Brass

~ Paula Turner, NY Coordinator
2023 National Convention
~ Bruce Dehner, Sports

Committee Reports – Delegate Action
5:30pm Closing in the Fourth Degree
7:30pm Seating of State Officers
Speaker: Betsy Huber
National Grange President
Conferring the Sixth Degree
Closing In the Fourth Degree

Sunday, October 15

8:30am Memorial Service
Virginia Conner, Chaplain
9:15am Gerald Eastman Award
9:30am Youth Opening – Fourth Degree
Youth Department Annual Report
Johannah Stewart, Director

Committee Reports – Delegate action
11:30am Recess
1:00pm Reconvene
Junior Department Annual Report
Sherri Taft Horner, Director

Committee Reports – Delegate action
2:00pm Food Drive Presentation
\$1.00 'C' Bill Presentation

Committee Reports – Delegate action
4:30pm Closing in Fourth Degree
5:15pm Museum Board Dinner

Little Falls Room
7:00pm Ice Cream Social, Idea Fair hosted by Onondaga County - Cayuga-Seneca Room
8:00pm Music and Entertainment
Delegate-At-Large Mtg.
Emerson Room

Monday, October 16

8:30am Opening in the Fourth Degree
Appointment of Election Committee
Election of Officers
Election of Museum Directors (2)
Committee Reports Delegate action

11:00am Speaker
Richard A. Ball
NYS Commissioner of Agriculture & Markets

12:00 Noon Recess

1:45pm Reconvene
Committee Reports – Delegate action
5:15pm Recess
7:00pm Reconvene
2023-2024 Budget Approval
Committee reports
Delegate action
Installation of Officers

Closing in the Fourth Degree

Tuesday, October 25

9:00am Opening - Fourth Degree
Conclusion of Business if needed

Closing the 151st State Session of the New York State Grange

HERE WE COME, NIAGARA FALLS!

If you would like to be a part of the historical National Grange Convention at breathtaking Niagara Falls this November, your coach may be waiting for you, eliminating any driving worries.

Roger Halbert, Special Deputy, is conducting a survey to gauge interest in a chartered bus from southern central New York. Proposed are pick-up points at Cobleskill, Oneonta and Cortland and three trip possibilities: (1) a one day trip with no overnight, leaving Saturday, November 18, leaving around 6 a.m. and arrival home around 11 p.m., various times depending on location; (2) two days, one overnight, November 17 and 18; (3) three days, two overnights, November 16, 17, returning on the 18th. The Seventh Degree conferral is Saturday, November 18 at 1 pm. and plans would call for homeward departure around 4 p.m. that day.

The trip is based on a minimum of 25 passengers choosing one of the options above. A decision will be reached no later than August 1. More information and financial details can be obtained from Halbert by reaching him at 607-783-2691 or electronically: rhalbert1@stny.rr.com .

Join us for the celebration of the 157th convention of the National Grange at beautiful Niagara Falls.



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ed by National Grange president Betsy Huber that called upon Congress to finish closing the country's digital divide. In establishing the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), Congress recognized that millions of Americans still face financial challenges to obtaining broadband connectivity. Huber called upon Congress to extend funding for ACP in order to connect hard-to-reach high-cost rural households and businesses across the country.

Of Interest

Commodity Checkoff Opponents Eye Farm Bill

Commodity checkoffs are programs established by agriculture producers and operated under the supervision of USDA that are responsible for promotion and marketing the commodities they represent and for conducting research into the expanded use of those commodities. Checkoff programs can be established or dismantled through producer referendums. These programs have always been tangled in politics. Proponents argue that the research, promotion and marketing efforts they fund are important to keeping producers competitive. Opponents say they question whether the money from mandatory fees producers pay is spent properly. New restrictions on checkoff programs have been proposed in the Opportunities for Fairness in Farming (OFF) Act introduced by Senators Mike Lee (R-UT) and Cory Booker (D-NJ) along with Representatives Nancy Mace (R-SC-1) and Dina Titus (D-NV-1). OFF would prohibit contracting research and promotion work to organizations that lobby Congress or federal agencies, require checkoff programs to publish their budgets, require contracts to describe the goods and services provided, and require periodic audits by the General Accountability Office and USDA's inspector general. Most of the proposed requirements proposed in the OFF Act are covered by current law governing checkoff programs. The exception is the prohibition for checkoff boards to contract research and promotion work to organizations that also lobby Congress or federal agencies. This provision could cause sparks to fly during the upcoming farm bill debate. The 22 current checkoff programs represent a diverse mix of products from blueberries to cotton to milk to Christmas trees and are all funded through mandatory fees paid by the producers of each commodity.

"I have a love affair with tomatoes and corn. I remember them from my childhood. I only had them in the summer. They were extraordinary." ~ Alice Waters

Perspective

"I know my corn plants, and I find it a great pleasure to know them." ~ Barbara McClintock

"I have no hostility to nature, but a child's love to it. I expand and live in the warm day like corn and melons." ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

"The Christian is like the ripening corn, the riper he grows, the more lowly he bows his head." ~ Alfred Bertram Guthrie

The items included in this article from the National Grange Legislative Director Burton Eller. They are part of a publication called "View From The Hill"

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