

THE EMPIRE STATE GRANGER

American Values, Hometown
Roots



Our Vision!

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

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March April 2024

President's Column

Sandra Green



It was great to see many New York Grangers at National Session. A big THANK-YOU goes out to Paula Turner for all she did as our member on the Host Committee. And Thank –You to all NY Grangers who worked on transportation, registration, hospitality room, and all the behind the scene activities that made the session a success. Those attending felt welcomed by NY and all the other North East states.

Over the years, people have sometimes asked, “What does the National Grange do?” I hope all of you who attended National Session in Niagara Falls can now answer that question. Following are some of the answers I give.

One of the most important things National Grange does is advocate for rural America. The legislative personnel at the National Grange talk with members of the Federal Government about possible and current legislation. Everything they say is based on the policies that come from local Granges and are passed on through the Pomona and State Granges and finally at the National Session. And, those in the government are realizing how well the Grange understands people in rural America. They are reaching out to the Grange to learn what people want. Does

that idea you have to improve a law matter? Yes, it does. Bring your ideas to your local Grange. If you need help researching a topic &/or wording a resolution, State Grange is ready to help.

A new program the National Grange is working on is called Reaching Rural Surgical Seniors (RRSS). This is a program to help seniors, and others, prepare for hospital stays, including surgeries. There are suggested questions seniors should ask, a booklet to organize important information, and more. Letters will be coming to local Granges soon. Just sign up and all the materials needed to present this program to your Grange and your community will be sent to you. And, your Grange could qualify for a monetary reward for your efforts.

National Grange also organizes programs for Youth and Juniors. They present Grange in Action, Distinguished Grange, and Community Service Awards. There are several discount offers through the National Grange. Check out www.nationalgrange.org

I hope each of you will make one of your New Year’s resolutions reaching out to someone about the wonderful aspects of Grange that you enjoy.

**That's the
GRANGE way!**



State Grange President Sandra Green and Agriculture Commissioner Ball with members of the Chapter of The Year

Frontline Flash

February 6, 2024

by Christine E. Hamp, National Grange President

It is with mixed emotions that I let you know that I have signed the final paperwork and that our National Grange Headquarters Building at 1616 H Street NW, Washington, D.C. is sold.

The National Grange Executive Committee signed a Purchase and Sale Agreement with 1616 H Street NW LLC, a District of Columbia limited liability company, on January 17, 2024, and the sale closed today, Tuesday, February 6, 2024.

This journey began in November 2021 with the difficult vote to sell our headquarters building. Since that day there have been countless hours spent by many people making sure that we got the best deal possible based on the current economic and real estate conditions.

The sale price was \$10.3 million. After paying off the \$1.3 million left on our mortgage, broker commissions, title and escrow charges, local taxes and fees, and as the prorating of final rent payments, utility bills, and existing service contracts are wrapped up by the Title company over the next few weeks, we have a net \$8.12 million to invest. The investment advisory committee formed per Resolution 203 in 2021 will reengage and get a Request for Proposal (RFP) out as soon as possible to find an advisor to manage our investment funds. Please know that in the meantime the National Grange Executive Committee has opened an account to protect our proceeds in short-term U.S. Government securities. I will keep you informed of our progress as we move forward with the process laid out in Resolution 203.

The Purchase and Sale Agreement requires us to vacate our 11th floor offices and the basement levels in the next 30 days but allows us to remain in our new 1st and 2nd floor spaces free of charge for six (6) months. The National Grange Executive Committee is working to determine our needs and reviewing our options for what to do moving forward once our six (6) months run out.

Past National Grange President Kermit Richardson said it best many years ago – “The Grange does not live at 1616 H Street. The Grange lives in the many communities we serve.” I, and I fervently hope all of you as well, am excited for this next chapter of the National Grange. #GrangeStrong!

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2024 NY FFA Chapter of the Year

Recognizing chapters that are building talent and leadership for the agricultural and food system and contributing to their local communities.

Sponsored by:

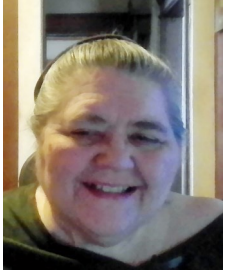


Cattaraugus-Little Valley FFA

New York State Grange sponsors the FFA Chapter of the year. The award is presented each year at the annual meeting of the New York State Agricultural Society. The award is based on the overall activity of the FFA Chapter. This year the winner was the Cattaraugus-Little Valley Chapter. They hosted the district 10 leadership Development event, Sold Strawberries for the fish and wildlife club and attended Albany for the State FFA Leadership Experience to name a few.

**District 10 FFA
Leadership
Development
Event**
Tuesday, February 13th
Judges Meeting: 3:30 PM
Contests Beginning at 4:00 PM
***Students that are competing
MUST be in FFA Official Dress**

Legislative Column



Cindy Benson-Pollard

Winter looks like it is on its way out and spring is just around the corner. Soon we will be seeing the world turn green and flowers start to bloom again. The legislative activity of Grange is also picking up. Are you picking up on the legislative work of your Grange?

I hope that by the time you read this article, you will have received your copy of the new legislative policy handbook. I hope that you will take the time to review our policies for the coming year. You can also find this information on our New York State Grange's website. If you haven't visited the website, I encourage you to take a few minutes to check it out.

Our legislative priorities flyer is available for your use. This flyer is a very good way to let your community know what the Grange is currently advocating for. Please contact the state office and they will send them to you.

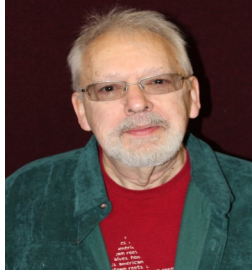
The State Legislature is back in session and is busy starting the new legislative session. Some of the issues that we are currently working on with them include a cap on the cost of insulin for diabetic patients, junk fees and opposing the use of hydrofracking fluids on highways during the winter. These are just a few of the issues that are before the Senate and Assembly currently. Please be sure to contact your local representatives and let them know what the Grange's policies are.

Are you starting to work on your resolutions to be considered at this year's state meeting? Please be sure to get them to me as soon as possible. It helps reduce the last-minute preparations.

I was asked about having the schedule for pre-session committee Zoom meeting schedule available when information is sent out about the upcoming State Grange meeting. I will do the best I can to have that ready for delegates when they choose their committee assignments. Please note that these dates will not be cast in stone. Changes may need to be made as we get closer to State Grange.

If you need help or have any questions, please feel free to contact me. I am always glad to help.

Leadership Membership



Barton Snedaker

What a year! State Grange session followed quickly by National session very close by in Niagara Falls. At our state session, in case you hadn't heard, we elected our first female President/Master. The first in over 150 years. That is quite a milestone. At national level the second female President/Master was elected. Both of these events seem to signal a change in the Grange, in my opinion.

So my topic this edition is exactly that, Change in the Grange. That change can be as simple as electing new officers in your local Grange. It could be the implementation of a new community service program. If you think about it, then any changes you make in your community Grange could be the beginning of changes in The Grange at its higher levels. These changes could begin, and be the reason for, growth of Grange at every level, also.

In a brief but important talk with our new State President, she suggested a relatively new tactic for involvement in the growth we all need in Grange. She succinctly put into words an idea I had which had never totally gelled in my thoughts. Her clear outlook was to develop a group of Grangers who would become the regional outreach contacts across the state. Think of it as Grange Growth Deputies. The Membership/Leadership department will provide printed materials and other resources for this project. There are still details to work out, but if you are interested in the idea please let me know. You are the ones who know best where and when you could be of service.

Changing horses in mid-stream, or so it seems. While at the national session I found a printout that really caught my eye. I don't know who produced it or where it came from. It is about the language/words in our degree work. I, for one, really like the imagery and use of the English language which makes up the four degrees and meeting ritual. You know how much I believe words matter. If you have younger Grangers in your fold you may want to talk with them about this. They may find some of the language less than understandable. Remember that the degrees were written in the late 1800s and used the words which were then current. That is no longer the case. The suggestion on this printout is that the

Grange undertake a long term, extensive review of the outdated and archaic terms. In order to bring the Grange into the 21st century this may be absolutely necessary. Maybe you can, within your own Grange, start looking at some of this language. I may be re-committing Grange heresy by suggesting this. Look through your manuals and discuss with your younger members what changes they would suggest be made. The paper ends by saying- "History does not need to be lost, but we must evolve."

Some of the suggested word changes were: admonition/warning, ariseth/arises, consisteth/consists, delusive/misleading, garnered/gather, intercourse/communication, possesseth/has or possesses, slothful/lazy. I'm sure there will be more if you look. Good luck.

Community Involvement



Melvin Phelps

I hope everyone is staying warm and cozy this winter. I know it always seems to be so long but I feel like it makes us appreciate spring when it arrives. As you work your way through the winter season now is the perfect time to start planning your Grange's next Community Project. To help with this there are some resources on the NYS Grange website to make this easier. I would encourage you to take a look and print off some of these and use them. These resources were not available to be printed in the handbook that was available at state session, so make sure you check them out.

Here is a summary of what is available on the website.

2024-2025 Community Service Handbook – this is what was printed and available at state session in part of the complete handbook for all departments. This includes changes to the program, do's and don'ts and deadlines.

Project Planning Guide – this was developed as a form to fill out as you carry out your projects. It includes a space for keeping track of dates, responsibilities and outcomes/impacts of your projects. I would encourage you to use these and include them in your yearbook with each activity.

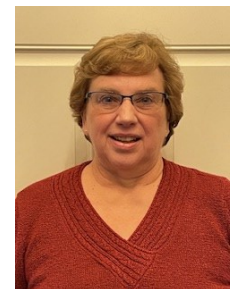
Volunteer Service Hours Report – This form was designed to print and give to your Grange Members so they can keep track

of their hours of community service. They can hang it on the fridge at home and record all the good things they are doing in their community in the name of the Grange. You can then collect them as you complete your report and work on your yearbook to answer that difficult question of how many grangers helped and how many hours. Maybe you even print them off and keep them in a binder at your grange hall and record for them as they participate.

Annual Report – This is the form that is due to me by September 15th and **every Grange should be filling it out.** These are no longer judged but instead a way for us to track our state accomplishments. Take a look at this and record your activities as they happen. It is easier to keep this up dated through out the year as opposed to trying to remember everything you did on September 1st.

All of these forms are saved on the website as a PDF file for easy printing and you can even type right into the form and print when completed. As always keep planning and feel free to reach out to me with questions, suggestions or concerns.

Lecturer



Brenda Noble

The Lecturer and Family Activities Conference will be held Saturday April 27th, 2024 at New York State Grange Headquarters. Please have art and photo contest items to State Grange Headquarters by April 15th. The talent contest will have 3 categories: Instrumental (solo or group); Vocal (solo or group); Skit/Variety/Dance (solo or group). There will NOT be a theme for talent contest entries as previously stated in the Lecturer Program Book for 2024-2025. The time limit is **5 minutes** as this has been a requirement for entries in the Evening of Excellence at National Grange. Please let me know by April 15th if you are participating in the Talent Contest. When entering the contests please label entries with Name, Address, County, Grange, and age of the entrant (this is important in determining Division of entry). If you plan to enter the Public Speaking Contest, please contact Johannah Stewart, New York State Grange Youth Director.

The Northeast Lecturers Association will have a Lecturers Conference in June 21-23, 2024. Friday evening will start with a program where each state wears their state colors and marches in

together. New York State's color is pink. Then we will have fun games to get to know each other. There will be a total of six innovative workshops throughout the weekend. On Saturday evening there will be a banquet with each state providing a 10-minute skit or entertainment. The conference will be held at the Holiday Inn in Norwich, CT. Hotel rooms are \$129/night. There will be a discount for early registration, and registration forms will be out soon with more details. For the Banquet on Saturday night the choices: Bourbon Pork, Cheese Ravioli, or Filet of Sole with Seafood Stuffing. With registration you will receive a book of Programs from each state based on the theme: "7 Strong" for the seven Northeast states.

The National Grange Lecturer has posted updated programs to the National Grange website. The Quilt Block for 2024 is Split Back Star. You can send as many as you want, but only one is designated for judging. There is also the Virtual Photo Contest, Garden Design Contest, Weather Watcher Challenge, and a Design-A-Program Contest. All the contests are submitted virtually except for the Quilt Block, and all contests have a submission deadline of September 1, 2024. The National Grange also continues the partnership with the Quilts of Valor.

We are looking forward to receiving your contest entries and seeing you all in April!

State Grange Historian

Carol Bailey



DID YOU KNOW...

That there are lots of things that can be preserved around and in your hall or meeting place? Many of these items and suggestions pertain to your home as well.

Around your hall or meeting place are several things you can do to preserve it. Many I know are hot in summer and cold in winter. If you can afford to it is good to keep the temperature in the sixties with a humidity of 30 to 40 percent. Keep your building in good repair. Take care of little problems before they become big ones. It should be handicap accessible.

Plant bushes and flowers to beautify the edifice. Have a cleaning schedule to wash windows and paint if necessary.

If yours is a historic structure and/or a long time Grange hall, think about obtaining a historic marker. Your town historian can answer questions and give you information.

Moving inside there is furniture that needs attention. Dust and oil it as needed. Keep appliances in good working order. Wash dishes after use. If not used on a regular basis cover dishes with newspaper or cloth to keep dust off. If you have any wall hangings wash or dust which ever is appropriate. Clean floors and wash curtains as needed.

You may wonder what this has to do with preservation but keeping buildings in good repair and everything neat and clean helps to preserve them.

Now let's talk about artifacts within the building. Your sashes and station cloths should be stored in a cool dry space and out of sunlight. Brush or shake the dust off.

Bibles and books should be stored out of the sun and away from dust.

Wall hangings such as photos, paintings, posters and certificates need special attention. They should be framed with acid free material and ultraviolet light protection. PLEASE LABEL PHOTOS with names, dates and any pertinent information with an acid free pen. Label any other items with important information also. Other photos that might be handled place in sheet protectors. Acid free archival boxes or totes can be used for storage.

Cloth items like quilts or banners should be displayed flat or hung with a rod sleeve sewn on the back for display. Presentation pieces like plaques or plates need to be washed or dusted. Display on a shelf or in a cabinet.

It is important to where white cotton gloves when handling many of these items so body oils are not left on them. Use mild soap and warm water when washing many of these items and then air dry.

Now down to those innumerable minutes that every Grange has. They should NOT BE KEPT IN THE SECRETARY OR OTHER MEMBERS' HOUSES. In a house they are in danger of fire or water damage. If the person dies, they may hard to retrieve.

Do not use clips or pins on the pages. Keep old minutes in acid free totes and store in a cool dry space. A large safe will protect them but most halls do not have one.

I advise scanning or copying the first year's records and any other of great importance. Important ones might include buying or selling a hall, a notable community service or other milestone. Also copy any that are beginning to fade.

When a Grange closes the minutes go to State Grange and then to the Olin Library at Cornell University for preservation.

This was a talk I gave at Jefferson County Pomona Grange and it was suggested there that I use it for a column.

Noted architect Robert A. M. Stern said "The power of the past holds over us all, as standard setter for the present and signpost for the future."

Chaplain's Corner



Virginia L. Conner

RITUAL and SCRIPTURE

As you do the Grange ritual work ie: opening, closing, Degrees, installation of officers etc., have you ever come across a phrase that sounds very familiar and think: "seems like I have seen that in the Bible"?

Well you have thought correctly. Just recently I was reading Psalm 139 and verses 11 and 12 were very familiar. They were about darkness and light. Aha, yes I had just recited them in the Sixth Degree Chaplain's prayer at State Grange Session in Auburn and again at National Grange Convention in Niagara Falls.

Somehow when you see God's Word in our Grange Manuals, our ritual takes on increased meaning. It also reveals how closely our Grange Founders were to their spiritual belief and into the reading of the Bible.

May I suggest a winter activity. During the long, cold, dark, snowy days/evenings of the winter months, to sit in your favorite comfy, cozy chair with a cup of your favorite hot beverage, your Bible with a concordance and a Grange Manual. I have taken an old outdated Grange Manual and written the scripture references beside the speaking parts in the Manual. You'll be amazed how many you will find.

May Blessings be bountiful and Peace be plentiful as we enter into 2024.



Junior Grange

Sherri Taft



I had the opportunity to spend time with Junior Grange members from several states while at the National Grange Session in Niagara Falls. The three Junior Grange Ambassadors that were running for National Junior Grange Ambassador each gave a presentation about corn and had a craft related to corn for the Junior Grangers to work on together. Corn is the Agricultural Awareness project for April - June 2024. Congratulations to Gale Reburn of Pennsylvania on being named the National Junior Grange Ambassador for the upcoming year.

Now is the time to think about the Public Speaking and Sign-a-song competitions. The three categories for Public Speaking are - Impromptu, Short story and Prepared. For the Impromptu speech, the contestant will draw three topics from a mystery bag and select one of the topics to give a speech on. The Short story may present a published short story or poem of their choosing. The time limit is one to three minutes for the Impromptu and the Short story categories. The prepared speech is to be three to five minutes long and must be on one of the following topics: How I can be the difference in my community; What makes a good leader; Why the Junior Grange is important to me; How/why is becoming a young advocate an important step for my future. The first place winner in the Short Story and Prepared speeches will be able to represent New York State Grange at the National Grange Session in November 2024.

The sign-a-song competition is for Junior Grange members aged 5 - 14. The categories are Novice, Hobbyist and Group. The contestants are judged on communication, expression and overall presentation. The sign-a-song winner at the State Talent Day will represent New York State at the National Grange Convention and will be judged during the contest time. The winners will be announced during the Grange Night of Honors and the Best of Show winner will present their sign-a-song that evening.

The Talent Contest will be held on Saturday, April 27, 2024 at the New York State Grange Headquarters in Cortland. Junior Grange members are encouraged to participate in the talent contest. The age groups are ages 5 - 9 and ages 10 - 14 (age as of January 1, 2024). The talent contest categories are

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3) Junior Grange

instrumental (solo and group), Vocal (solo and group), skit/variety/dance. If you are interested in participating in the State Grange Talent Contest, please let the New York State Grange Lecturer, Brenda Noble, know by April 15, 2024. I look forward to seeing many Junior Grange members showing off their talents!

There are many activities for our Junior Grange members to do to keep them busy. The National Junior Grange Program Book can be found at www.nationalgrange.org under the Junior Grange tab. This book has information about all of the Junior Grange programs for 2024. The New York State Grange handbook can be found at www.nysgrange.org under the Junior Grange tab. This has information about the Junior Grange program, the 1+ program, activities and the crafts for 2024 and 2025. If you have any questions about the New York State Grange handbook, feel free to reach out to me and I will answer your questions.

State Grange Secretary



Ryan Orton

I've received many e-mails and calls regarding the New York State Grange Cultural & Educational Foundation. This 501(c)(3) branch of the New York State Grange can serve as a go-between for local Granges to receive grants for such things as Grange Hall improvements. As many grants must go to or through a 501(c)(3) organization, this is the perfect way to receive any grants.

However, I'm not the person to contact. While I am the Secretary of the New York State Grange, the Cultural & Educational Foundation has their own set of Officers with Past State Master Bruce Croucher as President and Jo Downey of Albany County as Secretary. These are the kind folks you want to be in touch with regarding any questions or inquiries for grants for your Grange. Here's their contact information:

Bruce M. Croucher - croubr@ottcmail.com

Jo Downey - josiedee7a@gmail.com

2024 is a big year for 12 Granges as they will celebrate their 150th Anniversary! One Grange will also celebrate their 125th Anniversary! I hope each Grange that achieves a milestone anniversary such as these will plan a community celebration to recognize your accomplishments and invite people to join your Grange to begin the march for another 125 or 150 years of service! These Granges are:

- 150th Anniversary (Organized in 1874):
 - Seneca Grange #44 (Seneca County)
 - North Barton Grange #45 (Tioga County)
 - Eureka Grange #46 (Wayne County)
 - South Rutland Valley Grange #53 (Jefferson County)
 - Ripley Grange #65 (Chautauqua County)
 - Lincoln Grange #122 (Wayne County)
 - Sandy Creek Grange #127 (Oswego County)
 - Bethlehem Grange #137 (Albany County)
 - Corfu Grange #142 (Genesee County)

- Interlaken Grange #160 (Seneca County)
- Bergen Grange #163 (Genesee County)
- Lodi Grange #213 (Seneca County)
- 125th Anniversary (Organized in 1899):
 - Oak Grove Grange #873 (Dutchess County)

I was very pleased to report an approximate ~60 member NET GAIN in membership for New York for the September 2023 Quarter! Congratulations to each Grange that took in new members during the summer and early fall to help us achieve this net gain! This has been a goal we've wanted to achieve for quite some time now, and we finally scored this goal!

Congratulations to the following Granges for taking in new members since the last ESG:

- +39 New Members: Susquehanna Valley Grange #1552 (Broome County) They're now officially revitalized, and they've hit the ground running!
- +18 New Members: Copake Grange #935 (Columbia County)
- +7 New Members: Ausable Valley Grange #973 (Essex/Clinton County)
- +4 New Members: Freedom Plains Grange #857 (Dutchess County)
- +3 New Members: Bethlehem Grange #137 (Albany County)
- +2 New Members: Colonel Harper Grange #1508 (Delaware County) – Associate Members
- Owahgena Grange #1358 (Madison County)
- Eureka Grange #46 (Wayne County)
- +1 New Member: Fredonia Grange #1 (Chautauqua County)
- Albright Grange #440 (Cortland County)
- Stanford Grange #808 (Dutchess County)
- Star Grange #9 (Jefferson County)
- Champion Grange #18 (Jefferson County)
- North Cameron Grange #355 (Steuben County)

Youth



Co-Directors

Johannah Stewart & Sarah Barber

Happy New Year Grangers!!!! I am excited to announce that I, Sarah Barber, Former NYS

Grange Pomona, am now the Co-Youth Director! I am so excited to work with Johannah and our youth committee to grow our department and enrich the lives of our youth. Over the next year, one of the things we are going to focus on is the Legislative process that Grange is founded on and encourage our youth to get more involved writing resolutions on the issues they are passionate about.

NYS Grange Youth have an amazing opportunity to participate in the legislative process of our government. For years they have been offered the opportunity to travel to Albany and meet with our governmental representatives through a program called the Robert A. Earlandt Memorial Award. This award was created to honor the memory of Robert A. Earlandt of Wayne County. Brother Earlandt was a strong supporter of Grange Youth and also keenly interested in the Legislative work of the Grange. It was his wish that the monies donated in his memory be given to the New York State Grange Youth Department. The Youth Department decided that an award in his name be created to allow the youth to learn firsthand the Legislative work on the Grange and of New York State Government.

Each year, one young man and young woman will be chosen from applications submitted to visit the New York State Legislature in Albany to meet with their local Senators and Assemblymen, visit and be recognized on the Assembly Floor, and take a tour of the New York State Capitol Building. They will also receive a special plaque at the Annual Session of the New York State Grange.

The requirements are as follows:

- The youth member must have an interest in Legislation, be active in school and community activities, and have a desire to learn more about Legislation.
- Send a resume of the Youth member they feel is deserving (or, if suggesting self, send your own resume).
- Applications are due to the director (s) by September 1st.
- Winners will be announced during the Opening of the New York State Grange Session on Sunday during the Youth program.

As a past winner of this Program myself I highly recommend that your Grange think about the youth members you may know and submit an application recommending them for this award. The application can be found in the Youth Handbook on the NYS Grange Website.

I look forward to the coming year and all the ways we can encourage our youth to realize their full potential and grow our department.

Our next Youth event will be

(Continued on page 6)

SUPPORT

JUNIOR

GRANGE



New Grange Members

Albany Co.

Bethlehem Grange #137

Donna Biscone

Lisa Janiche

Dorothy Starr

Allegany Co.

Almond #1102

Katelynn Roulo

Teresa McMahon

Broome Co.

Susquehanna Valley #1552

Ed Arnold

Shauna Asson

Morris Atwell

David Ballard

Mary Ballard

Fran Barrett

Fred Barret

Beverly Bills

Jay Bills

Ryan Glovich

Carlton Gordon

Heather Gordon

Alan Hupman

Cathy Hupman

Gary Hupman

Harry Hupman

Mary Hupman

Jenabay Hupman

Sara Hupman

Jeffery Mcaughlic

Andre Moore

Bob Mulcahy

Myreta Mulcahy

Aaron Price

Carolyn Price

Dan Price

Bernie Rosellen

Carole Sabatine

Paul Sabatine

Judith Salton

Janella Smith

Chuck Spickerman

Ann Underwood

Doug Worden

Jeness Worden

Columbia Co.

Copake #935

Margaret Avenia

Marrion Batty

Les Baum

Lisa Binder

Mary Ann Carrick

David Craw

Joyce Craw

Linda Dohphin

Lori Drumm

Phyllis Ehrlich

Jim Germain

Amelia Harnish

Susan Krim

Maria Iorillo

Deborah Macheski

Hannah Mandel

Dorothy Nowack

Stephanie Rabin

Emily Rubin

Joe Rutkowski

Andy Scaccina

Franny Sobel

Rob Solomon

Tom Zimmerman

Delaware Co.

Colonel Harper #1508

Dale Orcutt

Robert Orcutt

Dutchess Co.

Stanford #808

Kaylee Cassinelli

Evan Curtis

James Griffin

Charlotte Murphy

Rhinebeck #896

Sarah Baldwin

Georgeta Penepent

Erie Co.

Hamburg #1293

Matthew Agle

Essex Co.

Ausable Valley #973

Tracey Barber

Bruce Bourgeois

Cindy Bourgeois

Maggie Carter

Susan Loomans

Charles Smithson

Sally Smithson

John Sokol

Fulton Co.

Mayfield #683

Charles Becker

Dorene Wilcox

Peter Wilcox

Genesee Co.

East Pembroke #1157

Corey Feary

Jessica Winstel

Jefferson Co.

South Rutland Valley #53

Wyatt Phelps

Oneida Co.

Floyd #665

Gaye West

Pleasant Valley #1453

Mike Zombek

Saratoga Co.

Milton #685

Mary Albers

Melissa Bell

Megan DeMeo

Melissa Camp

Julie Chandler

Michael Clegg

Kathleen Coleman

Alexa Collesides

George DeGaspard

Victoria Fowler

Janice French

Stephen Galish

Gerffrey Hoffman

Lisa Kastberg

Ambar Khan

Andre Lockhart

Michelle Lanne

Camille Marshall

Melanie McDonald

James McLagan

Nancy O'Brien

Oksana O'Reilly

Darlene Partlow

Rhonda Poirier

Elizabeth Posson

Paula Pritchard

Kate Schwartz

Tina Sheppard

Stephanie Sikorski

Anna Smith

Lori Soderlind

Ravi Sood

Larry Woolbright

Jane Zalsky

Wayne Co.

Rose # 1051

William Kline

Now is the time!!!!

Across the country states are achieving a net gain in membership. Many have made this goal repeatedly in the last few years. New York State is within easy reach of a net gain in membership it will only take each Grange in the state to gain one new member.

(Continued from page 4) Youth

April 12-14, 2024
 Hosted by Addison Grange and
 Steuben County Pomona
 Grange
 The Y at Watson Woods
 9620 Dry Run Road,
 Painted Post, NY 14870
 We hope to see you there!

**Patrons Agricultural and Consumers
 Co-op (PACC)**

Guest Columnist, Richard Church

After 60 years serving Grange farmer/members, PACC has ended its service by leaving funds to communities served. Following is a historical perspective.

(Establishment of PACC as reported in the 1973 NYS Grange History by Ray Alexander) "Patrons Agricultural and Consumers Co-op was organized in Tompkins County in 1963 for the benefit of Grange members. It was recognized by the State Grange Executive Committee in 1965 as an independent cooperative, and sustained by the Delegate Body in the October 1965 State Session. It was also incorporated.

The purpose of this cooperative is to offer a service to Grange members whereby they might purchase farm supplies at a discount. A lifetime membership fee of \$5.00 is charged. Allan K LaMotte, Freeville, NY is the President, and prime promoter. Other officers are Charles Miller, Vice President; Richard Church, Secretary; Mrs. Gertrude Miller, Treasurer; Howard Finewood, Assistant Treasurer; Robert Wright, Kenneth Miller, Marinus Michaelson, and Robert Newton.

Presently there are about 150 members, and it is growing. Membership is concentrated in central New York, in Tompkins, Wayne, Ontario, and Allegany Counties. Purchases are by cash payment, mostly for twine, fertilizer, seeds and farm chemicals. Volume is increasing and has nearly reached the \$150,000 mark. There is no central warehouse, thus eliminating that overhead.

It is hoped that this may be coordinated with Purchase Power to the mutual benefit of all Grangers."

Over the years, the Annual Meeting was held at Bob and Ruth's Restaurant in Naples on the second Friday of April. Over the 60 years, only 3 persons served as President starting with Allan LaMotte, Robert Place, Ontario, NY, and James Wilcox, Almond, NY. Marjorie Place followed Richard Church as Secretary, and eventually as Secretary/Treasurer. After many years, Marjorie was replaced by Patricia Mohr, Webster, NY.

As farms merged, and less larger farmers were Grangers,

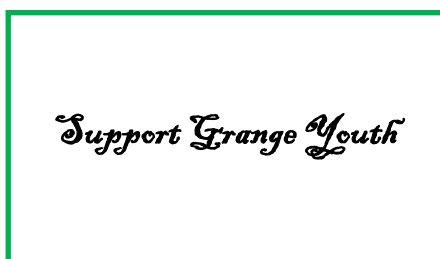
sales declined. Following the illness and passing of James Wilcox (12/6/2019), no one was available to take over the role of President. Following a few years of inactivity, the Board of Directors voted to close PACC, and divide up the remaining funds by donating funds to the Fire Departments/Rescue Squads of the original founders, past presidents, and other directors; specifically, Dryden, McLean, Lincoln, Walworth, Almond, Angelica, and W. Walworth. These donations have been received with much appreciation and gratitude.

Richard Church, was Past Secretary and longtime Director.

**National Grange adopts
 new Mission Statement**

The 2024 edition of the National Grange Leaders' Conference is a wrap. Over 80 participants traveled to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, and a handful of others participated via Zoom. The agenda focused on strategic planning, team building, and the future, and included many workshops in what I'm calling the "Toolbox Series" – critical topics and skills that attendees are encouraged to take back to their states to teach and to share. Please contact your State Grange President to ask how you and your Grange can receive the information.

One outcome of the conference is the adoption of an updated Mission Statement for the National Grange – "Strengthening individuals, families and communities through service, education, nonpartisan grassroots advocacy and agricultural awareness."



**That's the
 GRANGE way!**

The National Grange is pleased to announce the recognition of National Grange News Corner. Each family will receive a certificate and be featured in the National Convention. The deadline for nominations is September 10, 2024 and should be sent to the

The Senate and House returned this week from their two-week Presidents Day recess with a government shutdown staring them in the face. The first deadline is Friday, March 1 when funding runs out for USDA, FDA, Energy, Transportation, HUD and Military Construction. The remaining agencies' deadline is March 8. There was a high-level pow wow at the White House Tuesday between President Biden, Vice President Harris, Senate Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, House Speaker Johnson and Minority Leader Jefferies. The meeting, reportedly intense at times, apparently produced some negotiating options for Friday to prevent shutdown. The Congressional leaders announced an agreement on Wednesday to prevent a shutdown by giving themselves until March 8 to pass appropriations bills to cover the above agencies. After more presidential primaries this week, it continues to appear President Biden and former President Trump will each skate to their party nomination. Senate Minority Leader, Mitch McConnell (R-KY) announced he will step down from that position in November. A recent Gallup poll found the top issue facing the country according to respondents is immigration, saying that "large numbers of immigrants entering the United States illegally" is a critical threat to U.S. vital interests. Don't look for farm bill negotiations to go anywhere soon. The Senate and House ag committees are still far apart on several major issues. As well, some political strategists from both parties recommend waiting until after elections this fall to seriously address the farm bill. Increasingly heard around Washington ... "Sky-high cost of food is eating our paychecks." The best news is that cherry blossoms are just a month away.

Fewer Farms, Older Producers

The agriculture census just released by USDA shows both the number of farms and the number of farm acres have fallen significantly from 2017 to 2022. The number of farms fell 7% over the five years, while the average age of farmers and ranchers rose slightly to 58.1 years. The amount of farmland fell from 900 million acres to 880 million, a loss of more than 20 million acres. The number of dairy operations fell 39%, beef cattle operations fell 21%, big hog operations declined slightly, while big chicken operations grew from 7,211 to 7,406.

Beef Chicken and Pork Producers Advocate for Clear "Fake" Meat Labels

Legislation has been introduced to require the use of "imitation" or similar terminology on labels of plant-based meat and meat alternatives. A bipartisan, bicameral group of legislators on the Hill introduced the FAIR Labels Act in both the House and Senate. The Act is intended to clearly differentiate between real meat, plant-based meat and lab-grown products so consumers can clearly understand the difference at the retail counter.

USDA Equity Commission Reports

Over the past three years, members of the USDA Equity Commission met regularly to examine how changes to USDA programs, policies, systems and practices can help lift barriers to inclusion or access, and address systemic discrimination or racial, economic, health and social disparities. The Commission's recommendations include commodity program reforms, more equitable delivery of all USDA programs, farm worker access to USDA food and nutrition programs, and increased funding for 1890's institutions and Tribal extension programs.

Support for Wildlife Services

The National Grange joined over 250 national and state organizations in urging Congress fully fund the Wildlife Services division at USDA. Wildlife causes more than \$12.8 billion in damage to natural resources, public infrastructure, private property, and agriculture. Wildlife Services works to prevent, minimize or manage this damage and to protect human health and safety from conflicts with wildlife.

Push for Early Cancer Detection

The National Grange sent letters of appreciation to the Senate and House sponsors of the Nancy Gardner Sewell Medicare Multi-Cancer Early Detection Screening Coverage Act (S. 2085 and H.R. 2407). The Grange stressed a recent study it conducted that pointed out the cancer disparities in rural America and the need for Medicare to cover new screening tests that can detect dozens of cancers in their early stages with a simple blood draw. The Grange then sent the study and its findings to 126 congressional leaders and staff with jurisdiction over the two bills and urged passage of the

Financial Aid available from New York State Grange

The following are Financial Aid opportunities for members of the Grange:

- DeNise Agriculture Scholarship is available to Grange, FFA and 4-H members who are pursuing a career in an agriculture related field
- The June Gill Nursing Scholarship - trust established by a Grange member for Grangers pursuing a career in nursing
- The Caroline Kark Award—trust fund established by Grange for Grangers interested in a career in working with deaf or hearing impaired people
- Susan Freestone Award—established for Junior Grangers seeking higher education in New York State
- Grange Student Loan Fund—established for Grange members as college financial aid. Low interest loans to be repaid after graduation.
- Cornell Grange Scholarship is granted through Cornell University based on determined financial need.. This scholarship was started with a grant from the New York State Grange. Forward letter of request to New York State Grange Office by June 1st (see page 4 for address)

Applications for all awards are available from the New York State Grange Headquarters.

Application Deadline is April 15

National Grange Session Niagara Falls

New National Youth Team Ready to Work



This year's team will consist of Gayle Reyburn (PA) - Junior Ambassador; Garrett Phelps (NY) and Asheton Medlin (NC) - Youth Ambassadors; and Ashley Holloman (NC) - Outstanding Young Patron. They will work closely with one another promoting the Junior and Youth Departments at the National Grange, in tandem with National Grange Junior & Youth Director Samantha Wilkins.

Gayle Reyburn, 14, is currently the Pennsylvania State Junior Grange Ambassador. She is one of seven siblings, and has been involved in the Grange "since birth." She is a member of Russellville Junior Grange #550. She is a freshman in high school, and an active team member in gymnastics, 4-H, band, musicals, and her church junior youth group.

Reyburn says she is excited to represent the National Junior Grange and hopes to help bring Junior Grangers together more. "More get-togethers for the Juniors in the nation would be nice," she says. "I feel like the only time the Juniors see each other is at Nationals."

She wants Junior Grangers to get involved more, too, "I would tell the Juniors to do a lot of the contests... then also to stay active and go to the meetings, build good relationships with other Juniors, and have fun and not go away when they get to their high school years." One of her goals is to help bridge the gap between the Junior Grange and the Community Grange.

Garrett Phelps is a member of South Rutland Grange #53 in New York. He is enthusiastic about the Grange and its future. In the Grange, he is active in his Community and Pomona Granges, and has been serving as the New York State Grange Youth Ambassador.

A senior in high school, Phelps is active in FFA, 4-H, Jefferson County Junior Holstein Club, and Student Council, and is a member of his varsity swim and tennis teams.

Phelps says his big focus is "connectivity." He says he has a strong desire to connect and communicate with other local youth organizations at the high school and middle school levels.

"Family, meals, history, compassion and tradition - they are all connected," says Phelps. He wants to highlight how each of these things can connect our Grangers to one another to keep the traditions alive.

Phelps' father, Melvin, is incredibly proud of his son, "I think it's absolutely amazing. Anything students can do makes organizations better," he said.

The other half of the Youth Ambassador team is Asheton Medlin, a member of Bushy Fork Grange #1093 in North Carolina. She's a Junior at UNC-Chapel Hill where she is studying biology to become a veterinarian.

Medlin has been a Grange member since she was 8 years old and first attended North Carolina's State Grange camp; now, she is heavily involved in her local, county, and State Granges. In addition to her Grange work, she is a volunteer at the Orange County Animal Shelter, a member of the UNC Helping Paws and Pre-Vet Clubs, and plays intramural sand volleyball and soccer.

Medlin hopes to tackle challenges that stem from the 2020 COVID pandemic. She feels that "many youths do not want to go out and do things, especially if they do not have friends there with them," and, like Phelps, hopes to connect with groups like the FFA. "In-person outreach is more effective than consistent social media posts," she said.

The final member of the four-person Youth Leadership Team is Ashley Holloman, who was selected as Outstanding Young Patron. Holloman is a 14-year member of Southern Wake Grange #1295 in North Carolina. She and her husband Chad live on the family farm in Micro.

Holloman earned her Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Education and has been teaching for a decade, while also serving as an FFA advisor at Corinth Holders High School. She aims to create a happy, safe, and fun classroom by listening, learning, teaching, and loving.

She and her husband own and operate H&P Farms, where they raise cattle, sheep, and goats, and are co-leaders of the Batten Farm 4-H Club.

Holloman looks forward to having the opportunity to represent North Carolina and the National Grange while networking with Grange members from across the country.

"This role will give me the opportunity to see the Grange from a new perspective and to help inspire Grangers to look toward the future of their Grange," Holloman said. She believes that the National Grange could rebrand programming to get Community and Pomona Granges excited to encourage their younger members to get involved.

Congratulations to these four incredible young members. To invite them to be a part of your Grange events, please contact National Grange Junior and Youth Director Samantha Wilkins at samantha@nationalgrange.org.

Legacy Families

Grange Legacy Families are those Families with five or more generations of Grangers. With 6 generations of Grangers, the Curtis Family (NY), Wainwright Family (NJ), and Yandow Family (VT) received recognition, while Croucher-Smith Family (NY), King Family (MA), Roberts-Weiland Family (WA), Pickering Family (NY), Walker-Vonada-Anzueto Family (PA), Walters-Houser-Scharf/Keen (PA), Walters-Vonada-Anzueto (PA) were

recognized for having 5 generations of Grange members.

Photo : Croucher—Smith Family , Clifton Springs, NY Master Huber, Karin, Bruce, Chris Hamp and Sharon



Conti. On page 8

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Wayne County

Carol S. Bailey, historian for NYS Grange, was asked to speak at the Lyons FFA. They were interested in the significance of agriculture to the degrees in Grange. Jeremiah Wigfield who had received the sev-



enth degree in Niagara Falls had spoken about the degree and the advisor and the members were curious. Also at that time Jeremiah received his blue jacket. He is the great grandson of Carol. His mother was present also. Carol was also presented a FFA T-shirt for her continued support of the FFA in Lyons. Snacks were enjoyed by all.

Eureka and Newark Granges hosted their annual Christmas party in mid December. About fifty were present for the pancake supper and program that followed. Four Juniors did a Christmas skit about a mouse. A musical solo played by a youth member was enjoyed by all. Everyone joined in singing several carols accompanied by Jane Milem on the piano. Santa Claus found time in his busy day at the North Pole to come and visit us. He had gifts for the children in his pack so the children were so excited. Adults enjoyed a gift exchange before venturing home. Santa is a Grange member at Eureka.



BY MEAGAN McDonald
Communication Fellow
Rural Minds and the National Grange are excited to announce the launch of the "Rural Mental Health Resilience" program. This program, a collection of resources for local Grange use, is a direct response to the mental health crisis in rural America. The epidemic touches all Grangers and the communities where they live.

Thursday afternoon's session featured a panel discussion led by Jeff Winton, the founder of Rural Minds. Travis Carlson, writer and Emmy award-winning independent filmmaker, and Becky Wiseman, LCSW-R, Family Consultant Case Supervisor for Cornell University's NY FarmNet Program joined Mr. Winton for a presentation and discussion of Mother's Day. Mother's Day is an independent film written and directed by Carlson. This award-winning film is a "one-shot" feature film based on his own experience with his mother's mental illness. The discussion used clips of the film shown throughout the presentation and Carlson's life with his mother during her mental health crisis. Carlson expressed, "Hollywood has not done a good job of representing rural communities... or their mental health challenges." His passion for telling this story and helping to end the stigma and shame around mental illness in rural communities

came across clearly when telling his mother's story. Wiseman further expounded on the shame aspect in these communities by relaying a story about needing to meet farmers seeking mental health treatment in firehouses because of the stigma they felt about meeting at the mental health clinic. Their worry about people in their community knowing they sought mental health treatment sometimes keeps them from getting the help they need.

After this presentation concluded, the conversation moved to a more intimate setting, and four Grangers, ranging generationally from "Baby Boomer" to Gen "Z", joined the panel to discuss mental health in their communities and local Granges. They began relaying their own experiences with mental health issues and stigma, then moving to questions and discussion from the audience. The common theme among all is the lack of communication and openness about mental health issues within their own families. A call to "break the cycle," of this stigma and lack of mental health awareness was amplified by moderator, Pete Pompper, National Grange Community Service Director. Panelists also indicated that they had seen a desperate difference" in the youth since the COVID-19 pandemic. The majority of the discussion centered around youth and young adult's

National Grange Session cont.



Opal Sprague, 91 (center), received a National Grange Connector Award for her work on connecting with media and learning skills while her Grange presented a rural mental health program. Photo by Lindsay Schroeder

Sports

Director
Bruce Dehner



your teams organized. I will advise teams of the entry fee as soon as available. I would love to have more teams participate. It will be held at state headquarters. Bowling is the second event, June 1st at Cort Lanes in Cortland. Get a team together and join the fun! You don't have to be a good bowler, it's all about having a day of good Grange fellowship, not skill. I look forward to seeing everyone and hoping for warmer weather ahead.

We will be holding our first sports event of the year, the Dart Ball tournament, on April 28th. Please get

abilities in dealing with mental health issues, how to support youth as an adult within the Grange, and the need for mentorship and intergenerational communication, specifically surrounding mental health issues.

How, as the Grange can we move the needle on this mental health crisis? Chuck Strand, Executive Director of Rural Minds, said Granges are the network to reach rural America." We are the trusted voice in our communities. The opportunity is now available for each local Grange to become a resource for their community on mental health issues.

Agricultural Knowledge ?

Here are a couple of resources:

Country

Folks Newspaper countryfolks.com

Morning Ag

Clips Online Newsletter



HOLY COW !!!, We're 150 years old.

The Bethlehem Grange #137 was established in 1874 and is one of the oldest Granges in the nation. We are hosting an OPEN HOUSE April 13th, 10 am to 4 pm. Please join us for our birthday celebration. There will be displays, refreshments and entertainment! All of our celebration will take place in our own Bethlehem Grange 137 building, Which is on the National Historic Register. We're located at 24 Bridge St. Selkirk, NY 12158.

Please let us know that you are planning on coming so that we have an approximate headcount, by calling Carol Carpenter at 518-421-1384. Or you can text the same number. Even last-minute plans to attend are welcome. We look forward to seeing everyone there!