



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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May June 2024

President's Column

Sandra Green



Spring is the time of preparation. A time to start again, fresh. Are you starting on your Spring projects for Grange? Seeds need to be sown in Spring for any harvest later. Preparations need to be made in advance for any project to flourish. Has your Grange made preparations?

New York State leaders are busily preparing for future events. Some of these will be expanded upon in other articles in this edition of the "Empire State Granger". Some will be explained in future articles. Please check nysgrange.com and Facebook accounts for information as well.

As I have mentioned before, we hope you will contact us for help with your projects. And, we hope you will help with ours. A few of the areas in which we need help will be listed at the end of this article. If you are interested in receiving help in the areas listed, do get in touch.

I am still learning the various aspects of my new role as Master/President of the New York State Grange. Please continue to be patient with me. There are so many aspects of this position that most of us have not/do not consider. I have made some progress, but I know I am far from being what previous Mas-

ters have been. Any suggestions any of you have will be gratefully received. I learn more each day that I didn't know I didn't know.

For example, I did not know of several of the programs offered through the National Grange for all Grange members. I suggest looking at nationalgrange.org and reading the Patrons Chain. There is so much available.

One National Grange activity that I hope you will check into is First Friday. On the first Friday of each month a Zoom meeting occurs which starts with an informative presentation. Then, people "break out" into smaller groups where they can talk about many topics. It is a great way to get together with Grangers from across the nation.

Let's all plant good seed and nurture the tender plants. And, just as importantly, let's remove the weeds of dissention and strife. We are all different but all important as Grange members. A garden of just one type of plant may be easier to tend, but the resulting harvest may seem bland after a while. Would you want to eat only one vegetable all winter? Bouquets of one type of flower still have other plants added to enhance their beauty. Without the Babys breath and greenery a group of roses would not show to its best potential. At times we each need to be the greenery. At times the Babys breath. And, at times one of the roses. But, most of the time, in the Grange and in life, we are a unique flower that helps make the most beautiful bouquet of all. One of many different flowers and greenery that allows each to show its individual beauty and makes the whole more beautiful. Let's grow our garden so that we show our beauty in the Grange bouquet, a multitude of flowers and greenery that together are more beautiful than individually.

Grange programs and activities are the nutrients our garden needs and help nurture all of us. That is why it has often been said that one gets more out of the Grange than one puts in. Just remember, no one can get anything out if nothing is put in. What are you doing to grow our Grange garden? I promise, getting involved does have rewards. And most say the rewards far surpass the work put in.

Electric Rebates

There is a statewide program to help farmers and non-profit groups improve electric on their farms and Grange Halls (or any non-profit group like a Fire Company, VFW, Church, etc.). The information was supplied by Hill Electric Supply, they can sell new LED lights to farmers, utilizing utility rebate programs offered by National Grid, NYSEG, RG&E, and Central Hudson.

The only requirements are that a business have a commercial electric account or be a tax exempt farm, or non-profit. Tax exempt farms only pay the prices that we show on our flyers. Freight is free and farmers can place multiple orders throughout 2024. Each farm is allowed to purchase up to 100's of lights under this program and can focus on quality lighting as well as energy reduction. Hill Electric Supply submits documents to the utility and is paid by the utility for the lights about 2 months after the sale is complete.

Colonel Harper has been doing some major electrical upgrades at their hall. They used the Hill Electric Supply and purchased several thousands of dollars of materials and after rebates the amount was reduced to under two hundred dollars.

Below are some flyers that show details about lighting fixtures that are available through the different utility programs.

HILL ELECTRIC SUPPLY CO. INC.
174 Broad St. Glens Falls, NY 12801
518-793-3436
Kirk Suckman x113 kirkc@dale-electric.com

Scan to see most current list with additional fixtures. Current sheet: August 2nd, 2023

QUALIFY FOR REBATES!
Via Central Hudson Incentives

SMALL BUSINESS, FARMS & NON-PROFIT ENTITIES

UFO HIGHBAY After Rebate

	\$1	65-784R2 - 150W, 21600 Lumens, 5000K \$1
		65-786R2 - 200W, 28800 Lumens, 5000K \$10
		86-217* - PIR (Motion) Sensor \$10

(*Must be ordered with fixture to get the rebated price)

LINEAR HIGHBAY After Rebate

	\$10	HB10500150 - 105W, 13650 Lumens, 5000K \$10
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- Motion Sensor Available
- 6' Whip Included
- Mounting Hardware Included

AREA LIGHT After Rebate

	\$20	LFXE-LG-80-150W-50K-P \$20
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- 80/100/150W, 10800L, 5000K
Multi-Watt: 13500L, 20250L

MOUNTS

	\$20		\$20		FREE
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	\$105	ALCM 260 T4 G1 5K \$105
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- 200W=400wmh, 25000L, 5000K

	\$130	ALCL 350 T4 G1 5K \$130
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- 250W=750wmh, 34000L, 5000K

	\$80	ALCL 410 T4 G1 5K \$80
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- 300W=1000wmh, 40200L, 5000K

MOUNTS

	\$20		\$20		FREE
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Must have photo eye or time clock to receive rebates

• 120-277V • 10 Year Warranty

Only Central Hudson commercial customers are eligible for these instant rebates. Customers must provide a copy of their utility bill to show eligibility. Invoice must show ship-to address where products are to be installed. Contact name at facility along with phone number and email address. Central Hudson will verify that the lights were installed at the listed location.

Further Electric Companies Continued on Page 8

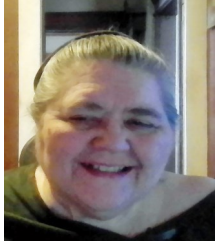
Now is the time!!!!

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.

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Legislative Column



Cindy Benson-Pollard

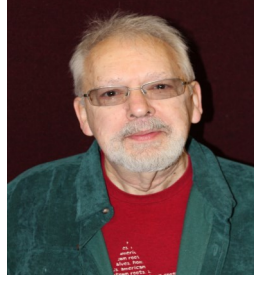
We are finally able to celebrate the start of spring. Flowers are blooming and the bees are starting to buzz around. The warm weather is inviting us to spend more time outside. Maybe it is a good time to talk about what the Grange is doing within your community and how we are working to make it a better place to live.

The state legislature is hard at work in Albany. At the writing of this article, the budget negotiations are under way. There are also other issues that they are considering. Some of the issues that I have been following include expanding the EPIC insurance program for seniors, opposing the mandate for electric school buses for schools, and the use of hydrofracking fluids on roads during the winter. I ask that you be on the lookout for our email blasts asking for your help in securing the passage of these bills. If we do not have your email address, I encourage you to share it with our state office so that you can participate in this work of the Grange. On the federal level, negotiations for a new Farm Bill are slogging along. It is very difficult to move anything through Congress due to bipartisan fighting. Bills that have bipartisan backing still seem to have problems securing enough votes in one house or the other to progress. Again, I encourage you to contact your representatives to ask for their support for a comprehensive Farm Bill. This is just one of the important issues that are being addressed in Washington.

Resolutions are starting to come to my attention for the State Grange session in October. Thank you to those who have sent them to me thus far. I ask that if you have any questions about writing a resolution or need further information to help you, please contact me. I am always happy to help you. Remembering when you write a resolution, the acronym of "KISS" is the best way to write a resolution. Try to limit the whereas sections to no more than three or four. Be sure the resolved section can stand alone as a statement.

I have been receiving suggestions for speakers for the annual legislative day in September. If you have any suggestions for a speaker that you would like to hear from, please let me know. I am always open to suggestions to help in planning the day.

Leadership Membership



Barton Snedaker

This letter has been written for the attendees of Grange Growth Summit 2.0 who were told at the time they were going to become the Membership Committee. As I wrote it I realized it could be of interest to many more Grangers. Please let me know what you think.

Dear Loyal Granger,

In a conversation with our newly elected (and first woman) State President/Master the idea of how to best use a Membership Committee/Team came up. The idea is that those members who attend various events in their local area can be Grange Ambassadors and member finders.

Do you have fairs, festivals, farm shows, farmer's or flea markets, field or fun days, FFA events, and craft shows, or dairy days, etc. near you? Is it possible for you, or your Grange or Pomona, to set up displays about the Grange at these events? State Grange, through Membership/Leadership, will provide the kits: pamphlets, fliers, printed material and signage for you to be able to set up a suitable display to inform attendees at these events about the Grange. There will be other Grangers available to assist you if needed. If we share our successes (and failures) it will help us develop positive techniques for presenting the Grange in these venues.

In your kit you will also want to have the information on local Granges available. Tri-folds, fliers, pictures and the like may be of interest to people looking for Grange information. Be sure to have the days and times of their meetings and a contact person in a ready to hand out format.

Wear your Grange T-Shirts, hats, sweatshirts, pins or other Grange emblem emblazoned clothing to show others your Grange spirit and activity.

The Grange still exists! The Grange is not just for farmers! The Grange is not a secret society! These three messages, first and foremost, need to be debunked and presented to the general public. These types of events are excellent places to do just that.

If this is an activity you would be comfortable doing, and of interest to you, please let us know. If it is not for you, then feel free to say no.

The program is a new idea and will probably take a little while

to be fully functional, but with your help it could be exactly what the Grange and your Grange needs to promote membership in our order like no other.

Please consider letting us know you'd be delighted.

Sandra Green - President
Barton Snedaker - Membership/Leadership Director

Lecturer



Brenda Noble

Join Us this June in Norwich, CT!

I am pleased to update you on the upcoming 2024 North East Lecturers Association (NELA) Conference which will be held **June 21-23** at the **Holiday Inn in Norwich, CT**. This is an awesome opportunity for all Grangers and Want-to-be-Grangers to join together for some great food, fun, education, and relaxation. Our event is open to all and we hope you will consider registering today at <https://sites.google.com/view/nelcgrange/home?authuser=2>. The hotel rate is \$139 per night. Registration for this conference is only \$30 per person for which each registrant can attend all non-meal events, receive a Seven Strong tote bag loaded with gifts from all seven State Granges, and one complimentary Lecturers Program book. Additional Lecturer Program Books will be sold for \$10 each. Our registration table will open at 4:00 PM on Friday, June 21st.

Fun Night Friday – June 21, 2024

Dinner is on your own and then we will have our Spirit Night Extravaganza starting at 7:00 PM in the Chelsearose II ballroom with all seven state Spirit Teams parading into the ballroom. There will be a special prize for the most spirited team! All New York State Grange members are asked to wear the color PINK, which is our state Grange color for the welcoming ceremony. Following the opening activities, the rest of the evening is set aside for Game Night. Each State Grange will offer a game to participate in and to win prizes. After the games, Northeast SHIPmate Kelly Riley will offer Kahoot to play for prizes. And if you still have energy, a complimentary shuttle bus will leave the hotel at 9:00 PM for Mohe-

gan Sun Casino.

Satisfy your Yearning for Learning Saturday – June 22, 2024

You'll wake up refreshed to start the day at 8:00 AM with a \$10 buffet breakfast in Laurel/Rose room. At 9:00 AM, we will begin our conference Opening Session in the Chelsearose II ballroom with a Call to Order by NELA President Matt Clark, a Roll Call of attendees by State, Pledge of Allegiance, and our keynote presentation by National Grange Foundation Board Chair Joan C. Smith. Following the keynote presentation, at 10:00 AM, Workshop #1 will be focused on "Membership" and hosted by Rhode Island State Grange Lecturer's Department. At 11:00 AM, Workshop #2 hosted by Massachusetts State Grange Lecturer's Department focused on "Harnessing AI to Our Advantage, Promoting the Grange in all Media".

From 12:00 Noon – 1:00 PM, we will enjoy a Buffet Pizza Party in Chelsearose II for just \$10 per person. Following lunch, at 1:00 PM., Workshop #3 hosted by New York State Grange Lecturer's Department will focus on "How to Market Your Grange". At 2:00 PM, Workshop #4 hosted by Maine State Grange Lecturer's Department will be offered on "Community Service".

At 3:00 PM, for those who pre-registered, we will offer a complimentary tour of U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

At 6:30 PM, we will head back to the Chelsearose II ballroom for our Celebratory Banquet and Entertainment. This banquet costs \$45 and you will have three menu choices (pork, pasta or fish). We will hold a Gift Baskets drawing and an opportunity drawing after dinner and then have some fun entertainment. And if you still have energy, you can leave the hotel at 9:00 PM for an optional complimentary bus trip to Mohegan Sun Casino.

"Send-off Sunday" – June 23, 2024

Today our final day together begins at 7:00 AM with our \$10 Buffet breakfast in the Laurel/Rose room. At 8:45 AM, we will offer an optional worship service by Charles Dimmick, Connecticut State Grange Chaplain. Our first workshop will be at 9:30 AM hosted by New Hampshire State Grange Lecturer's Department on the "Heirloom Program". At 10:30 AM, Workshop #6 hosted by Vermont State Grange Lecturer's Department will be offered on "GRIT". At 11:30 AM, we will offer some closing remarks and then pass the gavel from Connecticut to New York, who will be hosting the 2026 NELA Conference in New York. We promise to have you out of the hotel and on your way by 12 noon.

We hope you share this information widely and encourage folks to attend this low cost, high output conference in Connecticut. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at bno-ble195@gmail.com or 585-768-6632. Registration forms can be provided to mail in if needed. SEVEN STRONG!

State Grange Secretary



Ryan Orton

At school, this year's Travel Club Trip was to Iceland during Spring Break. Iceland is the "Land of Fire and Ice" – made from millions of years of volcanic activity with many snow-capped mountains and ancient glaciers of ice covering the landscape. It was a fantastic trip to a beautiful country...and the kids were awesome, too! No one lost a passport, and our flights weren't cancelled!

One of our activities in Iceland was hiking a glacier. The kids were very excited about this part of the trip; it ended up as one of their favorite activities! But, if you know me, hiking just isn't my thing, and I was *not* looking forward to this activity. Being the good sport that I am (and not wanting the kids thinking I was wimping out), I donned crampons so I could walk on solid ice and a harness just in case I fell and slid into a giant hole that seemingly descended to the Earth's molten core. They even gave us a pick ax, which was mainly used for as a prop for photo ops. Once we were dressed in proper attire, we began our 2+ hour glacier hike. We had to hike up to the glacier before we could walk on it. Some of it was clear up hill. We climbed those sheer cliffs like a battalion charging up a hill in battle. It was definitely strenuous work, and I became exhausted and out of breath quickly. My lungs burned, and my legs felt like jelly. I wanted to stop and turn around so many times. But, I had to keep repeating to

myself the lesson of the 5th Degree: "Hope and Persevere!" I also had to keep saying to myself, "Don't stop now or you will fall back down this glacier into one of those holes and become the latest Facebook post. Then what will the kids think of their 'fearless leader?!'"

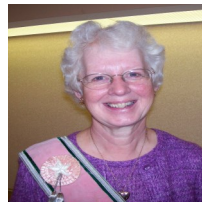
When we finally made it to the top of the glacier, the view was spectacular! Though it was windy and cold, the magnificence of what we could see as well as the accomplishment of hiking a glacier was truly amazing. We took group pictures, collected some of the just-melting water that we could drink (it was ice cold – a perfect treat when we climbed back down), and enjoyed the feeling of being on top of the world. When we all boarded our bus to head to our next amazing site (the Black Sand Beach on the North Atlantic Ocean), I couldn't help but look back at the glacier we just hiked and think to myself, "I just hiked that. I was on top of that glacier. *I did that!*" I never thought in a million years I would be able to say and reflect on this awesome experience.

Working to keep our Granges thriving, needed, and growing is like hiking a glacier. It certainly is hard work. It can exhaust us. It can seem like an utterly daunting task. It can even be something we don't look forward to just because it is difficult. We may want to take the easy road and just sit around waiting for someone else to do it. Anxiety is definitely a real and recognized emotion in today's world. Sometimes, we just want to throw in the towel because nothing seems to work and we have less help to do anything.

But, I encourage you to face these challenges head on. Think of the lesson of the 5th Degree. Charge up those hills like a battalion. Hike up that glacier – put on your crampons and your harness. March past those giant holes of despair. Focus on your task; keep breathing; push past the pain of failure and try something new; work your way to the top for the glorious view of a thriving, needed, and growing Grange in your community. Don't give up. If I can hike a glacier, so can you! Congratulations to the following Granges for taking in new members since the last ESG:

+10 New Members: Plattekill Grange #923 (Ulster County)
 +5 New Members: Greenfield Grange #807 (Saratoga County)
 +2 New Members: Walton Grange #1454 (Delaware County)
 +1 New Member: Bethlehem Grange #137 (Albany County)
 Smithville Valley Grange #1397 (Chenango County)
 East Chatham Grange #1066 (Columbia County)
 Albright Grange #440 (Cortland County)
 Freedom Plains Grange #857 (Dutchess County)
 Rhinebeck Grange #896 (Dutchess County)
 Ricard Grange #993 (Oswego County)
 Eureka Grange #46 (Wayne County)
 Newark Grange #366 (Wayne County)

Chaplain's Corner



Virginia L. Conner

Once again we made the trip to sunny Florida. It is amazing the differences we see from State to State as we travel the 1300 miles from home to Dade City. In the 22 years we've been doing this migration in February and March, there's always something NEW to see or hear.

Recently we traveled to Punta Gorda and there we were introduced to a duck we'd never seen before. When on the ground it was an ordinary waddling duck and not very attractive with all black feathers. But when it took flight there was a white band of feathers on the underside of the wings. The most unique thing about these ducks was when flying, they did not quack, they whistled! When 20-25 of them flew in to land on the pond, they were all whistling in chorus. It was a delightful sound and so different from the usual quacking!

Do you enjoy learning something NEW each day? I do and it was exciting to see and hear the whistling ducks – a NEW duck species to add to my bank of knowledge.

The word NEW appears many times in the Bible. One verse I particularly like is Lamentations

3:23, "they are NEW every morning, great is your faithfulness". The hymn "Great is Thy Faithfulness" is based on Lamentations 3:23: the refrain is: "Great is Thy faithfulness, Great is Thy faithfulness, morning by morning NEW mercies I see; All I have needed Thy hand hath provided, Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!"

Look for or ask the Lord God to show you something NEW each day and rejoice in His faithfulness to you.

Please remember William Gearring in your prayers.

Youth



Co-Directors

Johannah Stewart & Sarah Barber

Can you believe it is almost time for another Northeast Regional Youth Conference? New York will be hosting this year July 19 - 21, 2024 at the Comfort Inn & Suites East Greenbush - Albany, 99 Miller Road, Castleton, NY 12033. Rooms will be available in a Block through July 5th, 2024 by calling the hotel directly at (518) 479-3217, Option "0" to get the front desk, or you can use the online booking link below.

Booking Link: <https://www.choicehotels.com/reservations/groups/JE54R1>

Registration for the conference will be \$50/person and covers meals and conference fees only. Participants must book their own hotel rooms. Rooms are \$139.00/night and include breakfast. Youth members can arrange housing through the NYS Youth Department if needed. Registration forms will be available soon on the State Grange website.

We will have a showcase for the contests listed on the National Grange Website. Some possible contests to participate in are the Public speaking and sign a song competitions, Grange Baseball, and Grange Parliamentary procedure. Please let us know if you would like to perform.

Plans are in the works for the conference but as of now we have a luau planned for Saturday

Junior Grange

Sherri Taft



Do you have a Junior Grange member in good standing that you feel deserves to be honored? If so, ask your Junior Grange leader to submit a letter of recommendation stating why that Junior Grange member should be honored. Please include the member's accomplishments, projects, Community Service activities, and school activities from September 1, 2023-August 31, 2024. This form is due by September 1, 2024 to the State Junior Director, Sherri Horner, 164 County Route 14, Fulton, NY 13069. The Junior Grange member of the Year will be announced on Sunday, October 27, 2024 at the New York State Grange Annual Session. The winner will receive an award of \$25.00.

Soon it will be county fair time. Does your Junior Grange set up a booth at your local county fair to promote the Grange? A county fair is a great place to provide information to the public about the Grange. By displaying current Junior Grange programs and projects, some fair attendees may want to learn more about the Grange. It is important to include contact information of a member of your Grange for anyone to reach out to if they would like to learn more about our wonderful organization. If you need information about Junior Grange and the various Junior Grange programs, please reach out to the New York State Grange Headquarters and request materials that can be displayed in your fair booth. I enjoy visiting county fairs over the summer and I always look for the Junior Grange displays. It warms my heart to see our Junior Grange members promoting the Junior Grange program.

The end of school year is drawing to a close and students are looking forward to summer vacation. Be sure to plan activities to invite children from your community into your Grange. This will give them something to do and will introduce them to the Grange. It would be wonderful if we could get new Junior Grange members this summer!

Keep up the good work that all of you Junior Grangers are

Kids Days Out

doing!

Kids Days Out

The information for the Kids' Day Out events for summer 2024 has been mailed out to the Junior Grange leaders, Youth Chairpersons and Community Grange Secretaries. Please ask any of these people for a copy of the dates to see which one works best for you. They also have the registration form that can be copied for anyone that would like to register. The information has also been put on the New York State Grange website and can be printed off from the website. Registrations are due by July 1, 2024 (no late registrations will be accepted). Checks are to be made out to: **New York State Grange Camp** and mailed to:

Sherri Horner, Camp Co-Director
New York State Grange
164 County Route 14
Fulton, NY 13069

If you have any questions, feel free to contact the New York State Grange Camp Co-Directors:
Sherri Horner email – kidsbreak1@yahoo.com or call/text at (315) 380-2294

Ryan Orton email – rorton808@yahoo.com or call (845)868-7869

2024 Junior Grange Craft Projects

All projects will be judged in groups as follows: Ages 5-8, 9-11, and 12-14, the group that the projects will be judged in will be based on the entrant's age as of January 1 of the current year.

All crafts need to be labeled with Name, age, Junior Grange, County

Note: Each Junior Grange is allowed to send a total of 15 craft projects to State Grange for state-level judging, along with any OJAY* crafts. Please send one entry per age group for each of the five projects, Junior dues MUST be up to date.

Drop Chocolate Chip Cookies

Using a recipe of your choice, make your favorite chocolate chip cookies. You may use any kind of chips in the cookies (peanut butter, chocolate, butterscotch, white chips, confetti chips, etc). Each contestant must enter six (6) cookies on a disposable plate. The recipe must be included with the entry.

JUDGING – Flavor – 40% Appearance – 30% Texture – 30%

Draft Stopper

Using any material of your choice, create a draft stopper to fit a standard sized door. If using a filling, fill the draft stopper with any item you choose (rice, dried beans, batting, etc). Not to exceed 32" in length.

JUDGING – Creativity – 40% Workmanship – 30% Appearance – 30%

Holiday Luminary

Make a luminary for your favorite Holiday. Using any material, create a luminary for your favorite holiday. Please include a flameless LED votive candle in your luminary. Not to exceed 12"x12"x12".

JUDGING – Creativity – 40% Workmanship – 30% Appearance – 30%

Stuffed Sock Decoration

Using a sock of your choice, create a stuffed sock decoration. Decorate in any manner and using any materials, such as (though not limited to), paint, yarn, sequins, markers, and buttons. Not to exceed 12"x12"x12".

JUDGING – Creativity – 40% Workmanship – 30% Appearance – 30%

Wooden Table Decoration

Using fallen branches or scrap driftwood, create a table decoration.

Sand and refinish the wood, then decorate in any manner of your choice. Not to exceed 18"x18".

JUDGING – Creativity – 30% Workmanship – 40% Appearance – 30%

*OJAY (Older Junior and Youth) Project

Older Junior Grange members (ages 10 – 14), as well as Youth members up to the age of 18, may enter an item such as a scrapbook, banner, poster, report, craft, digital photography, needle-point, wood, sewing, etc. The item must have been completed in the last year. This project may be folded/compacted and able to fit in a 12"x12"x12" space for ease of transport and display. All entries will be judged at the State Grange Session.

JUDGING – Creativity – 30% Workmanship – 40% Appearance – 30%

New Grange Members

Albany Co.

Bethlehem #137
Edward Grande
Matthew Miller
Joe Sligh

Broome Co.

Susquehanna Valley #1552
Jean Colwell
Theresa DeVivo
Brenda Wilber
Cole Wilber
Jared Wilber
Keith Wilber

Chautauqua Co.

Fredonia #1
Rebecca Huber

Columbia Co. #935

Scott Altman
Stephen Colman
John Dietz
Barbara Gallicano
Jane Peterson
Stephanie Sharp
Barbara Walton

Cortland Co.

Albright Grange #440
Carl Gaffney
Delaware Co.
Walton #1454
Janet Budine
Heather Miller
Tia Stark

Dutchess #808

Stanford #808
Roderick Link Jr.

Freedom Plains #857

Bridget Boccini
Monuel Boccini
Amisha Hitt
Richard Ryan

Stone Church #1561
Alicia Noonan

Essex Co.

Ausable Valley #973
Tracey Barber
Cathryn Clark
Gregory Coleman
Helen Nerska
Robyn Pray

Matthew Plouffe
Andy Prescott
Kathy Prescott

Jefferson Co.

Star #9
Michael Denehy
Champion #18
Sandra Hubbard

Madison Co.

Owahgena #1358
Eliza McCaulley
Andrew Szalach

Saratoga Co.

Milton #685
Salvatore Augogia
Casey Tashjian

Steuben Co.

North Cameron #355
David Littlejohn

Wayne Co.

Eureka #46
Mazlyn Fuchs
Stephany Fuchs

Allegany County

Family Activities



Pomona master James Dowd presenting a check for \$1200 dollars to Lisa Yates-Vice President of Allegany County Cancer Services.

On March 23, 2024 the Allegany County Pomona Grange held a benefit dinner at the Belfast Fire Hall in Belfast, NY. The event was attended by 110 people. We had 23 baskets from various businesses and individuals from around Allegany County. We also held a 50/50 raffle. The dinner consisted

of lasagna, Italian bread and salad. Beverages were punch, milk and water. The baskets and raffle were big hits.

The committee for the event consisted of: Jim and Donielle Dowd, Emily Ormsby and Richard Graves. We had four State Grange officers, one special deputy and one museum board member in attendance. These special guests were New York State Grange President, Sandra Green, New York State Grange Lecturer, Brenda Noble, New York State Grange Steward, Matthew Horton, New York State Grange Gatekeeper, James Dowd, New York State Grange Special Deputy, Emily Ormsby and New York State Grange Museum Board member, Richard Graves.

The event was to raise funds for the Allegany County Cancer Services. We raised \$1200.00 for them.

Maryanne Campbell
Hi everyone, I am the new Director of Family Activities. I am from the Butternut Valley Grange in Gilbertsville and a member of the Otsego Pomona Grange. I have been on this committee since 2019 and I am looking forward to working with everyone on this committee. Each year the committee looks forward to seeing the craft items that will be judged at the State Contest Friday, April 26, 2024. There are many beautiful craft items submitted with a wide range of talent demonstrated by both men and women.

Unfortunately my previous article was not in the last Empire State Granger. I did receive some phone calls in regards to the contest and I encourage you to give me a call if you have any questions. As a reminder, no professional people may enter the contest and community members may participate for one year. However the community member must become a Grange Member prior to entering subsequent years.

Categories for 2024 included woodworking, quilting such as table runner or topper, bed size quilt, doilies, latch hook, 3 piece baby set, embroidery, cross stitch and stuffed toy that should be child safe. The holiday ornament maximum size measuring 6 inches by 6 inches. The tea cup continues to be popular craft entry. Our handbook indicated that the tea cup is to be glued to the saucer. By the time this article is printed the contest will be over. In Junes Empire State Granger I will have the State Grange contest winners listed as well as the items being sent to the Big E in September. The following winning items at State Grange level will go on to the Big E in Springfield Mass, to be judged at their level, Afghan, doilies, adult garment, latch hook, stuffed toy, baby afghan, child or adult sewn garment and tea cup. The craft items will be displayed in the beautiful Northeast Exposition Grange building. Items will be sent to the Big E the end of August.

As always our handbook information gives you the guidelines and restrictions on the size for certain crafted items. Items should be clean and free from stains. I was asked about the size of the bed quilt and there are no specific measurement guidelines for the quilt.

We know that crafters are creative, dedicated, patient, and have perseverance, as some

craft items take months to complete. Keep in mind for next year that everyone in Grange is invited to participate in the contest. You can enter in more than one category but only one item from each category can be submitted from your Pomona Grange.

There are some crafts that change yearly, such as the quilted table runner or topper for 2024, quilted wall hanging 2025, bed size quilt 2024, baby size quilt 2025, latch hook 2024 and plastic canvas 2025. The baking contest will have changes yearly, this year is pumpkin bread. Please check the rules, as there are both regular and diabetic bread entries. In 2025 the baking contest will be chocolate cake with peanut butter frosting. Your Grange will set up specific judging dates for the baking contest as they are not judged in April with the craft items. The winners will then bake for the State Conference in October.

Our health project this year is Domestic Violence. There was a display table with information presented at the April Conference. This display will be set up at the State Grange Conference in October. Our goal is to increase awareness and education to our Grangers and the community. Your feedback is important so if there are specific topics you would like information on please let me know.

I would like to thank Brenda Noble, for the years she served as Family Activities Director and now is our State Lecturer. She is dedicated, knowledgeable and is a hard worker. Linda Batsford also served on this committee for several years and is no longer serving. Both Brenda and Linda will be missed. It has been such a pleasure working with you both.

Valerie Griffing remains on the committee and has several years of experience. She is knowledgeable in all aspects of this committee. Welcome to our two new members, Jeannette Moore from Onondaga Pomona Grange and Letitia Pickering from Monroe Pomona Grange.

Please feel free to call me at 607-847-6639 with questions you may have or contact your local Grange Activities Member. My cell phone 607-226-4441. Please note that there is a correction for my E-mail, kmcampbell@citlink.net.

For everyone entering crafts thank you very much and encourage other Grange members to participate next year.

That's the GRANGE way!

Sports

Director
Bruce Dehner

please contact me ASAP. to have a good amount of teams.



Bowling registration deadline is May 13. If you have not received and application, We would like

**SUPPORT
JUNIOR
GRANGE**



Support Grange Youth



Be a star and add a few new members to your Grange.



POLICY UPDATES and ISSUE NEWS

MARCH 2024 WRAP-UP

Washington Overview

A blessed Good Friday to you from Washington where Congress is on Easter recess. The Grange youth and junior leadership team and Grange president Christine Hamp were in DC mid-March where they saw the cherry blossoms at their peak, participated in the Grange virtual fly-in, spent time in congressional offices on Capitol Hill, celebrated Ag Day, met with Ag Secretary Vilsack, toured the White House and participated in leadership training with the national 4-H and FFA leadership teams. Congress passed and President Biden signed a \$1.2 trillion spending package to keep the government open through September. The package includes funding for USDA to design a new data system to track foreign purchases of U.S. farmland, boost funding to hire more Border Patrol agents, and increase immigrant detention capacity from 34,000 to 42,000 beds, no money was allocated to continue the broadband Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).

Agriculture and Food

USDA Issues Tighter "Product of the USA" Label

A new regulation by the Department of Agriculture requires any meat, poultry or egg packaging bearing "Product of the USA" or "Made in the USA" terminology must come from animals that are born, raised, processed and packaged in the United States. This issue has been widely debated since the 2015 repeal of mandatory country-of-origin label was repealed. That action was taken to avoid retaliation by Canada and Mexico following a World Trade Organization (WTO) ruling against the United States. Without the mandatory language, concern spread among producers about the use of "Product of the USA" terminology on foreign-born meat that was only packaged or processed in the U.S. The National Grange has strong policy supporting the new label and appreciates USDA issuing the final regulation.

USDA Bars Discriminatory Contracts

A new rule from USDA's Packers and Stockyards division will prohibit contracting companies from taking regulatory or discriminatory action against producers. The rule bans false or misleading statements or omissions of material information when companies write or terminate contracts with producers or when performance is being evaluated.

The agriculture industry is split over the issue with some producer and processor groups concerned about the potential for additional litigation under the new rule governing contracts. However, in some segments of the ag industry, there have been cases of clear evidence of price-fixing and unfair practices. National Grange has policy supporting such a rule and has been working for several years for such action by USDA.

Bird Flu Found in Dairy Cows

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza or bird flu has been detected in some dairy cows in Kansas, New Mexico and Texas. The virus appears to have been introduced by wild birds. Dairy farmers first became concerned when milk production dropped sharply, the cows were lethargic, and their feed consumption fell. However, the cows appeared to recover in a week or so on their own and the affected cows did not appear to be transmitting the virus to other cows within the same herd. Initial testing by the National Veterinary Services Laboratories has not found changes to the virus that would make it more transmissible to humans which would indicate the current risk to humans is low. Pasteurization of milk also kills viruses and bacteria, and the process is required for milk sold through interstate commerce. In addition, the bird flu virus cannot be transmitted to humans by eating properly cooked meat and poultry products.

Health Care

Congress Urged to Pass Drug Price Reform

The National Grange and nearly 100 patient, disease, community and consumer groups are urging Congress to pass Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) reform legislation. PBMs play a role in driving up the price of medications by distorting the list price to support their profit margin. PBMs make money by favoring medications with an artificially inflated list price coupled with a large rebate. However, these rebates are not passed on to the patient at the pharmacy counter. PBMs also control which prescription medications are available to patients, both in the Medicare program and commercial health plans. The largest three PBMs (Express Scripts, CVS Caremark and Optimum Rx) control 80% of the prescription drug marketplace. Passing PBM reform has been and will continue to be a high priority for the National Grange in its battle against high drug prices.

Why is Rural Health So Hard

Bill Frist is a physician, a heart transplant surgeon, a former U.S. Senator from Tennessee and a vocal rural health care advocate. In an article in Forbes, he focuses on issues which must be addressed to improve the health of over 60 million people who are falling further behind in access and quality health care. Health systems simply put, he says, are designed for urban and suburban communities, not rural. While campaigning for his underdog Senate race in 1994, Frist visited all 95 Tennessee counties. It was then he discovered the remote communities he visited had severely limited primary and secondary health care access. For many he met with, it had been years since a physician set foot in their town or community. Thirty years later, the rural health care conundrum has only gotten worse. Dr. Frist points to a confluence of factors – increasing rural hospital closures, an aging population, a persistent opioid epidemic, and an explosion of lifestyle-driven diseases – have made rural communities even more vulnerable and more challenging to serve. Frist says rural health care solutions are complex and must begin with sensitivity to culture, with heavy emphasis on establishing personal trust and establishing convenient, affordable care closer to the home. Solutions must start from the vantage point of the patient, not the provider, not the insurance company, not the urban policy maker. Solutions will require new, more innovative models of health care delivery, targeted federal and state government commitment and incentives, and a willingness to meet rural Americans where they are with the care they need.

Telecommunications

Broadband Speed Benchmarks Raised

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is upping its benchmark for high-speed fixed broadband to download speeds of 100 megabits per second and upload speeds of 20 megabits per second. The 100/20 benchmark is a substantial increase from the commission's current 25/3 standard. The \$42.45 billion Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD) already requires 100/20 Mbps speeds. The new requirement assures all states receiving BEAD funds will deploy the same broadband speed standard, which is also sufficient to support precision agriculture.

Rural America 5G Fund Proposed

The FCC plans to launch a \$9 billion program to extend voice and 5G mobile broadband services to rural areas that will not receive the service without subsidization. Funding sources for the rural mobile 5G program will come from government appropriations, revenue generated from spectrum license auctions, and contributions from telecommunications companies participating in the program. Opposition to Pole Rules Change Broadband providers and trade groups are opposing a utility company petition asking the FCC to remove a provision in its updated pole attachment rules that require pole owners to provide their most recent inspection reports to prospective attachers. When a broadband provider wants to deploy infrastructure like fiber, they often must attach it to poles owned by incumbent utilities companies. These poles need to be prepared for the new attachment, which may involve replacing the entire pole for structural or zoning reasons. The FCC's sharing of inspection reports requirement is intended to mitigate disputes between utility companies and broadband providers on the need for pole replacement. The National Grange filed several petitions with the FCC in 2023 urging the adoption of such rules.

Of Interest

"Transparency" law Bad for Small and Independent Businesses

Congress inserted the Corporate Transparency Act into the National

Défense Authorization Act in 2021 in an effort to combat illicit financial activity. The Act requires businesses to report their beneficial ownership to the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network at the Treasury Department. However, the law doesn't define ownership as actual ownership but in effect requires even the smallest companies to report just about everyone who works for them as a beneficial owner. It also exempts many lines of businesses like banks, broker dealers, utilities, accounting firms and more that are more able to abuse the financial system than farms, ranches and other small Main Street businesses. The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Alabama ruled the Corporate Transparency Act unconstitutional March 1. The federal government has filed a notice of appeal. The National Grange and 94 small business groups, state and national associations, and more are urging the Senate Banking Committee to pass legislation that would delay the Act's filing deadline requirement during the Appellate Court process. The House previously adopted similar delay legislation by a vote of 420-1.

Perspective

- “Faith is the strength by which a shattered world shall emerge into the light.” ~ Helen Keller
- “Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe.” ~ St. Augustine
- “Faith consists in believing when it is beyond the power of reason to believe.” ~ Voltaire
- “Faith and prayer are the vitamins of the soul. Man cannot live in health without them.” ~ Mahalia Jackson
- “Stand straight, walk proud, have a little faith.” ~ Garth Brooks

New York Farm Show



Display at the Farm Show

On February 20, 2024 James Dowd, New York State Grange Gatekeeper, traveled to Syracuse to man the State Grange Booth at the annual Winter Farm Show. The show ran from February 20 through Feb 24. I would like to thank Sherri Horner and Carol Bailey for their help manning the booth. It made every-

thing more enjoyable.

We handed out about 250 Empire Granger Special Editions as well as 200 Grange bottle openers and 1200 pieces of candy. There was a great deal of interest shown in what Grange is about and in what Grange does. Families were surprised about Junior Grange and things for the whole family to do.

I felt we made a good impact on all of the people we talked to. We had one gentleman that wanted an Associate Membership form and handed out quite a few regular membership forms.

Thank you to the New York State Grange for allowing me to do this, I always enjoy it.

National Grange News

WASHINGTON, DC - The National Grange is pleased to announce that President Christine E. Hamp has nominated two members to appointments for nationwide industry and governmental advisement groups.



Marilyn Blasingame (left) and Matt Peterson were each nominated to appointments on behalf of the National Grange.

Marilyn Blasingame will serve as the National Grange representative to the [Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention \(AWHP\)](#) Advisory Council, and Matt Peterson will represent the Grange on the Accelerating Broadband Deployment on Unserved Ag-

gricultural Lands Working Group of the [FCC's Precision Agriculture Connectivity Task Force](#). Both positions were previously held by past National Grange President Betsy E. Huber.

Blasingame, a Prairie Grange #1832 member in Belvidere, Illinois, lives in Brooklyn, New York, where she is a public health worker specializing in infectious disease and sexual health technical assistance. “It is my passion to educate health professionals and do what I can to improve the healthcare system,” Blasingame said. She is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh with a master's in public health. She will serve as the National Grange's Liaison and capacity building specialist for the AWHP Advisory Council

“I am excited to represent the National Grange,” she said. “The AWHP is working on some incredible campaigns around women's health, obesity, and cardiovascular health, and I feel honored to add my voice to the many passionate and dedicated members of the organization. Women's health is such an important and often overlooked field, and I am excited to help bring more attention to improving the lives of women across America.” Blasingame hopes that working with the AWHP Advisory Council will be able to advance advocacy related to applicable health and healthcare resolutions that have been accepted on the National Grange level. She also plans to highlight important information from the Advisory

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Scan to see most current list with additional fixtures
Current sheet: January 17th, 2024

QUALIFY FOR REBATES!

Via NYSEG + RG&E Incentives

3 Simple Steps:

1. Copy of your UTILITY BILL
2. TAX EXEMPT CERTIFICATE
3. YOUR ORDER

FREE FREIGHT!

CONTACT: Kirk Suckman
518-793-3436 x113 (7am-9pm)
kirks@dale-electric.com

\$1

UFO HIGHBAY After Rebate

HBC4100U508BK	100W, 15000 Lumens, 5000K	\$5
HBC4150U508BK	150W, 21500 Lumens, 5000K	\$1
HBC4200U508BK	200W, 28000 Lumens, 5000K	\$10
HBC4SENSORPIR*	PIR (Motion) Sensor	\$18
HBC4SENSORMW*	Microwave Sensor	\$20

*Must be ordered with fixture to get the rebated price

\$5

ADJUSTABLE HIGHBAY After Rebate

HML1100U50A	100W, 14284 Lum, 5000K	\$5
HB10500150	105W 13500 Lum 5000K	\$5
HB10500150LS1	105W, 13500 Lum, 5000K	\$15

with Built-in Motion Sensor

\$1

DUSK TO DAWN LIGHT After Rebate

71333C	- 36/48/60W, 3/4/5K, 7750L	\$1
UDD 125 G3 5K	- 90W, 12265L, 5000K	\$1
GI-ACC-DDAS	- Mounting Arm	\$2

NYSEG + RG&E commercial customers are eligible for these instant rebates. Customers must provide a copy of their utility bill to show eligibility. Invoice must show ship-to address where products are to be installed. Contact name at facility along with phone number and email address. Lights must be installed within 60 days of purchase. Your utility will verify that the lights were installed at the listed location.

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QUALIFY FOR REBATES!

Via National Grid Incentives

3 Simple Steps:

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kirks@dale-electric.com

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(Continued from page 7)

Council through Grange news channels to educate Grangers on current events in women's health advocacy.

Founded in 2022, AWHP is focused exclusively on women's preventive health across all life stages and irrespective of any one disease area. We work in partnership with a diverse ensemble of leading women's health-focused organizations to advocate for equitable, accessible, and affordable preventive care.

Peterson is a member of Custer Center Grange #103 and lives in Ansley, Nebraska. He is a member of a multi-generational family farm and ranch operation, serves as a customer enablement specialist for a digital agriculture company, and owns and operates Peterson Clear Creek Ag Solutions, LLC. "I am excited to be part of bringing broadband access to all of rural America," Peterson said. "I bring the perspective of the agricultural business owner who relies heavily on dependable internet access."

He believes that the FCC's Precision Agriculture Connectivity Task Force is aiming to advocate for the needs of rural America – just like the Grange.

Peterson will serve on the Accelerating Broadband Deployment on Unserved Agricultural Lands Working Group. This Working Group aims to develop policy recommendations to promote the rapid, expanded deployment of broadband Internet access on unserved agricultural land, aiming to achieve reliability capabilities on 95 percent of agricultural land in the United States by 2025, including recommending specific steps for the FCC to consider, as well as indicating areas where funding should be directed.

National Grange President Christine E. Hamp nominated Blasingame and Peterson for these appointments based on their direct connections to the missions of the working groups. "I believe wholeheartedly in finding members with expertise in the field to fill positions like these," Hamp said. "I want to use and showcase their talents and get as many of our members involved in public policy and advocacy issues on behalf of the Grange as possible."



Reaching Rural Surgical Seniors

Announced in November at the National Grange Convention, the National Grange received a Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Award (EADI #30051). This award has allowed the development of the [Reaching Rural Surgical Seniors](#) program, which aims to help prepare

senior citizens and others living in rural communities for surgery, post-surgical care, and decisions that must be made when aging. In January, every Grange in the country should have received packets of information about the program, including a flash drive of videos and other files. We encourage **all Granges** to present this program or portions of it to their Granges and communities.

About the Program: The Reaching Rural Surgical Seniors program includes more than two dozen videos and two guides/question prompt lists to help older adults make decisions about their healthcare and home life. It includes a [2-minute trailer](#) and [22-minute video](#) that are great introductions to the program and will lead people to the program website –

www.seniorsurgeryguides.com – where all the materials are available to watch, download, and use at home.

This program was prepared by the National Grange and medical experts, with input from Grangers and community members.

How to use the program: We encourage Granges to hold community meetings where they can present the information to their Grange and the community. The Grange is a natural conduit, working for the benefit of the communities where they serve, and this is just one more form of outreach to make a stronger, more resilient community.

We encourage Granges to show the trailer, introduce the program, and then show the 23-minute video which highlights portions of the program that can be found online. If time permits, showing some of the other videos about specific aspects (i.e. Falls, Talking to Others, Preparing Your Home) can help get those in attendance acquainted with the program. Additionally, we recommend printing copies of the guide and brochure to distribute, encouraging those in attendance to use them.

The Reaching Rural Surgical Seniors program can also be used as an ongoing Lecturer's Program, as many facets of the program can be used and talked about – consider bringing in other medical or senior care experts in your area to enhance the program and make it "your own."

This program is also an easy outreach opportunity for your Grange in places like county fairs, bazaars, Grange dinners and fundraisers, or other places your Grange is visible in the community.

Other ideas include working with your local health system or neighborhood pharmacy to distribute the information, and partnering with churches, Lions Clubs, senior centers, or other groups to present the program.

Why should you participate: The first 15 State Granges and 250 Community Granges across the country can receive a cash incentive for presenting the program and [submitting a report](#). Check the images for the requirements. When submitting your report, include the number of people impacted (or give a rough estimate if it's presented at a fair/festival/hospital/etc.) so we can ensure we have reached enough people, which will give the National Grange further opportunities to develop impactful programs like this.

The Grange is the *trusted voice of rural America*, and this is one more way that your Grange can make an impact!

If you have questions about the program, contact Joan C. Smith, project manager, at rrss@grange.org.