

# 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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## President's Column

Sandra Green



For New York state Grange, the start of a new year means activity. During January The Ag Society Forum is held, the CAO has its business meeting and the Northeast Connection for the Grange has its Leaders Conference. And, all of these occur during a week's time. A busy but informative and productive week.

The Ag Society Forum this year focused on future trends. Attendees were encouraged to take a look at agriculture, and its products, from the modern consumers' point of view. The way consumers allocate their resources in terms of how much they are willing to pay, and for what they are willing to pay, is constantly evolving. This information is not only valuable to producers but for those who support the causes of agricultural pursuits. What updates in regulations or laws might need to be made to ensure New York's agricultural producers have the support needed to provide what consumers want.

One specific area discussed was how the use of AI (Artificial Intelligence) could effect farming. Benefits and drawbacks were debated. While the all agreed some AI could greatly assist in some as-

pects of farming, everyone also agreed that the human experience and instinct will never be replaced.

At the CAO (Council of Agricultural Organizations) meeting, the resolutions we presented were well accepted. The adopting decisions of the CAO must be unanimous. If one member disagrees, the resolution is lost. That ours were accepted speaks well for the work done in the Agriculture/Environment arena by New York State Grange. Good job. The next activity for CAO members is the lobby day in Albany. Let us hope the resolutions adopted by the CAO will have impact in the legislature.

Several of New York State Grange's Directors and Committee members attended the Northeast Leaders Conference. There they met with their counterparts from the other states in the Northeast Region. I am sure they will be sharing their thoughts.

One of the main events at the Conference focused on defining core values, and then, creating/updating vision and mission statements to reflect how those core values could best be presented to the non-Granger world and Grangers themselves. It has been some time since this activity was last undertaken. It is time to do it again.

I would be very interested to hear what each New York State Grange members consider the Grange's Core Values to be. The NE Leaders Conference is also where the Northeast Connection meeting and the meeting of the Trustees of the New England Grange Building are held. I will share more about these in an upcoming article.

Those that attended any of these events, I believe, came away inspired, renewed, and ready to face what is to come. I hope all New York Grange members will listen to what the attendees have to say and step up to help, as they are able.

## FFA Chapter of the Year 2025

Sponsored by NYS Grange



The Windsor FFA Chapter exemplifies the spirit of "Living to Serve," with a dedicated mission to support the families within their district and community. Their journey began

in 2017 when the Windsor Central School District purchased property adjacent to the high school with the assistance of a Land Bank Grant. The vision was clear: transform the property into a thriving land laboratory for the school's budding agriculture program. Aligned with the district's mission to ensure every student is future-ready, Windsor FFA was officially chartered in 2018 with just eight members. Today, it has grown to include over 300 students led by three teachers, offering diverse educational opportunities at both the high school and middle school levels.

What was once a neglected property with a rundown house and overgrown fields, is now a flourishing 6.7-acre land laboratory. This transformation has been made possible through various grants, which continue to fully fund the program, including a summer enrichment initiative employing 14 students. The land lab features two garden plots, a small orchard, a cut flower garden, a high tunnel providing a year-round growing season, a small greenhouse, a perennial high tunnel, and an apiary.

The program's impact is tangible. Crops grown at the land lab are distributed to community food pantries, low-income housing farm stands, the school cafeteria, and a public farm stand. This year's harvest reached a record-breaking 7,215 pounds, all provided to the community at no cost. Generous donations from recipients help offset operational expenses, ensuring sustainability. Students are at the heart of this success, contributing their skills and creativity to every aspect of the operation. Introduction to Agriculture students prepare fields and start seedlings, even innovating faster seed germination techniques using a repurposed pop-up greenhouse. The Introduction to Horticulture class established a vibrant cut flower garden, now used by the Floral Design class. The CTE Work Experience class manages machinery, tills soil, spreads compost and maintains green spaces. The Environmental Science class oversees the



apiary with support from FFA members interested in the business side of beekeeping. Each September, students set goals for the year ahead, reflecting their drive to expand and improve. This year, the focus is on achieving self-sufficiency through community donations, which is now a dedicated line in the FFA budget. What began as a simple land acquisition has grown into a program that cultivates not only crops but also skills, opportunities, and life-changing experiences for students and the community.

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## Legislative Column



Cindy Benson-Pollard

Spring is just around the corner. It won't be long, and flowers will be popping their head out of the ground after a long winter nap. Some of us may be coming out of our own hibernation. Grange activities will be picking up. Now is a good time to start writing your resolutions for consideration at this year's State Grange session.

By now you have received your legislative policy handbook. I need to make you aware of a correction that you will need to make. On Page -6-, there was an error made in the statement regarding electric agricultural vehicles. The statement should read:

***We oppose the efforts to mandate the use of all-electric agricultural vehicles. (2024)***

The new state and federal legislative sessions are in full swing. The Governor has given her State of the State address. I hope that you were able to review her to priorities for the coming year. Commissioner Ball also gave a state of agriculture report. He outlined his priorities for the coming year. They were outlined in his press release that was in the Morning Ag Clips.

Do you get the "Morning Ag Clips?" I do. I find them full of very important information about all sectors of agriculture. This is delivered to you via email every morning, Monday through Saturday. If you would like to get this free email, please visit [www.morningagclips.com](http://www.morningagclips.com) and subscribe to it.

Please be on the lookout for emails from me asking for your help contacting your legislators. As the legislative session moves forward, we will be advocating for issues that are part of our current policy. I will provide you with a sample statement letter that you can copy and paste as your own to send to your representatives asking for their support or opposition of an issue. If you have not signed up for our emails, I encourage you to do so. Please visit our website at [www.nysgrange.org](http://www.nysgrange.org) and sign up. Your help with these issues is important.

If you need help with writing resolutions or have any questions about our policies, please contact me by email at [cbenson81@msn.com](mailto:cbenson81@msn.com). Please be

sure to put Grange in the subject line. I will be glad to help in any way I can.

## Leadership Membership

Thomas Lawton

This month I want to highlight a topic that is pivotal to our mission and sustainability: the importance of growing our Grange's membership. The journey of our Grange has been marked by community service, fellowship, and the preservation of our agricultural heritage. To continue this rich legacy, expanding our membership is essential. Let's delve into why this growth matters and how it benefits us all.

### Strengthening Our Community Roots

At the heart of every Grange is a strong sense of community. New members bring fresh perspectives, diverse skills, and renewed energy. This infusion not only enriches our gatherings but also strengthens our collective ability to support local initiatives. Whether it's organizing community events, assisting with local agriculture, or supporting our neighbors, every new member amplifies our impact.

### Enhancing Our Programs and Initiatives

With a larger membership base, we can offer more robust programs. Imagine the possibilities: expanded educational workshops, more extensive community outreach programs, and greater resources for our youth and elderly services. New members mean new ideas and more hands to turn those ideas into reality.

### Preservation and Innovation

While we honor our traditions, growing our membership ensures that we also evolve with the times. New members often bring innovative approaches and a willingness to embrace new technologies, which can help modernize our Grange's operations and activities. Balancing tradition with innovation is key to remaining relevant and effective in our rapidly changing world.

### Supporting Agriculture and Sustainability

As advocates for the quality of Rural life including agriculture and sustainable practices, increasing our membership means more people promoting these essential values. More members can lead to larger-scale projects, such as community gardens, agricultural fairs, and local food initiatives. Together, we can make a more significant impact on local food security and sustainable farming practices.

### Building Lifelong Friendships

Lastly, joining the Grange is about building lifelong friendships and creating cherished

memories. Each new member adds to the tapestry of relationships that define our Grange family. From sharing stories and experiences to working side by side on community projects, the bonds we form enrich our lives and those of our fellow members.

### A Call to Action

To ensure the continued success and vitality of our Grange, we need your help. Invite your friends, family members, and neighbors to our next meeting. Share your positive experiences and the benefits of Grange membership. Do you need some assistance and support? Contact a member of the Leadership/Membership committee. We would love help you and your Grange develop a membership drive that fits your Grange. Together, we can foster a thriving, dynamic, and growing community that will carry our Grange into the future with pride and purpose.



## Chaplain's Corner



Virginia L. Conner

### WHITE

What do you think of when you hear the word "White"?

As I write this column in late January, we have gotten a blanket of snow that has made everything look clean, fresh and white.

For those of you who knew my mother, she had the softest white hair. For one third of her life, her hair was the color of auburn. Then at age thirty the Lord changed her hair color to white. That's the color I and my siblings remember her having the other two thirds of her life when she entered Heaven's gates at age 91. We always thought our mother fit the verse of Proverbs 16:31 which says, "White hair is a crown of glory and is seen most among the godly".

The Bible talks about the color white quite a bit. White hair in Revelation 1:14 for purity and glory. The white throne in Revelation 20:11. White garments in Daniel 7:9. The white horse in Revelation 6:2 represents victory. Then the completion in John 4:35 when Jesus says: "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are

white already to harvest".

Back to the original question: probably the most common response is "white as snow". In the prayer for cleansing in Psalm 51, verse 7 says, "wash me and I will be whiter than snow". Isaiah 1:18: "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow". Other verses with the phrase "white as snow" are: Mark 9:3; Matthew 28:3 and Revelation 1:14.

Our sympathy is sent to the Eddy family upon the passing of Nelson Eddy on January 3, 2025. Brother Eddy was a very active Granger from Jefferson County and was currently serving as President of the State Grange Museum Board.



## Youth



Co-Directors

Johannah Stewart & Sarah Barber

The year is off to a great start. The North East Leaders Conference held in Danvers, MA was well represented by the Youth Department. Sarah Barber, Jomni Tarbell and Garrett Phelps were in attendance. They attended workshops and meetings with other youth departments from the northeast. Saturday morning there was a tour of the Essex North Shore Technical and Agricultural High School. This school's impressive vocational programs for students in grades 9-12 include carpentry, electrical, health care, cosmetology, animal and veterinary science, culinary arts and many more. Saturday afternoon there was a workshop on finding hidden potential in our Grange members and aligning our strategic plan to our core values. Saturday evening we had a delicious banquet followed by a lively game of musical bingo. At the business meeting on Sunday it was announced that the North East Connection will be creating 3 trustee positions for youth members. Would one of your youth Grange members be a good fit? Stay tuned for more

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2) Youth

information. Rhode Island State Grange will be hosting the North East Youth Conference in July. We look forward to attending and participating in the contests and workshops there. We will post more information about this event when it gets closer.

At the writing of this article we are preparing for the Winter Youth weekend which will be held at Chenango County Pomona Grange in Norwich, NY. Activities for the weekend include a nature hike, cooking demonstration, ritual work, election of officers and a Sock Hop Saturday evening. I hope you will ask your youth members all about it when they get home.

Plans are in the works to bring our Robert Earlandt winners to Albany to meet with the members of the legislature. Our winners for this year are Jomni Tarbell and Garrett Phelps. We would love for you to invite them to a Grange meeting after their trip and have them tell you what they experienced. Maybe they could help you write a resolution for your Grange to submit at this year's State Session.

There are many ways your youth members can be involved in your Grange at the local & county levels. Can they help with your community dinners or a game night? How about a community service project? The opportunities are endless if you just ask. We can't wait to see what the rest of this year brings.

## State Grange Secretary



Ryan Orton

ESG ARTICLE – SECRETARY – MARCH/APRIL 2025

Grange Month is fast approaching, and it's the perfect time to honor Grangers with Membership Awards! Here are some reminders regarding ordering Membership Awards:

A "Silver Star Member" is a Granger who has been a member for 25 continuous years. A "Golden Sheaf Member" is a Granger who has been a member for 50 continuous years. Please note that the proper term is "Golden Sheaf," not "Golden Sheath!" A "Diamond Member" is a Granger who has been a member for 75 continuous years.

When ordering Membership Awards, make sure you use the correct form! Use FORM O (White) to request Silver Star (25 Year) Certificates and/or seals for 40, 55, 60, 65, & 70 years of membership.

These forms stay with me as State Secretary, and I mail these Awards to the person and address noted on the form. There are no charges or fees for 25, 40, 55, 60, 65, or 70 Year Membership Awards.

Use FORM M (Gold) to request Golden Sheaf (50 Year) Certificates, Diamond (75 Year) Certificates, or special letters for 80, 85, & 90 years of membership (yes, we've had members reach 90 years of Grange membership!). These forms are forwarded to the National Grange after I sign them and affix the State Grange seal. The National Grange will mail these Awards to the person and address noted on the form. Each of these awards are \$12 each. Make checks payable to The National Grange. Note the shipping charges on the back of the form! Make sure you calculate this correctly and write your check appropriately! Provide accurate and complete information. Any missing or incorrect information, including your payment for Form M, can delay the arrival of your Awards.

If a Granger has been a member of more than 1 Grange, please note the Granges and years when they were a member prior to joining your Grange. Don't forget to sign your form in the correct space (Subordinate Secretary line, not State Secretary line), and affix your Grange's seal. If your Grange does not have a seal, please note this on your form. **WRITE NEATLY & LEGIBLY!** This could also delay the arrival of your Awards and/or make more work for you and me! We also want to make sure names are spelled correctly! If you run out of these forms or would like to request some, please contact me. **MOST IMPORTANTLY – WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK QUESTIONS!** I'm always willing to help my fellow Grange Secretaries fulfill the "arduous duties" of the office!

Congratulations to the following Granges who gained new members since the last article:

+6 New Members: Pierstown Grange #793 (Otsego County)

+5 New Members: Stanford Grange #808 (Dutchess County)

Milton Grange #685 (Saratoga County)

+3 New Members: Cuyler Grange #449 (Cortland County)

+2 New Members: Copake Grange #935 (Columbia County)

Freedom Plains Grange #857 (Dutchess County)

East Pembroke Grange #1157 (Genesee County)

+1 New Members: Fredonia Grange #1 (Chautauqua County)

East Chatham Grange #1066 (Columbia County)

Hinman Hollow Grange #1331 (Otsego County)

## Lecturer



Brenda Noble

I would like to take a moment to remember Past State Lecturer Nelson Eddy, as he has passed on to the great Grange above. We remember him for his many years of dedicated service to the Grange, and his love for history. Well done good and faithful servant.

Please remember the Art and Photo contest entries are due to Headquarters in Cortland by April 20, 2025. The Art Contest is Drawings. The Photo Contest has two categories: Grange Halls; Fairs: Local, County, and State. Also, take a look at the Writing Contest and Promotion Contests. You can assist your Lecturer with creating a Worksheet or Puzzle to be used at a Grange meeting. You can also help promote your Grange on Social Media. See the Lecturers' Handbook on the New York State Grange website for details.

We hope everyone is planning on attending the Lecturers/Family Activities Conference on Saturday April 26, 2025 at Headquarters in Cortland. Please call in reservations to Cheryl 607-756-7553 at State Grange Headquarters, if you are planning on attending. Lunch will be served by Cuyler Grange for \$12 per person. It is a fun day for all Grange friends across the state. Please join us!

The Talent Contest will also be Saturday April 26, 2025. Please let me know if you will be performing by April 15, 2025. It will be a general contest for Vocal solo and groups, Variety, and Instrumental Solo and groups for Juniors and Subordinates.

Also, be thinking about State Fair Grange Day on Saturday August 30, 2025. I would love to have a variety of Granger participation to showcase the Grange in New York State!

## Junior Grange



Sherri Horner

Even though we have had a very cold and snowy winter, spring is just around the corner. One of the most important months of spring for Grange is April when we celebrate Grange Month. What are your members going to do to promote your Junior Grange? Are you going to do an open house to bring people into your meeting hall? Perhaps there is a local business that will allow your Junior members to set up a display in their window showing everything that Junior Grange has to offer to the children in your community. There is so much that you can do to promote your Junior Grange during Grange Month in April.

Whatever you do, please take pictures and send them to me. I would like to create a slide show to share with everyone at our New York State Grange Session in October. This way, members from across New York State can see what our Junior Grange members are doing and perhaps take an idea back to their own Grange.

Junior Grange members from across New York State submitted entries into the National Grange Creative writing contest. Congratulations to Tessa Ryan, Stanford Junior Grange #414 for receiving first place in her age category; Paige Darling, Whitehall Junior Grange #346, for receiving second place in her age category; and Tobias Darling, Whitehall Junior Grange #346, for receiving third place in his age category. All three of these wonderful Junior Grange members wrote about corn, which was the agricultural topic for last year.

Summer is coming and so are county fairs. My favorite part of the summer is to visit various county fairs and see what awesome displays our Junior Grange members create to show fair goers what an awesome organization we have for the children in our neighborhoods. If your Junior Grange sets up a display, please send me pictures and I will make sure to include them in the slide show that I am planning on doing for the New York State Grange Session in October.

As always, I look forward to hearing about events that your Junior Grange is doing so that I can try to attend the event.

# Sports



Co-Directors  
Bruce Dehner & Matt  
Horton

Well everyone think spring. Hope everyone is working on getting your teams set up for our sports events. We had a very good year last year and I would like a better one this year. Here are the dates dartball April 27<sup>th</sup> at state headquarters, bowling June 1<sup>st</sup> at Cort Lanes Cortland, NY., Golf is July 13<sup>th</sup> at Orchard Valley golf course in Lafayette NY and corn hole is August 2<sup>nd</sup> at state headquarters. Contact either Matt or myself to sign up for any event. Fraternally Bruce Dehner

I hope everyone has been keeping warm recently. We are now in the middle of winter. What better way to ride out the winter than to practice our sports skills in preparation for the coming year.

Dartball is fast approaching. The tournament will be Sunday April 27<sup>th</sup> at state headquarters. Please feel free to call me at (607) 346-3316 or email me at matthewhorton14870@yahoo.com to sign up for this event. The team must have at least 7 players. Teams must consist of both men and women. We should have a wonderful time. Please sign up by April 15<sup>th</sup> so I can have everything ready. In the meantime, keep practicing. I want to see lots of home runs from all the teams this year.

Bowling is getting closer as well. Keep your schedules free for June 1<sup>st</sup> in Cortland. This is played with a team of 4 people also both men and women.

Golf is July 13<sup>th</sup> in Lafayette NY.

Corn hole is August 2<sup>nd</sup> at the headquarters building. Teams of 2, we always have a lot of fun.

To sign up for any of these events, please contact Matthew Horton or Bruce Dehner. You can also sign up for the bowling, golf, and cornhole events at the Dartball tournament.

We hope to see everyone at the sports events this year. If anyone has any questions feel free to contact us.

Fraternally, Matthew



# Family Activities

Maryanne Campbell

Let's start with a bit of history: Did you know that the Stuffed Toy Contest was extremely popular because all the toys were given to hospitals to benefit children in the 50's and 60's? This was sponsored by Ploy-fil as well as the Quilt Contest for several years. Today there is a need for hats and small blankets in the hospitals NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit). This is a department in the hospital for sick or premature newborns. There are specific requirements and measurements needed. If anyone is interested in making these items, please contact me by phone or email.

As you prepare for your contest, both Subordinate and Pomona, keep in mind you have one entry per category. However, you can enter as many categories as you wish. Entries should be free from stains and marked clearly by completing the entry form with the class, your name, address, phone number, Grange name and number. Indicate also if you are a Grange member or non-member. Please have this information securely pinned with a safety pin or tape on the back of your craft.

I had mentioned in our last Empire State Granger that there were 3 categories that are rotated every two years, however they are rotated every other year. 2025- class 2A-quilted wall hanging, class 3C-Plastic Canvas and class 2B-baby size quilt. 2026 the class 2A quilted table runner or topper, class 3C Latch Hook and Class 2B Bed size quilt.

Class 5- tea cup was discontinued. In its place, we want everyone to use their imagination and recycle calendars. There are no rules and no measurements for this class. Let's see what you can do by recycling and being creative.

Items for the State Contest should be mailed to our Grange Headquarters in Cortland by April 20<sup>th</sup>. Judging will take place on Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. Our committee is looking forward to presenting your crafts to the judges. As always, we appreciate your skills, dedication and the numerous hours you have put into completing your crafts.

I have received several recommendations for future contests regarding crafts, baking contests and reviewing the contest forms. Our committee welcomes all your ideas. The new handbook will be developed later this year and we will certainly go over ideas that have been pre-

sented to us for 2026-2027.

Our Health Project for 2025 will cover Autoimmune Diseases. Each committee member will present and have information on three Diseases. Valarie Griffing-Lupus, Myasthenia Gravis and Psoriatic Arthritis. Jeanette Moore-Rheumatoid Arthritis, Celiac Disease and Scleroderma. Letitia Pickering-Type I Diabetes, Addison Disease and Psoriasis. I will present Graves, Multiple Sclerosis and Fibromyalgia. There will be a display at our April Conference with information on the above diseases. Please stop and look over our display.

We hope you attend our April 26<sup>th</sup> Conference to see the crafts, displays and talent that will be presented.

## State Grange Historian



### DID YOUR KNOW ...

That there was a PATRON'S PAINT WORKS, INC? There was a full back page ad for it on the December 1929 edition of the National Grange Monthly. The paint brand was Ingersoll and stated it was proved best by over a half century of use. Patrons were urged to buy direct from the company that was located in Brooklyn, NY on Plymouth St.

Of interest to women were ads for quilt material and food specialties. Food included pure cane sugar syrup from Georgia, pure vanilla and oranges. A more local ad was "SALTED CUCUMBERS, freshened made delicious pickles. All sizes forwarded dry, Post, Express, Freight. Won't freeze or spoil. EDSON'S GARDENS, NY."

For men there were ads for real estate, grain, remedies for animals, fertilizers and many for seeds, plants and bulbs. Raising silver foxes was guaranteed to be profitable for farmers according to one ad. "\$1000 down gets farm, 160 acres, 20 cows, horses, equipment, tractor etc. Terms part milk check. Let your wants be known. Write Mr. Douglas, Herkimer, NY" This ad appeared only two months after the stock market crash. I wonder if someone bought it.

A man from Rochester advertised large gladiolus bulbs. For six dollars you got a hundred bulbs. Howard Gillet in New Lebanon was also selling them along with several more. They

seemed to be a very popular item. Alfalfa and red clover were also listed along with seed potatoes. Evergreens were advertised also.

Let's not forget cultural items. Sheet music was offered at ten cents a sheet, inspirational recitations and plays. The Elbridge Entertainment House, Inc. was advertising Grange plays and entertainments, "the best and cleanest that can be found." Their games, drills, songs and stunts were popular with Grange audiences. The Willis N. Bugbee Company of Syracuse also offered plays, novelty songs and lecturer's helps. Both were in business yet well into the 1950s or 60s. Their books are often found in old lecturers files including mine.

Also of Grange interest was ad for badges, Grange pins etc. The companies listed were Fuller Regalia and Costume Co., Boston Regalia Co., DeMoulin Bros. & Co. and C. J. Bainbridge. Fuller and Boston companies were in Massachusetts. DeMoulin was in Illinois while Bainbridge was in Syracuse. They offered the usual badges and pins. DeMoulin also sold banners, lodge furniture and uniforms. Fuller and Bainbridge I believe both came to state sessions through the years to promote their wares and sell. A man in New Jersey advertised offered money making propositions to Granges.

Cash was paid for false teeth, dental gold, discarded jewelry, silver, platinum and diamond. Another company wanted watches. Another interesting ad urged Grangers to send in their old carpets and new rugs would be made from them.

In the April 1930 issue of the same paper there are numerous ads for baby chicks and other poultry. There was only one from NY and that was from Horseheads. Snow White Poultry Farm offered Gregory's white leghorn chicks that live, grow and produce. Most of the ads for poultry were from Pennsylvania.

In that issue also was a quarter page ad for Bell Telephone System. Their ad was a story of a country school in North Dakota getting a phone call about a coming blizzard. The parents had received the call also and drove horses and wagons to pick up the children. Everyone arrived home safely before the blizzard thanks to the telephone.

These ads show a cross section of life in the 1920s and 30s. Some things have changed considerably while others show little change.





## New York Grange Youth educates about fire safety New York Grange Youth educates submitted by Nathan Frost Kirkland Grange #684 (NY)

Nathan Frost speaks at the Jefferson County Fair in Watertown, NY. Preschoolers were given fire hats, fire prevention coloring books, and glow stick necklaces for visibility on Halloween. October is Fire Prevention Month. Does anyone know who Smokey Bear is? He is the mascot for the U.S. Forest service's wildfire prevention campaign. One day in the spring of 1950, in the Capitan Mountains in New Mexico, a large, uncontrolled wildfire was spotted by a fire tower. Soon companies of firefighters from all over Texas and New Mexico were battling the blaze. It was then reported that a bear cub was walking by the fire line. The firefighters hoped that the mother would be back to get him. After the fire went through, he was found up a tree that had been charred badly by the wildfire. His paws and hind legs were severely burned. He was removed from the tree by a group of firefighters. One of the crew members, a rancher, agreed to take him home. A New Mexico Department of Game and Fish ranger heard about the cub when he returned to the fire camp. He drove to the rancher's home to help get the cub on a plane to Santa Fe, where his burns were treated and bandaged. Soon, news of the bear cub's rescue and condition had everyone concerned. The state game warden wrote to the chief of the forest service, offering to present the cub to the agency as long as the cub would be dedicated to a conservation and wildfire prevention publicity program. The cub was soon on his way to the National Zoo in Washington D.C., where he became the living symbol of Smokey Bear.

Now to wildfires. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear about wildfires? Maybe you think about places like California, Oregon, or Texas. But wildfires can happen anywhere, anytime. 84% of wildfires in the U.S. are caused by human error. Most of these fires are preventable, by taking the proper precautions, and knowing a few key fire prevention tips.

So, how can we prevent wildfires? One way is to check the weather: The weather plays a key role in wildfires. Lightning from thunderstorms can cause dry vegetation to catch fire if the lightning strikes it. Dry spells with little rain can lead to drought, making the fire danger much greater. When conditions are favorable for wildfires, the National Weather Service (NWS) will issue a red flag warning. A red flag warning means that the combination of dry conditions and wind favors out of control fires. Be sure to check your local state regulations as some states have an annual burn ban. For example, New York's burn ban is March 16 – May 14 every year. Another way to prevent wildfires is to know how to make a safe campfire. When you make a campfire, whether for camping or not, be sure to build it in an open area away from overhanging trees and flammable materials. When dousing your campfire, you should do 4 things; 1; Douse the fire with at least one bucket of water. 2; stir the coals. 3; dump another bucket of water onto the fire. 4; stir the coals again. Your campfire should be cold to the touch before you leave.

Lastly, Let's talk about vehicles. From Cars to ATV's, vehicles are often overlooked in their ability to cause fires. Vehicle exhausts can reach over 1000 degrees Fahrenheit! That can cause any dry vegetation to catch fire. If vehicles are not properly maintained, they can create sparks, or overheat, leading to a fire. If you are hauling a trailer, make sure that the tow chains are secure, not dragging on the road surface. Make sure that your bearings, brakes, and axles are properly maintained so that they will not overheat or lockup and start a fire. Chainsaws and other outdoor work equipment are not exempt from these problems. Be sure that they are well serviced and in proper working order before you use them again.

This year, 2025, will be Smokey Bear's 75th anniversary. What would be a better way to celebrate than to practice these wildfire prevention tips; weather awareness for drought-like conditions, campfire safety, douse and stir till cold, and servicing and maintaining your machines so they don't spark or overheat!

## Opinion: Congress Can Learn from Rural America by Christine E. Hamp

*National Grange President*

In a country built on the ideals of unity and collaboration, it is disheartening to witness the growing divisiveness that is paralyzing American politics. Today, more than ever, we need common sense—not as a partisan tool, but as a guiding principle—to navigate the challenges we face as a nation and in our hometowns. From our largest cities to our most rural communities, the consequences of gridlock are painfully evident. Nobody wins when lawmakers and leaders create intentional roadblocks in legislation instead of coming together for the good of the American people; our most vulnerable populations are the ones who end up feeling the pain the most.



The founding fathers designed a system that thrives on dialogue and compromise, working together for the common good. Too often, intense partisanship overshadows progress. Common sense, defined as “the ability to use good judgment in making decisions...” dictates that no one ideology has a monopoly on solutions. Legislators must prioritize problem-solving over scoring political capital, putting the needs of all their constituents (not just the ones who voted for them) above party loyalty.

Bipartisanship is not a lofty ideal; it is necessary to ensure all citizens are represented. Issues like access to healthcare, infrastructure, agriculture, education, and economic development are not political party problems—they are American problems. Solving these complicated issues requires collaborative effort, mutual respect, and a willingness to find a middle ground. A common sense approach acknowledges that while we may not agree on everything, we can and must agree on the need to move forward – together.

History offers numerous examples of what can be achieved when leaders set aside partisan differences. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, ending segregation and prohibiting employment discrimination, became law with significant bipartisan support despite intense political and social pressures. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 also relied on bipartisan backing to pass into law. More recently, the bipartisan infrastructure deal of 2021 demonstrated that progress is still possible when leaders work together to address critical national needs.

As president of the National Grange, I have seen – and participated in – the power of cooperation in rural communities. Farmers, community leaders, small business owners, educators, and healthcare providers regularly come together to tackle challenges unique to rural life. These communities often exemplify the spirit of neighbor-helping-neighbor, setting aside differences to achieve shared goals.

The Grange believes in and demonstrates the transformative and collaborative power of community service. Projects like food and clothing drives, disaster relief efforts, community meals, and youth mentorship and resiliency programs illustrate the impact of collective action. These initiatives transcend ideological differences, reminding us that our shared humanity is far more significant than what divides us. Legislators could learn much from these grassroots efforts. Imagine what we could achieve if Congress – and leaders at all levels – approached work with the same sense of purpose and unity that drives volunteers in rural communities. Focusing on shared objectives and taking practical, deliberate steps to achieve them could transform political stalemates into opportunities for progress.

Rural America faces critical issues: declining population, lack of trustworthy broadband, underfunded schools, and limited access to healthcare, to name a few. To adequately address these problems, unity among local, state, and federal leaders is a necessity. It requires listening to those on the ground to craft solutions that reflect lived realities. In rural communities, common sense solutions often mean pooling resources, leveraging partnerships, and looking past differences for the common good.

To deliver results for all Americans, we must demand common sense from our leaders. We call on our legislators to take part in:

**Listening:** True leadership begins with listening to diverse perspectives, including those in rural communities, which are too often overlooked.

**Collaborating:** Policymakers must seek partnerships beyond party lines, focusing on shared goals rather than political differences.

**Acting with Purpose:** Solutions should be rooted in reality, not politics. Leaders must act decisively and inclusively to address the pressing issues of our time.

**Engaging Communities:** Citizens, too, have a role to play. By engaging in community service and advocacy, we can build a stronger, more united nation.

In this pivotal moment, let us reject the cynicism and gridlock of blind partisanship and embrace the power of collaboration and building strong relationships. The challenges we face are significant, but so

# New Grange Members

**Albany Co.**  
**Bethlehem #137**  
 Diane Greenwood  
 Kathleen Irons  
**Broome Co.**  
**Susquehanna Valley #1552**  
 Samuella Cadwell  
 John Flinn  
**Chenango Co.**  
**Otselic Valley #1398**  
 Terry Ives  
**Columbia Co.**  
**Copake #935**  
 Brian Herman  
 Peter Kelly  
 Tia Maggio  
 Jacob Nyman  
 Stuart Peterson  
 Fran Sobel  
 Alan Wanzenberg  
 Claire Wegh  
 Taryn Zarillo  
**Dutchess Co.**  
**Oak Grove #873**  
 David Bennett  
 Kathy Bennett  
**Delaware Co.**  
 Colonel Harper #1508  
 Amber Champlin  
 Donald Champlin  
 Jaiden Stoesser  
 Gavin Walsh  
**Essex/Clinton**

**Ausable Valley #973**  
 Steven Dorr  
**Herkimer Co.**  
**Millers Mill #581**  
 Kyle Liewellyn  
**Jefferson Co.**  
**South Rutland Valley #53**  
 Lonnie Brislan  
 Lori Marshall  
 James Marshall  
 Vicki Newton  
**Onondaga Co.**  
**Marcellus #464**  
 Michael Foster Jr.  
**Oswego Co.**  
**Mt. Pleasant #349**  
 Kent Dristle  
**Otsego Co.**  
**Butternut Valley #1533**  
 Catherine Fay  
 Jon Fay  
**Rensselaer Co.**  
**Brunswick #1337**  
 Lynn Judkins  
**Saratoga Co.**  
**Greenfield #807**  
 Dylan Bokus  
 Madeline Fiorino  
 Patty Harrington  
 Joseph Masten  
 Beth Padhajecki  
 Vincent Walsh

Contact Information

**Sandra M. Green, President**  
 100 Grange Place  
 Cortland, NY 13045  
 607-756-7553  
 president@nysGrange.org  
**Ryan Orton, Secretary**  
 218 Attlebury Hill Road  
 Stanfordsville, NY 12581  
 845-868-7869  
 secretary@nysGrange.org  
**Brenda Noble, Lecturer**  
 7973 Telephone Road  
 LeRoy, NY 14482  
 585-768-6632  
 bnoble195@gmail.com  
**Cindy Benson Pollard**  
**Legislative Director**  
 401 Charles Avenue, Syracuse, NY  
 13209  
 315-413-9335  
 Cbenson81@msn.com  
**Virginia L. Conner, Chaplain**  
 918 Bartnick Road  
 Genoa, NY 13071  
 315-246-7330  
 vlconner48@yahoo.com  
**Maryanne Campbell**  
**Family Activities**  
 PO Box 294  
 Norwich, NY 13815  
 607-847-6639 Res.  
 607-226-4441 Cell  
[kmccampbell@citlink.net](mailto:kmccampbell@citlink.net)  
**Thomas Lawton**  
**Leadership Membership**  
 4763 State Hwy 12  
 Oxford, NY 13830  
 607244-7799  
 lawtont4@yahoo.com

**Melvin Phelps**  
**Community Involvement**  
 PO Box 493  
 Copenhagen, NY 13626  
 318-778-6712  
 northerngracefarm@gmail.com  
**Youth**  
**Johannah Stewart**  
 211 Roe Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
 Elmira, NY 14901  
 585-880-6460  
[barringer.johannah@gmail.com](mailto:barringer.johannah@gmail.com)  
**Sarah Barber**  
 34 Timberee Lane  
 Valatie, NY 12184  
 518-698-1811  
[Sarahbarber22@gmail.com](mailto:Sarahbarber22@gmail.com)  
**Bruce Dehne Matt Horton, Sports**  
 PO Box 372  
 DeRuyter, NY 13052  
 315-852-6460  
 bed221@yahoo.com  
[matthewhorton14870@yahoo.com](mailto:matthewhorton14870@yahoo.com)  
**Carol Bailey, Historian**  
 3033 Middle Sodus Road  
 Lyons, NY 14489  
 315-946-4379  
 barnlady38@yahoo.com  
**Sherri Horner, Jr. Director**  
 164 County Route 14  
 Fulton, NY, 13069  
 kidsbreak@yahoo.com  
**Cindy Benson-Pollard**  
 NYS Fair  
 Grange Building Superintendent  
 315-413-9335  
 Cbenson81@msn.com  
 Steve@nysGrange.org  
**Sherri Horner**  
**Ryan Orton**  
 Camp Directors  
 kidsbreak1@yahoo.com  
 secretary@nysGrange.org

# Calendar Of Events

NEW YORK STATE GRANGE  
 2025

Calendar of Events, Activities, & Dues Dates

<b>February 20 – 22</b>	Central NY Farm Show – State Fair Grounds
<b>March 20</b>	Executive Committee Meeting, 4 p.m. – Zoom
<b>March 21 – 23</b>	Spring Youth Weekend – Newark Grange Hall – Wayne County
<b>March 31</b>	Subordinate Dues to State Secretary
<b>March 31</b>	Junior Grange Quarterly Report Due to State Secretary
<b>April 1-30</b>	<b>GRANGE MONTH – Plan a special public activity/ event</b>
<b>April 15</b>	Art/Photo Entries due at HDQ for Judging
<b>April 15</b>	Talent Entry Report Sheets due to the State Lecturer
<b>April 15</b>	Woodworking, Quilting, & Needlework due at HDQ for Judging
<b>April 15</b>	Empire State Granger Copy Due for May June Edition
<b>April 26</b>	Lecturer/FAC Conference – HDQ
<b>April 27</b>	State Dartball Tournament – HDQ @ 9 a.m.
<b>May 1</b>	Executive Committee Meeting, 4:00 p.m. - Zoom
<b>May 7 – 9</b>	NYS FFA Convention, State Fairgrounds – Syracuse
<b>June 1</b>	State Bowling Tournament – Cortlanes Bowling Alley, Cortland, 12:00 noon
<b>June 15</b>	Empire State Granger Copy Due for July August Edition
<b>June 19</b>	Executive Committee Meeting – Hilton Garden Inn in Watertown – 10 a.m.
<b>June 30</b>	Subordinate Dues to State Secretary
<b>June 30</b>	Junior Grange Quarterly Report Due to State Secretary
<b>July 13</b>	State Golf Tournament – Orchard Valley Golf Course, Lafayette, NY, 9 a.m.
<b>July 24</b>	Executive Committee Meeting – Headquarters – Budget –10 a.m.
<b>July 28 – August 1</b>	Grange Camp “Kids Day Out Events;” 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Monday, July 29 – Stanford Grange, Dutchess County Tuesday, July 30 – Walton Grange, Delaware County Wednesday, July 31 – North Cameron Grange, Steuben County Thursday, August 1 – East Pembroke Grange, Genesee County Friday, August 2 – Kirkland Grange, Jefferson County
<b>August 2</b>	Cornhole Tournament - HDQ
<b>August 15</b>	Empire State Granger Copy Due for September October Edition
<b>August 20 – Sept. 1</b>	New York State Fair – Syracuse
<b>August 30</b>	Grange Day at New York State Fair
<b>September 1</b>	Community Service Reports due to Director
<b>September 1</b>	National JG Report due

<b>Sept. 12 – 28</b>	Eastern States Exposition (The Big E) – West Springfield, MA
<b>September 15</b>	Lecturer’s Reports due to State Lecturer
<b>September 19 – 21</b>	Fall Youth Weekend – Brunswick Grange Hall – Rensselaer County
<b>September 21</b>	Grange Day at the Big E – West Springfield, MA
<b>September</b>	Executive Committee Meeting – TBA
<b>September 27</b>	Legislative Day, 9 a.m.
<b>September 30</b>	Subordinate Dues to State Secretary
<b>September 30</b>	Junior Grange Quarterly Report to State Secretary
<b>October 17 – 21</b>	153 <sup>rd</sup> Annual New York State Grange Session–Hilton Garden Inn, Watertown
<b>October 21</b>	Executive Committee Meeting – Hilton Garden Inn in Watertown – 10 a.m.
<b>October 21</b>	New York State Grange Cultural & Educational Foundation Meeting – Hilton Garden Inn in Watertown
<b>October 25</b>	Empire State Granger Copy Due for November December Edition
<b>November 8 – 16</b>	159 <sup>th</sup> Annual National Grange Convention – Carnival Horizon Cruise out of Miami, FL
<b>December 15</b>	Empire State Granger Copy Due for January February Edition
<b>December</b>	Executive Committee Meeting – TBA
<b>December 31</b>	Subordinate Dues to State Secretary
<b>December 31</b>	Junior Grange Quarterly Report & Dues due to State Secretary

As of 01/01/2025

# Museum Fund Raiser

GET YOUR MEMORIAL BRICKS BEFORE PRICE INCREASE.  
 At the November Museum Board meeting it was stated that the price would be increasing. So now is your chance to get them before prices rise. 4x8 inch are fifty dollars and the 8x8 inch are seventy five dollars. A few more are needed for an order with free shipping. Send your order to Patricia VanLare, 5413 VanLare Rd., Williamson, NY 14589. Email pvanlare2@yahoo.com Order blanks are available from her also.  
 Please continue to save "H" (history) dollars for the museum. Sixty dollars was turned in at State Grange. This will be the second year for this savings program.

# Reinterpreting the Teachings of the Fourth Degree

The following is an article from the Connecticut State Granger, used by permission.

By Terri Fassio, Co-Public Relations Director (CT)

“In winter, the season of rest from active toil, we sit down with our families, our friends and neighbors, and enjoy together the good things our labors in the lower degrees have brought us.” *(Fourth Degree Steward)*

The Fourth Degree teaches the value of reflection and connection during winter — a season often seen as a time for rest and introspection. As Grange members gather with family, friends, and neighbors, it’s an ideal opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of their programs and activities. This period of self-assessment encourages Granges to determine what strategies yield positive results and to consider innovative ideas, rather than clinging to traditional methods. By taking time to reflect on past successes and setting new goals for 2025, Granges can maintain the positive momentum generated during the busy fall harvest and holiday seasons.

In Connecticut, the snowy months serve as a crucial time for both individual reflection and organizational growth within the Grange. Effective Grange leaders inspire confidence among officers and members by fostering connections that extend beyond the organization to embrace supporters, the media, and the local community. They should also focus on identifying future milestones, such as anniversaries or new initiatives, which can serve as the basis for engaging programs and events. It’s equally important to acknowledge and share past accomplishments, reinforcing the value of collective efforts.

“What a child sees makes the most lasting impression. We may tell them of the pleasures and independence of the farmer’s life; but if their daily intercourse with us shows it to be tedious, irksome, laborious, without any recreation of body or mind, they will soon lose all interest in it and seek enjoyment elsewhere.” *(Fourth Degree Overseer)*

The teachings emphasize the significant impact of visuals and experiences, stressing that if the daily realities of Grange life appear tedious and laborious, interest will dwindle. To combat this, Grange leaders must cultivate a captivating vision for the future, inspiring members to partake in this shared journey. Outstanding leaders set ambitious goals and create a vibrant culture that motivates members to exceed expectations.

“Let the Agate be to you an emblem of FIDELITY. May your principles of manhood and womanhood be as firmly impressed as the lasting colors in the stone, and may our friendship be as firm as the stone itself” *(Fourth Degree President)*

Fidelity, a core theme of the Fourth Degree, is defined as loyalty and commitment to a person, cause, or belief. To enhance member loyalty, Granges should emulate successful brands by embedding themselves deeply into their members’ lives. The goal is to create an experience so integral that members cannot envision life without being part of the Grange. In a world filled with competing activities and commitments, this level of engagement is crucial.

To ensure that Granges remain appealing, the benefits they offer must be meaningful and valuable. They should cater to the professional aspirations and personal interests of each member, acting as a tangible symbol of the organization’s appreciation for their commitment. When members feel valued and supported, their loyalty to the Grange strengthens.

“When the ripened fruits and falling leaves of Autumn give place to Winter, as Husbandmen and Matrons - Patrons of Husbandry, indeed - we can enter into the enjoyment of that rest from physical labor which gives us leisure for mental and social culture; and which, in our Order, brings us into that circle where unbounded confidence prevails, and where the welfare of each is bound up in the good of all. Let us treasure up the lessons we have learned, both by successes and failures, plan wisely and hopefully for the future, and strive to make our lives as harmoniously beautiful and bountiful as are the works of Nature’s God.” *(Fourth Degree President)*

Granges should reflect on the lessons learned from both achievements and setbacks. Leaders are encouraged to plan wisely for the future, aiming to create enriching experiences that reflect the harmony and abundance that the Grange represents.

Grange members should take pride in their affiliation, actively promoting the organization and its benefits at every opportunity.

By incorporating these teachings into their marketing perspectives, Granges can enhance member engagement, foster a supportive community, and ensure a prosperous future.

Grangers, as Americans, and as neighbors, let us lead the way in restoring common sense to our politics and unity to our nation.

*(Continued from page 5)*

too is our capacity to overcome them—if we work together. As  
**Vaccines are the Best Protection Against Severe Illness This Respiratory Season**

During respiratory season, vaccines play an important role in helping protect against diseases like COVID-19, influenza (flu), and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), which spread more easily during the fall and winter months. We’ve partnered with **Champions for Vaccine Education, Equity and Progress (CVEEP)**, to share resources and information to help raise awareness and encourage everyone to stay up to date on their vaccines this respiratory season.

Fostering conversations around updated vaccines, treatments, and the latest guidance on risk factors is essential for protecting ourselves and our communities. By spreading awareness on the importance of staying up to date with vaccines, we can significantly reduce the risk of severe illness, hospitalizations, and even deaths. It is important for everyone to know where to get vaccinated, understand CDC recommendations, and be informed about vaccine safety, including the safety of receiving multiple vaccines at once. CVEEP’s website houses information and resources on these topics and more.

**Stay Up to Date With Vaccines This Respiratory Season**

**CVEEP**  
Champions for Vaccine Education, Equity + Progress

- COVID-19
- Influenza (Flu)
- Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough)
- Pneumococcal Disease

Visit [cveep.org](http://cveep.org) to access the resources on recommended respiratory



**SUPPLY STORE**

[www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org)



**GOOD DAY!™**  
**JANUARY 2025**

The January 2025 issue of *Good Day!* magazine covers our 158th Annual National Grange Convention, previews the 2025 Convention, highlights member accomplishments – including a living history of Grange memorabilia, and much more. This issue includes the final article in our United States agritourism feature, and also includes recipes that take you from stock to soup!

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# Wayne County Murals

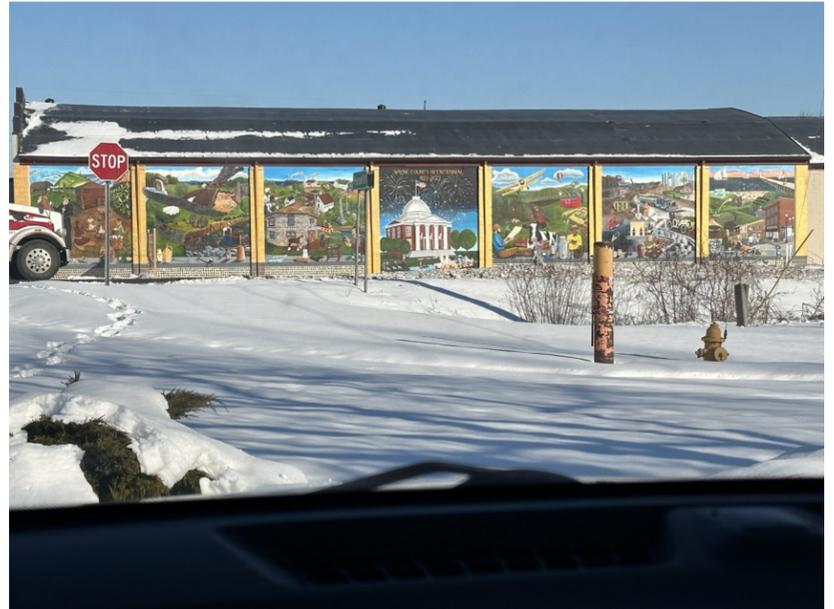
## 150th Anniversary Celebrations

The Granges in Wayne County are hosting a Rural Minds program on Saturday March 29 at 1p.m. Jeff Winton, founder and chairman, of Rural Minds will talk about the mental health crisis in rural America. He will share his personal story. He will also share resources that are available to all. Other professionals are being asked to attend and share their knowledge also. The program is at the Newark Grange Hall, 100 Woodlane, Newark, NY 14513.

This is a community service event as part of the 150th celebration of Eureka, Lincoln and Newark Granges.

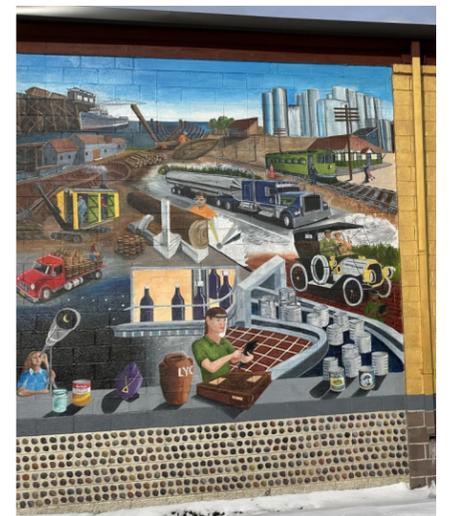
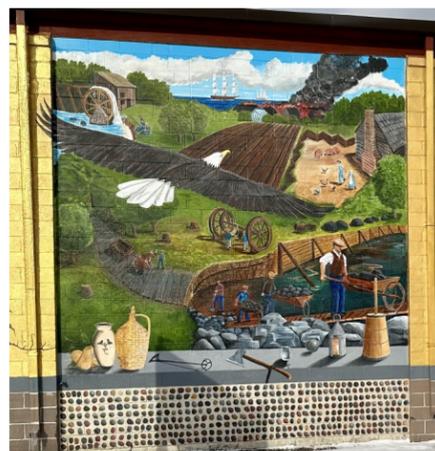
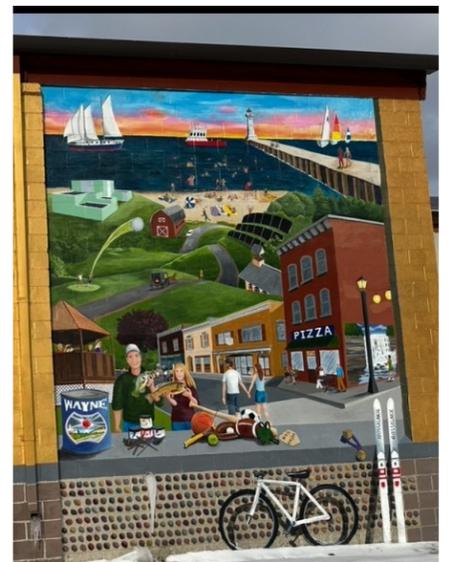
Another part of the 150th celebration will take place on Sunday, April 27 at 1p.m. It is a banquet that will be held at Newark Grange Hall. A gathering time will begin the afternoon followed by a catered buffet dinner. After dinner a program is planned including a visit by a National Grange officer. Other Grange dignitaries and county officials are invited to attend. A few accomplishments of the celebrating Eureka, Lincoln and Newark will be noted. Grange families who have remained on the same farm land continuously for 100 years will be recognized. All Grangers and friends are welcome to attend. Reservations by April 15 would be appreciated. The cost of the banquet is \$20.00. Make checks payable to Wayne County Pomona Grange and mail to Patricia VanLare, 5413 VanLare Rd. Williamson, NY 14589.

The large mural on the Thacher building on Rt. 104 in Williamson shows many facets of Wayne County history including Grange. The emblem is prominently seen in the bottom right corner. This mural is the concluding event from the Wayne County Bicentennial in 2023. Including the Grange was mentioned to Mark DeCracker, originator of Mural Mania, at the county fair last summer by Deb VanLare. She and all Grangers are thrilled with this public display of Grange as it is on a heavily traveled highway. Look for it if you happen to travel that way.



# Albany County Ravena Grange

On December 15, 2024 the members and friends of Ravena Grange gathered at Pegasus restaurant in West Coxsackie for their annual Christmas Party. Following dinner and a program relating to the season, continuous membership awards were presented to several members. Pictured left to right are Ismay Payne, 75 years, Starr Ross, 25 years, Nancy Payne, 55 years, Jo Downey, Grange Master/President, and Naomi Kier, 70 years. Susan Telfer, unable to attend, was recognized for 55 years of continuous membership.



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