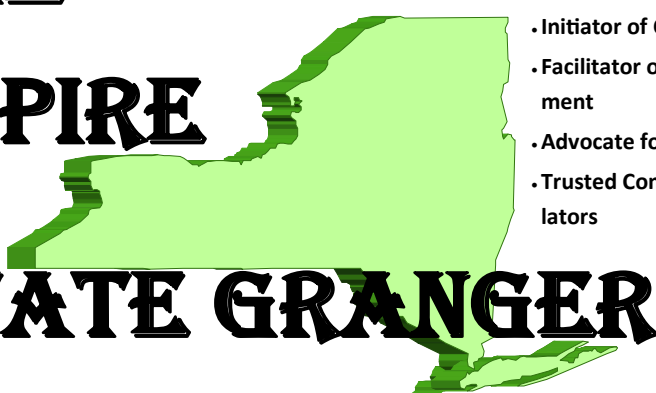



THE EMPIRE STATE GRANGER



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 2025

President's Column

Sandra Green



Each April, Grangers across the Nation celebrate Grange Month. During this time members reflect on and celebrate what belonging to the Grange means. As the Earth renews her greenery, Grangers renew their commitment to the organization that they love. Seeds are planted and growth begins. Every Grange member is involved in GROWING THE GRANGE. We should share information about what the Grange is, and who Grangers are, not because we want to “increase the numbers”, but because we all know how wonderful belonging to the Grange can be. We need to let non-members know why we love the Grange. Each time one of us asks someone to join, attend a meeting, or participate in an event, we are speaking to a potential future brother or sister. Be welcoming. Assure them that our family bonds can withstand differences of opinion. A quote I learned from my father says, “It has become clear to me that I can respect a lot of people with

whom I disagree.” Not only do Grangers respect one another, we genuinely care. Who wouldn’t want to join a family like that?

Be sure to ask folks what interests them. Find out what help your Grange might be able give. The person to whom you are speaking may never want to join Grange, but what you learn in the conversation may provide your Grange with its next community service project. All Granges having fundraisers will have more non-Grangers participate if they are engaged with others in the community.

Be proud of all that your local Grange has done over the years. Remind the community of traditional activities the Grange helped start. Inform others of service projects in which your Grange has participated. For far too long we have not taken credit for our accomplishments. There is nothing wrong with tooting your own horn.

Growing the Grange was one topic discussed at the National Leaders Conference. The workshop included lots of suggestions on the best way to reach out to those who might be interested. Not everyone can be reached in the same way. Sharing this publication might be best for some people. Others can be engaged best at functions in which your Grange is involved. And, the personal invite will never go out of style.

More ideas are available from the National Grange. The National Leaders and Staff asked that Grange members reach out to them to let them know how they might better meet our needs/wants. What do **you** want from National? More discount programs? Are there posters/flyers you would like to have available? What topics would you like to see explored on the National internet meetings? Please let them know.

Project Sustenance was discussed at another National Grange Leadership workshop. This new project from

the National Grange has grants available for local Granges which hope to provide programs to help their communities with Food Security, Self-sustainability, and Resilience. This could be a great fit for many Granges. Check it out online or contact National Grange.

A sense of EMPOWERMENT is something very Grange member should feel. The Grange is abundant in opportunities for this. Through the Grange one can explore new activities, share talents, take leadership positions, serve the community, encourage legislative policy changes at any level of government. There is a place in the Grange for anyone who wants to get involved with others.

Take time, not just during Grange Month, but throughout the year, to embrace the sense of empowerment Grange gives you. Use your opportunities to help others, in big ways and small. Share your love of Grange with all the people you encounter.

I leave you with this final thought: The Grange is Rooted, Resilient, United, a Powerful Force For Good.

Grange
Revival

Grange Revival, slated for July 21-27, 2025 in Torrey Utah at Thousand Lakes RV Park, campground and cabins, is a family event open for all Grange members and friends to create and strengthen fraternal bonds. From outdoor activities to off properties activities with lots of time to kick back and relax with other Grangers, there is something for everyone. Take part in planned activities or excursions or strike out on your own to find some fun during the day. Then head back to the campground at night to enjoy a communal meal and maybe even some campfire songs.

Bring your RV, load your car and pack a tent, fly to your destination and stay in a cabin or enjoy the experience with some added creature comforts at a nearby hotel. All the fun of Grange Revival is waiting for you! And

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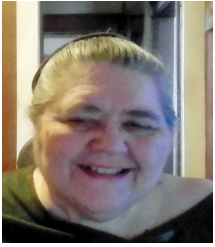
It is the time of the year when we are starting our planning for the Grange building at the State Fair.

We are reaching out to Granges that do displays at their local fairs. We have two boxes for displays. We would like to invite you to set your display during the State Fair. The boxes are 4 foot X 8 foot by 4 foot. They are lighted and has electric available. The set up is the Sunday or Monday prior to the start of the fair and take down is the Tuesday after Labor Day.

If you might be interested setting up your display, please contact me at my email address at cbenson81@msn.com. I will share all the details with you.

Please join us in promoting the Grange at the Great New York State Fair.

Legislative Column



Cindy Benson-Pollard

Spring has arrived and winter is on its way out. Things are turning green, and flowers are starting to grow. Are you growing in your Grange? Have you written a resolution to help update our Grange policy for the coming year?

This is a busy time in Albany. I hope that by the time you read this article, the legislature will have passed a timely budget for the coming year. They have also been discussing issues that are important to all of us. The Grange has been busy actively advocating for those issues that are part of our current policy.

We were successful in advocating for two issues that were signed into law by the Governor. These were and update to the Safe Schools environment act calling for a plan when temperatures are too warm for a safe learning environment and the second was for localities to allow for installment payments for property taxes. We have also been working on issues such as public input before rural hospital closures, prohibiting the use of fracking fluids on highways, expansion of available telehealth services and the need for defibrillators in private schools.

You may have started receiving email blasts asking for your help in our legislative efforts. I hope that we can count on you for your help. If you are on the email list, thank you for helping. Please be sure that you share this request with other members in your Grange so that they can help as well. By taking part in these efforts, you help to make your community a better place to live and to let others know that the Grange is working for their benefit.

When writing to your representative, we encourage you to be courteous. State the reason that you are writing to them, outline your position on the issue and always be sure to end by saying thank you for their time and consideration of your posi-

tion. A little honey goes a long way to having them listen to what you have to say. In our email blasts, we provide you with a sample letter for your use in writing. If you would like help with writing a letter, please reach out to me for help. I will always be glad to help you in any way I can.

Just a short reminder to Pomona Grange Secretaries. Please do not wait to send in your resolutions for consideration this year. It helps with the typing and research that happens prior to session. August is a busy time of year for me. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Leadership Membership

Thomas Lawton

Leadership/Membership Department Launches New Initiatives to Strengthen Granges Across New York

The Leadership/Membership Department is excited to announce a series of new programs aimed at strengthening and revitalizing Granges throughout New York State. These initiatives are designed to support local Granges in their efforts to grow, engage members, and ensure the continued vitality of our Order. In the coming months, the Department will be working to open new Granges in communities where interest is growing and reorganize dormant or struggling Granges where the spark still exists. If you know of an area or group interested in starting or revitalizing a Grange, we encourage you to reach out — this is a key part of our mission in the year ahead.

Additionally, the Department will be offering materials, resources, and training opportunities to any Grange wishing to participate in a statewide new member recruitment campaign. Whether you're looking to boost visibility in your community, attract new members, or reconnect with lapsed ones, support will be available to help you succeed. For Granges seeking a boost in energy or direction, a new revitalization program will offer hands-on assistance tailored to the needs of each individual Grange. If your Grange could benefit from a fresh perspective, please don't hesitate to request this help — we are here to work with you.

Training opportunities will

also be expanded this year to include a program on code reading and understanding the Unwritten Work — an important part of our ritual and identity. This training will help members deepen their knowledge and confidence in our traditions.

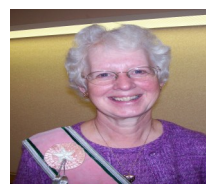
Leadership development is also a top priority. The Department will be hosting two regional events focused on strengthening Grange leaders across the state. These gatherings will provide valuable tools, fresh ideas, and peer support to help leaders grow and adapt in these changing times. Whether you're a long-time officer or just starting out, these events are designed to inspire and equip you for success.

Finally, a new member recognition program is being developed to honor and celebrate the efforts of members who go above and beyond in service to their Grange. This initiative is designed to highlight the dedication, hard work, and commitment of individuals whose contributions help their Granges thrive.

Stay tuned for more details on how to take part in these programs — and thank you for all you do to make your Grange and the New York State Grange strong, active, and welcoming.

Together, we can grow.

Chaplain's Corner



Virginia L. Conner

SHARP

I admit there are days when I don't feel like "the sharpest knife in the drawer". Have you ever felt like that? We all have to admit there are many reasons why we may not feel sharp but dull instead.

Let's ask — what does sharp mean? Here are just a few from the dictionary: clearly defined; distinct: as a sharp difference; quick in perception or intellect; clever; attentive; vigilant: as sharp eyes; pungent: as in taste; attractively groomed.

Let's see what the Bible says about sharp. Oh, lots of sharp objects in the Old Testament books of Exodus, Joshua, I Samuel and Isaiah: stones, knives, rocks and arrows. Then in Psalms 57:4 it

says the "tongue is a sharp sword" and Isaiah 49:2 "He has made my mouth like a sharp sword". In Psalms 52:2, "our tongue is like a sharp razor". Oh my, the tongue seems to be a concern. This part of our anatomy seems to be a focus from God to us. Isn't it true that our tongue shifts into gear and says hurtful, sharp words before our mind thinks through what we should say?

It would be wise for us to heed God's Word about our tongues and use them to speak kindness, truth and loving words to uplift, comfort and encourage those around us. A sharp tongue can spread hurt and a God-filled tongue can spread love.

From the Living Bible: Hebrews 4:12: "For whatever God says to us is full of living power: it is sharper than the sharpest dagger, cutting swift and deep into our innermost thoughts and desires with all their parts, exposing us for what we really are."

Even the last book in the Bible, Revelation 14 verse 14 has the word sharp in it. Check it out.

Our sympathy is sent to the family of Cheryl (Knowles) McGlynn, Steuben County Pomona Master. Cheryl passed to Grange Above on April 3, 2025.

Youth



Co-Directors
Johannah Stewart & Sarah Barber

National Grange offers two awards specifically for Youth and Young Adult members. These awards are the Wib and June Justi Community Service Award and the National Grange Junior Mentor Award. Members ages 14 to 30 are eligible. A Candidate for either award must be nominated by their Subordinate, Pomona, State Grange, State Master, or State Youth Director. The nominees are reviewed by a panel of judges who will se-

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2) Youth

lect winners for each award. Recipients will be announced at the National Grange Convention.

The purpose of the Wib and June Justi Community Service Award is to honor a youth or young adult member who has gone above and beyond for their community. Community Service allows local members to interact and service the communities where they reside. Wib Justi served as the first National Grange Director of Youth Activities. He and his wife, June, served in that position for 18 years. This award is given to a youth or young adult who exemplifies the life of the Justis: Serving others with positivity and dedication.

The information needed for the online application includes how the nominee possesses an attitude of service, a description of the service project in which they participated, and the impact made as a result of their service.

The National Junior Mentor Award’s purpose is to honor a youth or young adult member who makes an impact by serving and mentoring Junior Grange Members. The award is designed to recognize the youth and young adults that go above and beyond to guide and mentor Junior Grangers.

The online application for the National Grange Junior Mentor Award includes why the nominee should be selected, how the nominee has impacted Junior Grangers, and list specific activities, projects, etc. that the nominee participated in or led to impact Junior Grangers.

Applications for both of these awards must be received by September 1, 2025. Do you have a youth in your Grange that qualifies for either of these awards?

State Grange Secretary



Ryan Orton

ESG ARTICLE – MAY 2025
It’s time to begin planning for the Annual State Grange Session! The 153rd Annual Session

of the New York State Grange is hosted by Jefferson County. The Session will be held from October 17 – 21 at the Hilton Garden Inn; 1290 Arsenal Street; Watertown, NY 13601 (Jefferson County). The room rate at the Hilton Garden Inn will be \$159 per night (plus 11% sales & occupancy tax); this rate includes breakfast. Lunch and dinner will be available daily at the hotel restaurant at your own expense. This rate will be honored for Thursday and Tuesday if anyone wishes to come early or leave a day later. The reservation cut-off date is Sunday, September 21st. Grangers who are not part of the "Official Family" should make a reservation directly with the hotel at (315) 788-1234 and give the New York State Grange Group Number: "90E." Check in time is 4 p.m. and check out time is 12 noon.

Rooms will also be available at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites adjacent to the Hilton Garden Inn. Room rates here are \$139 per night (plus 11% sales & occupancy tax); this rate also includes breakfast. Reservations must be made by Sunday, September 21st, and can be made by calling the hotel directly at (315) 779-1234. Give the New York State Grange Group Number for this hotel: "NCG." Check in time is 4 p.m. and check out time is 12 noon.

Please note that, for both hotels, all changes to confirmed reservation dates must be made at or prior to checking into the Hotel to avoid early check out fees. Contact me via e-mail if you wish to make your reservations online, and I will send you the information to do this.

There will be one meal function for the entire Grange Family on Friday evening, October 17th. Those arrangements will be shared later by Melvin Phelps, State Overseer, who will be handling notification and meal reservations. The Conferral of the Sixth Degree will be on Saturday, October 18th at 7:30 p.m. Sixth Degree Tickets will be mailed to Pomona Granges in the Jefferson County area for advanced registrations. They will also be available at State Ses-

sion. The initiation fee for candidates taking the Sixth Degree is \$10.

The Delegate selection process is outlined in the New York State Grange By-Laws – Article II, Section 2.2: "The Pomona Grange of each County/District, at the regular meeting in July or prior to, shall elect or appoint one Delegate-at-Large and one other Delegate, who is the spouse of the Delegate-at-Large or another Pomona Grange shall elect one pair of Delegates for every 100 members or major fraction thereof." Delegates are eligible to serve only if their Grange is current in dues to State Grange with the submission of the March 2025 Quarterly Report. State Officers, Deputies, and Junior Deputies cannot serve as Delegates to State Session.

Pomona Secretaries: Please return the Delegates Form by Friday, August 15th to me at my home address: 218 Attlebury Hill Road; Stanfordville, NY 12581. Please complete the form in its entirety; this information is vital for virtual Committee Meetings prior to State Session. The only Committee planning to meet in person at State Session is the Grange Issues Committee. Others will meet in person if they are unable to finish their resolution work virtually. Cindy Benson-Pollard, State Grange Legislative Director, will create a schedule for these virtual Committee Meetings, and these arrangements will be shared later. Also, please note if any of your Delegates are first time Delegates to State Grange. It is the duty of the Delegates attending to notify either the State Master or State Secretary if you are leaving Session early and will not be present to vote on all matters presented before the Delegate Body or if there will be a Delegate Substitution due to the departure of a Delegate for any reason. There has been confusion when Counties were called for the roll, and no answer was returned as well as when a Granger who was a visitor at the beginning of Session suddenly became a Voting Delegate. Help us keep

our records accurate, especially when important votes are taken, by notifying us if there is a Delegate substitution or if you are leaving Session early.

All Delegates and attendees are reminded that, per vote of the Delegate Body on Resolution GI-33 at the 2024 State Grange Session in Oswego, the following Registration Fees were adopted:

- \$10 for all attending Grangers receiving a packet.
- \$5 for all attending Grangers who do not receive a packet.
- Grangers under the age of 21 do not have a registration fee.

The Executive Committee invites Pomona Granges alphabetically from Albany to Jefferson to provide an item that can be included on the Silent Auction Table for 2025. We appreciate your willingness to participate in this Annual Fundraiser. Instructions will be given on Friday evening as to the location of where items are to be delivered on Saturday of Session.

I’m already excited to see everyone in Watertown in October!

Lecturer



Brenda Noble

Lecturer

I hope everyone is having a great year so far. The National Grange Lecturer Contests are all posted to the National Grange website and are all to be submitted virtually by September 1, 2025. The contests include: Photo, Garden Design, Design-A-Program, and Creative Writing. Creative Writing contest: Adult Essay – "The Grange Is Important Today Because" Max 500 words; Short Story – "It Happened At/In Grange" max 500 words; Poetry – "The Grange of the Future" max 300 words.

The National Grange Quilt block design is Canning Jar. The directions on the National Grange website, but if you need a copy sent to you, please let me know. They are to be sent to the National Lec-

(Continued on page 5)



Grange Camp 2025 is continuing in the same manner as it has been the last few years. This program is open to Junior/ Youth Grangers and Non-Grangers alike. We are planning four “Kids Day Out” events around the State this year. Below is the four different locations for Grange Camp/Kids Day Out 2025. Kids Day Out will be 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM at each location and the cost is \$20.00 per attendee. Lunch and fun activities will be provided. Registrations will be due July 1, 2025 (no late registrations will be accepted). If parents/adults would like to stay for the day, there will be a \$5.00 charge for lunch.

Monday, July 28, 2025 Stanford Grange #808, Dutchess County, 6043 Route 82, Standfordville, NY 12581

Tuesday, July 29, 2025

Walton Grange, Delaware County, 135 Stockton Avenue, Walton, NY 13856

Wednesday, July 30, 2025 – North Cameron Grange, Steuben County, 5727 Gulf Road, Cameron, NY 14819

Friday, August 1, 2025 - Kirkland Grange, Jefferson County, Lutheran Community Hall, 43668 Lake Street, Redwood, NY 13679

We are looking for donations to help keep the cost of Kids’ Day Out to a minimum for families. We will be potting flowers at each location to help beautify the area. If your Grange in near one of our locations and would like to donate some flowers, soil, or flower pots, please bring it to the Kids’ Day Out location nearest to your Grange prior to or the day of the event. If your Grange is not near a Kids’ Day Out location but you would still like to help out this program, monetary donations can be sent to New York State Grange Headquarters, 100 Grange Place, Cortland, NY 13045 and put Kids’ Day out on the memo line.

If you have any questions about this program or how to give a donation, please contact the camp directors: Sherri Horner, call (315)380-2294 or email at kidsbreak1@yahoo.com or Ryan Orton, call (845)868-7869 or email at secretary@nysgrange.org

NEW YORK STATE GRANGE CAMP REGISTRATION FORM

Participant’s

Name: _____

Age: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Email: _____

Grange member? ____ Yes ____ No

If yes, Grange name and number: _____

County: _____

Date and location of Grange Camp attending: _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Doctor: _____

Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Insurance Company: _____

Group # _____

Allergies: _____

Medical Problems/Restrictions: _____

Medications: _____

CONSENTS

EMERGENCY CONSENT: It is the policy of the New York State Grange and its divisions to notify a parent when a child is ill or needs medical attention. In situations where the parent

cannot be contacted and immediate help for the child is needed, our procedure is to take the child to the nearest emergency service. Please sign below so that we can take appropriate action on behalf of your child. **I hereby give my/our consent for my/our child named above when ill or injured, to be taken to the nearest emergency center by the charge person or persons when we cannot be contacted. I consent to an ambulance being called to transport my child, if necessary. I further agree to pay all costs incurred for the transport. I hereby agree to release the sponsoring Grange and its representatives from liability for any injury to the above named person resulting from any cause whatsoever while attending the above Grange sponsored event, excepting only such injury or damage resulting from willful acts of such representatives.**

PHOTOGRAPHY CONSENT: It is ☐ **permissible** ☐ **not permissible** for the New York State Grange and its divisions to use photographs of my child taken at the event for press, brochure, and publicity purposes, including electronic and social media.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Junior Grange

Summer is just around the corner! Is your Junior Grange planning activities that would bring children into your Grange? Summer time is the perfect time to plan an activity, either in your Grange or at a local park. Plan a fun activity for the children, and while they are at the event, information about Junior Grange should be available for the parents to read and learn more about Grange. Let us do all that we can to increase our Junior Grange membership! Please let me know when you are having an event, and I will be glad to attend and talk about Junior Grange to all of the attendees.

The 2025 National Grange Handbook is now on the National Grange website. All of the programs for 2025 are in this handbook. One of the programs is Agricultural Awareness and the theme is Water as it relates to Agriculture. As New York is an agricultural state, this is a great project for our Junior Grange members to work on.

SUBMISSIONS FOR AWARD MUST BE MADE BY September 1 via email to nationaljuniorgrange@gmail.com

Complete the following tasks to receive your 2025 AG Awareness Award!

1. **RESEARCH:** Define what Water is and what Agriculture is. Now identify why water is needed in Agriculture.
2. **RESEARCH:** Through online resources or by visiting your local library research how Agriculture can use water more efficiently.
3. **RESEARCH:** What Crops use the most Water.
4. **IDENTIFY:** 3 different ways farmers collect water for usage in Agriculture.

5. Pick at least **TWO** of the following:

- A. **ACTIVITY:** Create an art project using water.
- B. **MAKE:** Small scale rain barrel
- C. **MAKE:** Water sources model using cardboard and color paper.
- D. **BUILD:** A usable Tower Garden.

6. **SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW:** 1. Create a poster to teach others about the multiple uses of water in agriculture.

7. **TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:** 1. Create an activity that can be used as a Lecturers program to test people’s knowledge about ways water is effective in agriculture.

8. **SHARE WHAT YOU KNOW:** Take all the things you learned about water – as it relates to agriculture and make a plan on how you are going to inform your family, friends, and community.

Submit the following information:

- A brief synopsis (no longer than 1 page) of your research
- Picture of your poster
- Pictures of your two activities
- Pictures of your efforts to bring awareness! (Talking to neighbors, at your Grange meeting, etc...)

(Continued from page 3) Lecturer

turer by September 1, 2025 with an entry form.

We are looking forward to Grange Day at the New York State Fair on Saturday August 30, 2025. It would be great for everyone to attend and support the Grange with the program in the Grange building. We will see you there!

Family Activities

Maryanne Campbell

As the Subordinate and Pomona contests come to an end our State Contest will be soon upon us. Our committee will be setting up on Thursday, April 24th. The judging will take place on Friday, 1:00 PM, April 25th. Saturday, April 26th the winners will be announced at our Conference Meeting. The first and second place winners will be displayed at our State Conference in October.

Our judges recognize artistic talent. Items will be judged based on the category criteria, creativity, originality and skill. We are fully committed to every one of our crafters to maintain equal opportunities based on the commitment, time, skill and dedication you all put into the craft items submitted. Each member of our Family Activities Committee are crafters as well.

The Big E contest always takes place in September. The first-place winners at our contest will be entered in specific categories to the Big E. All those items will be sent to the Big E by August 15th or sooner. Items for the Big E store can be mailed to me by the same date. Some items have already been mailed out. Thank you to all of you that have made and donated crafts to the Big E store. Once again if anyone is interested in working at the Big E store, just let us know.

Autoimmune Diseases are our topic for health education this year. Each committee member chose three diseases to research and obtain educational information for our Patrons and the community. Please check our

display table for information available to you. Autoimmune Diseases are characterized by the malfunction of our immune system. There are greater than 80 diseases listed. The diseases seem to be present in female more than males. They often begin in adulthood but can start at any age.

Nearly every part of your body can be involved. Approximately 98% of the people with Autoimmune Diseases complain of fatigue. The exact cause is unknown, however according to research, genetics, environmental, hormonal factors and certain infections. Upon my research of the diseases, it is believed that approximately 70% may be linked to environmental influences. Dietary habits are very important to review, to see if there are healthy changes you can make.

There are many areas you can check that will give you a wealth of information. Listed below are just a few: Mayo Clinic, Department of Health, Wikipedia and there are specific web sites for each disease. Purple is commonly associated for the awareness of Autoimmune diseases. Spring is a wonderful time for family activities, working together to plan and plant. Getting your gardens started whether it be vegetable, fruit, flower or herb. This is one of my favorite times of the year. There are some vegetables that can be planted in cooler weather, they like the cooler weather. I always have my peas planted in April but there are other seeds that can be planted once the soil is thawed.

Crop rotation is very important. Some information that I have reviewed encourages crops from the same family not to be placed in the same area more than once every 3-4 years. Now, I am not a Master Gardner, but I sure do enjoy working in all my gardens. So have fun with your gardens, do your research if you have any questions about planting. Our committee hopes to see many of you at the conference. As usual there will be a craft activity table. For those that are interested you can do a craft and bring the item home.

“Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.” Theodore Roosevelt
Please call or email me at: land line 607-847-6639, cell 607-226-4441. Please note that the email in our new Of-

ficial Directory is not my correct email. My correct email is kmcampbell@citlink.net.

Community Involvement



Melvin Phelps

May June Empire State Granger
Community Involvement Department
Melvin Phelps & Joan Phelps
Co-Directors

Happy Spring—Almost Summer! ☐☐

As the seasons change, it's the perfect time to take a fresh look at your community service projects. Have new needs popped up in your area over the winter? Maybe it's time to refresh your efforts, explore new opportunities, or make your current activities even more impactful.

As we head into the second half of the year, we wanted to share a few important updates from our department:

Yearbook Contest

The National Grange has made the decision to discontinue the Yearbook Contest on a national level. While this may be disappointing, we hope your Grange's motivation for service goes beyond awards and recognition. The good news: the New York State Grange will **continue the recognition program at the state level!** All rules and guidelines will remain the same for 2025. Just a reminder—yearbooks must be postmarked by **September 15th**.

Firefighter, Law Enforcement Officer, and Teacher of the Year Awards

National Grange has also discontinued these programs. However, **we will continue them at the state level** as well. Information and nomination details can be found on the **NYS Grange website**.

If you have any questions, ideas, or suggestions for our department, please feel free to reach out to **Joan or Melvin**. We're always happy to hear from you.

Stay tuned for the next issue of the *Empire State Granger*, where we'll share details on the **Back-Pack Program** and information about **“C” bill donations**. Let's keep the momentum going and continue making a difference in our communities!

Sports



Co-Directors
Bruce Dehner & Matt Horton

Goodbye winter hello spring. Dart ball would have been completed when you read this results next issue. Hope everyone has their teams ready for bowling on June 1st at Cort lanes entry forms are in the mail if anyone needs one get ahold of me. Golf is July 6th please note the date change at Orchard Valley Golf Course in Lafayette NY. Corn hole is Aug 2nd at state headquarters. Everyone get some practice in and come out and have a great time.
Bruce



SUPPLY STORE

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!

Order online through the Grange Supply Store at grangestore.org or call Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109.

\$5.00 PER ISSUE
(plus shipping)

or subscribe at nationalgrange.org/goodday

(Continued from page 1) Grange Revival

don’t forget: bring your friends! You need not be a Grange member to attend (but you sure will want to be after it’s over!).

Grange Revival includes numerous activities for attendees both on-site and around the area. Similar to a cruise, you can choose what to take part in and when to just relax with friends or on your own. It's your vacation - enjoy it with your Grange family your way.

Craft workshops and activities will be led by Grange members for attendees. You may learn a new skill or pick up a new hobby while having fun at Grange Revival!

Each evening, a group meal will be held in a designated location, cooked by Grangers and covered by registration cost. Each attendee is expected to help assist with one days meal preparation and cleanup. Skits, campfires and so much more will all be part of the experience daily.

Find more information on the National Grange Website under Events

Calendar Of Events

NEW YORK STATE GRANGE 2025 Calendar of Events, Activities, & Dues Dates	
	Junior Grange Quarterly Report Due to State Secretary
April 1-30	GRANGE MONTH – Plan a special public activity/ event
April 15	Art/Photo Entries due at HDQ for Judging
April 15	Talent Entry Report Sheets due to the State Lecturer
April 15	Woodworking, Quilting, & Needlework due at HDQ for Judging
April 15	Empire State Granger Copy Due for May June Edition
April 26	Lecturer/FAC Conference – HDQ
April 27	State Dartball Tournament – HDQ @ 9 a.m.
May 1	Executive Committee Meeting, 4:00 p.m. - Zoom
May 7 – 9	NYS FFA Convention, State Fairgrounds – Syracuse
June 1	State Bowling Tournament – Cortlanes Bowling Alley, Cortland, 12:00 noon
June 15	Empire State Granger Copy Due for July August Edition
June 19	Executive Committee Meeting – Hilton Garden Inn in Watertown – 10 a.m.
June 30	Subordinate Dues to State Secretary
June 30	Junior Grange Quarterly Report Due to State Secretary
July 13	State Golf Tournament – Orchard Valley Golf Course, Lafayette, NY, 9 a.m.
July 24	Executive Committee Meeting – Headquarters – Budget –10 a.m.
July 28 – August 1	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
August 2	Cornhole Tournament - HDQ
August 15	Empire State Granger Copy Due for September October Edition
August 20 – Sept. 1	New York State Fair – Syracuse
August 30	Grange Day at New York State Fair
September 1	Community Service Reports due to Director
September 1	National JG Report due
Sept. 12 – 28	Eastern States Exposition (The Big E) – West Springfield, MA
September 15	Lecturer’s Reports due to State Lecturer
September 19 – 21	Fall Youth Weekend – Brunswick Grange Hall – Rensselaer County

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September 21 September September 27 September 30 September 30 October 17 – 21	Grange Day at the Big E – West Springfield, MA Executive Committee Meeting – TBA Legislative Day, 9 a.m. Subordinate Dues to State Secretary Junior Grange Quarterly Report to State Secretary 153 rd Annual New York State Grange Session–Hilton Garden Inn, Watertown
October 21	Executive Committee Meeting – Hilton Garden Inn in Watertown – 10 a.m.
October 21	New York State Grange Cultural & Educational Foundation Meeting – Hilton Garden Inn in Watertown
October 25	Empire State Granger Copy Due for November December Edition
November 8 – 16	159 th Annual National Grange Convention – Carnival Horizon Cruise out of Miami, FL
December 15	Empire State Granger Copy Due for January February Edition
December December 31 December 31	Executive Committee Meeting – TBA Subordinate Dues to State Secretary 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.

(Continued from page 4) Junior

Individual Junior Submissions **MUST HAVE**

- Name
- Age
- Grange Name & Number
- State
- Mailing Address
- Email/ Phone Number

Junior Grange Submissions **MUST HAVE:**

- Junior Grange Name & Number
- Junior Leader’s Name
- State
- Mailing Address
- Email/Phone Number

Cortland County



'Albright Grange #440 was proud to present a 50 Year Golden Sheaf to member Paul Albright. Paul Albright was presented the Sheaf by his daughter Vickie Albright. Paul spent many years entertaining Grange members and the community playing piano with friends and fellow Granger Gerald Young on the harmonica. Congratulations Paul from your Grange family.'

The National Grange is pleased to announce the 2004 National Grange News Corner. Each family selected will receive a certificate and feature in the National Convention. The deadline for nominations is September 10, 2004 and should be sent to the

The Time is Now for the Silent Majority to Speak Up
By Christine E. Hamp, President of the National Grange



In every city council chamber, statehouse, and congressional hearing room, decisions are being made that shape the future of our families, communities, and country. Yet far too often, those decisions are influenced by the loudest voices – not necessarily the wisest or most representative ones.

For too long, the so-called “silent majority” – hardworking, civic-minded Americans – have taken a back seat in the advocacy process. We have trusted that “common sense” would prevail, that our leaders would act in our collective best interest, and that simply voting every couple of years would be enough.

It isn’t.

Democracy demands more than silence. It requires active participation. It thrives when everyday people – including farmers, teachers, small business owners, healthcare workers, construction workers and skilled laborers, students, and retirees – make their voices heard. It’s time for the silent majority to stop assuming someone else will speak for them and start showing up, standing up, and speaking out.

As President of the National Grange, I see firsthand how deeply our members care about

their communities. We believe in strong values, in service to others, in tradition, and in progress. But I also see that many feel disconnected from the legislative process – disillusioned, frustrated, or simply overwhelmed. The truth is that advocacy isn’t just for professionals or partisans. **It’s for all of us.**

You don’t need a lobbyist’s credentials to walk into your legislator’s office. You only need your voice. A personal letter, a well-placed phone call, a presence at a town hall meeting or community function – these are powerful tools that too few use. And in their absence, the vacuum is filled by those with more narrow, sometimes self-serving agendas.

We must remember that silence can be interpreted as acceptance. When small, independent pharmacies close due to unjust reimbursement systems, when broadband once again skips our back roads, when healthcare becomes harder to access and education less equitable – our silence can cost us dearly. But our engagement can turn the tide.

The Grange has always stood for active citizenship. We were founded on the idea that when neighbors and communities work together, we don’t just react to change – we lead it. Today, that spirit is more essential than ever. To the silent majority: you are not invisible. Your values, your experience, and your insight are needed in every conversation about the future of this nation. Let’s turn silence into action – at the local, state, and national level. Democracy doesn’t just belong to the loud. It belongs to the engaged.

Let’s act today.

Op Ed: A Better Path: Why “Slash and Burn” Social Policy Fails Rural America

Across America, we are seeing an alarming trend in policymaking – what I call the “slash and burn” approach. In an effort to cut costs, some leaders are gutting programs that support hardworking families, rural infrastructure, education, and agriculture. In the name of “efficiency,” communities are being stripped of essential resources and funding, leaving small towns and rural areas to fend for themselves.

Let me be clear: fiscal responsibility is important. Wasteful spending must be curbed, and government programs should be accountable to taxpayers. But reckless, across-the-board cuts without consideration for real-life consequences are not leadership – they are short-sighted, reactionary decisions that harm the very people they claim to serve and weaken the foundation of rural America.

The Cost of Cutting Without a Plan

Too often, rural America bears the brunt of these cuts. Programs that provide high-speed internet, rural healthcare access, agriculture research, and small business support are slashed with little thought to the long-term economic impact.

Consider proposed cuts to broadband expansion: Gutting funding for rural internet access doesn’t just save money – it puts a stranglehold on rural America. It means students will struggle to access education and complete assignments, farmers will be cut off from critical tools that help increase yield and market their goods, and local businesses will be unable to compete in a modern digital marketplace. That’s not “fiscal responsibility” – that’s setting rural America back by decades, pushing young families and businesses out of rural communities.

The same goes for cuts to agricultural programs. Farming isn’t just a business – it’s a way of life that feeds this nation. Slashing conservation programs, research funding, or cooperative extension services doesn’t “trim the fat” – it cripples family farms, undermining the very foundation of American food security.

Investing Smarter, Not Cutting Deeper

Instead of knee-jerk cuts, we need smart, strategic investment that ensures efficiency without abandoning communities. The National Grange has always believed in local solutions, self-reliance, and responsible governance – but we also know that

government has a role in laying the foundation for rural success by building up these communities before it's too late. Rather than gutting rural healthcare, let's reform existing policies to reduce administrative or overhead waste while expanding access to care. Rather than slashing funding for schools, let's invest in vocational training, apprenticeships, and modernized rural education. Rather than cutting agriculture programs, let's ensure funding prioritizes family farms and rural resilience.

“Slash and burn” cuts weaken rural America, but smart investments make it stronger. Creating the right policies and reforms won't just prevent economic decline; they will create opportunity, growth, and the potential for prosperity, thus allowing rural communities to rely less on government funding in the long term.

The Grange Way: Strong Communities, Strong Nation

For almost 160 years, the Grange has stood for rural prosperity, community-driven solutions, and balanced leadership. We reject the idea that progress comes from tearing down – we believe in building up and giving every citizen the opportunity for success.

Slashing budgets without a plan is easy. Leading with vision, investing in people, and creating sustainable solutions is harder – but it's the right path forward.

I urge our leaders to abandon the “slash and burn” mindset and instead commit to a measured, thoughtful approach that strengthens rural America rather than leaving it behind.

Equally, I urge those living in rural communities to demand policies that build up, not degrade, our communities. Demand support for policies and initiatives strengthening rural infrastructure, education, and agriculture.

Because when rural communities thrive, our entire nation is stronger.

Common Sense: The missing ingredient in American politics, and what Congress can learn from Rural America

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 too is our capacity to overcome them—if we work together. As Grangers, as Americans, and as neighbors, let us lead the way in restoring common sense to our politics and unity to our nation.

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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