



The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

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Use your voice to affect policy

By [Betsy E. Huber](#), National Grange President

I hope you will tune in on Zoom on Monday night (see below) to hear the latest in the Convention Zoom series, “The Resolution Process.” Moderator Pete Pompper will talk with Burton Eller, National Grange Legislative Director, and several special guests from local Granges.

The main purpose of the National Grange session is to adopt policies that we will support in the coming year(s). Where do these suggested policies come from? They come from YOU, the individual Grange members who submit them to your Community Grange.

Do you realize that you can influence Grange policy and through it change the law? As an individual, you have a voice in our democracy, but it’s a small voice. Joining with your fellow Grangers, your voice is amplified and can have a great influence on what happens in your town, your state Capitol, and in Congress.

The way you can do this is through resolutions. If you see a problem, write a resolution and bring it to your local Grange. There are instructions on how to write a resolution [HERE](#). If you need more help, call on your State President or legislative director, or call us here in the National Grange office.

We’re looking forward to lots of great resolutions to be considered in Niagara Falls in November.



THE RESOLUTION PROCESS
OR HOW YOU CAN DIRECTLY AFFECT POLICY

Join us on Zoom on August 14 at 8:30pm
to learn about the Grange Resolution process and how **you** can make a difference - locally, statewide, or nationwide, in the Grange and for the whole country.

CONNECT:
<http://grange.biz/resolution>
or
Meeting ID: 843 1330 1420
Passcode: 996145

*Join us on August 14th at 8:30pm Eastern for this Zoom about the Grange Resolution process and how **you** can make a difference – locally, statewide, or nationwide, in the Grange and for the whole country.*

[Click Here to Join!](#)

National Grange Youth deadlines approaching

By [Samantha Wilkins](#), National Grange Junior & Youth Development Director



We are just days away from the deadline to submit applications and projects for most National Grange Contests and applications. So the question becomes, have you submitted your applications yet?

The National Grange Youth Department has many deadlines quickly approaching and wants you to think about how your Grange youth & young adult members, or even your whole Grange can get involved.

John Trimble Youth Legislative Experience

If you are a youth or young adult member interested in learning about the inner workings of the legislative side of the Grange, then this is the experience for you. Two (2) youth could have the opportunity to be selected to spend the week at our National Convention, working directly with committees reviewing resolutions as a voting member on a committee and as a staff assistant to the National Grange Legislative Director. This experience will give the youth members a true inside look at the legislative aspect of the National Grange, seeing the grassroots legislative policy development effort at the National Grange convention. [Applications are due September 1.](#)

National Grange Leadership Team (Youth Ambassador & Young Patron Program)

The purpose of the Leadership Ambassador/Young Patron program is to provide an opportunity for youth, young adults, and young couples, selected to represent their state at a National Grange Convention the opportunity to build their leadership potential, broaden their view of the Grange by experiencing a National Convention, and receive educational training to use in their own states, along with the chance to build relationships with Grangers throughout the nation, and most importantly have fun while doing it. Each participant of the Leadership program will have the opportunity to compete for their chance to be a part of the National Youth Leadership team. This team will then serve for a 1-year term as the National liaisons for the Youth department and will be the voice and face of the youth across the nation. [Applications will be due September 1](#) and the applications can be found in the youth handbook.

Youth Officer Team

September 1 is also the deadline for the National Grange Youth Officer Team. This program in its long-standing tradition allows youth members from across the country to come together and open the National Grange Session and run a special part of the meeting. They will have the opportunity to meet with other Grange leaders that hold a National office and learn what it means to become a National Officer for the Grange. These youth will also have opportunities to share their thoughts and opinions on how the National Youth program can grow and change to benefit future generations. If your youth has yet to meet all of the requirements for the National Youth Officer team but is still interested in applying, we encourage you to still [submit an application](#), though priority will be given to those who completed all requirements.

Youth officer team T-shirt design - For the Youth opening during the National Grange Session each youth officer will sport a t-shirt designed by one of their peers. Designs may be sent as a png or jpeg image by September 15th to samantha@nationalgrange.org.

Wib and June Justi Youth Community Service Award

Community service is an integral part of the Grange that allows local members to interact and serve the communities where they reside. Do you have a youth in your state that has exemplified the Grange way through service? If so it is time for our State Presidents, Youth Directors/Committees, or state community service departments to nominate an outstanding youth for the Wib and June Justi Youth Community Service Award. [Nominations are due September 1](#) and applications can be found in the Grange Youth handbook.

Junior Mentor Award

Grange youth and young adults can have a powerful impact on the Grange experience for our younger members. And it is vital that we recognize those who have provided mentorship to our Junior Grangers. Do you have a youth who has gone above and beyond and invested their time to recognize and mentor our younger members? Now is the time to have your State Presidents, Youth Directors/Committees, and/or Junior Directors/Committees nominate an outstanding youth to receive the Junior Mentor Award this November. Again, applications can be found in the Grange youth handbook and [are due September 1](#).

Distinguished Youth Programs (State, Pomona, Subordinate/Community)

The Distinguished Youth Program is similar to the National Grange Distinguished Grange Awards program but its focus is to encourage state youth directors to get their youth/young adults to participate in all of the programs available to our members that appear in the youth program. Being named a Distinguished Youth Program shows your commitment to the youth of our organization. [Applications are due September 1](#).

Parli-Pro Contest

As we learned at several of the regional conferences this year, parliamentary procedure is all about how we run a meeting. At the National Session, we run a Parliamentary Procedure Contest which exemplifies Grange youth effectively participating in a business meeting. Teams can be made from youth across the country, by state or by region. You only need 6 members ages 14-35 to create a team. This year the contest will begin on Wednesday evening and will conclude with the winning team executing their meeting skills to the delegate body at the close of session on Friday. Team notifications are due September 1. If you are interested in a team but do not have other teammates, please contact National Youth and Junior Grange Director Samantha Wilkins at samantha@nationalgrange.org before September 1.

Grange Pillar Project Contest

Has your youth done something this year in their Grange Journey? This is what the Grange Pillar Contest/Projects are all about - doing something. If you are a Grange Youth (14-35) and have taken the initiative to plan a project your Grange has done from start to finish then you could qualify to participate in the Pillar Contest, where you will have the opportunity to present your project to a panel of judges during the National Grange Convention. The first step of the [contest is due September 1](#). For more information on how to submit your project please look at youth handbook found on www.nationalgrangeyouth.org.

There are a lot of ways that your youth can be involved or recognized on the National level. If you are interested in more information on any of these programs or how to apply please reach out to Samantha Wilkins, samantha@nationalgrange.org or review the Youth handbook. We hope that you will take this opportunity to come to Niagara Falls this November and create a new chapter in your #GrangeStory.

Advocacy Playbook: Farm Bill hurdles come into view

By [Burton Eller](#), National Grange Legislative Director



Farm Bills never move rapidly through the legislative process and are never easy to pass in the House and Senate. A multitude of interests have a stake in Farm Bill programs. These items range from food assistance programs, rural infrastructure grants and loans, beginning farmer assistance, and farm loans to milk pricing, commodity support, specialty crops, crop insurance, conservation, trade, and more.

The Farm Bill is a large funding authority pie but the demand from Farm Bill constituents is larger than the pie. Thus, a lobbying scramble ensues between traditional programs and new programs, regions of the country, food and farm programs, small and large producers, congressional districts, and the House and Senate versions of a Farm Bill.

Here are some major hurdles facing the House and Senate Agriculture committees as they begin to markup their versions of a new Farm Bill in September:

- **The calendar** – [The 2018 Farm Bill](#) authority for most programs expires September 30. It will be impossible to pass a new Farm Bill by then, so Congress will have to pass temporary extensions of expiring titles of the 2018 farm law. The last four Farm Bills have averaged just over 550 days from start to finish.
- **Commodity program changes** – A controversial idea is floating to [require producers to update the base acreage](#) they use to qualify for commodity payments. A mandatory update from the history of base acres to actual planted acres will create winners and losers that pits commodities and producers against each other. Commodity payments have been tied to a producer's base acres since 2002. Tying payments to base acres rather than planted acres was meant to ensure that farmers make planting decisions based on market prices rather than on government payments. But cropping patterns have changed over the last 20 years.
- **Conservation** – The [Inflation Reduction Act \(IRA\)](#) provided a huge bucket of money for conservation and environmental programs. The Farm Bill conservation title traditionally funds conservation programs as well. Some in Congress want to reduce Farm Bill conservation support and use the money for other programs such as nutrition assistance and beginning farmer support. Others are pushing to fully fund Farm Bill conservation in addition to existing IRA funding.
- **New and beginning farmer support** – Access to land is a huge barrier for those who wish to enter production agriculture. Several bipartisan marker bills have been introduced in both the House and Senate to add funding for community-led land access solutions to the Farm Bill. But money will need to be taken from other Farm Bill sections to accomplish this.
- **Tight budget** – Total Farm Bill spending is controlled by Congress' budget agreement and it's a tight budget. Unlike many Farm Bill years, there's no loose change lying around.
- **"All politics is local."** – This famous statement by former Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill certainly applies to Farm Bills. Lawmakers, particularly Senators, traditionally shed their partisan cloaks and work in unison to protect the interests of their constituents back home.

[Urgent Action Needed! Join the Grange in Supporting the Kidney PATIENT Act to Protect Access to Lifesaving Medicines](#)

The National Grange is thrilled to share an important update about preserving health care access for rural Americans. On July 28th, [the Kidney PATIENT Act \(H.R. 5074\)](#) was introduced in the U.S. House by Representatives Earl L. "Buddy" Carter (R-GA), Ann McLane Kuster (D-NH), Carol Miller (R-WV), and Terri Sewell (D-AL).

The Kidney PATIENT Act protects coverage for oral-only drugs, including phosphate lowering therapies (PLTs), for patients on dialysis under Medicare. This critical legislation delays the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) ability to move PLTs into a payment bundle which could hinder patient access to these essential medications, especially rural residents.

We are working to bring equal access to healthcare and new innovations to farmers, ranchers, and rural Americans. If CMS shifts oral-only medications like phosphate binders into to the end stage renal disease payment bundle, patients who already have limited access to care – like those in rural areas – will experience new hardships getting treatment.

[Take a moment today to reach out to CMS and urge them not to change current coverage of essential medicine for kidney patients.](#)

[Participate in a National Grange service project](#)

For 20 years, the Grange has been the leading voice advocating for the expansion of broadband into rural communities. Most frequently, we focus on the infrastructure of build-out, which is still a major factor keeping millions of Americans from high-speed, reliable internet to their homes. However, for others, broadband is available but unaffordable.

For this reason, the National Grange is actively working to promote the [FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program](#), which provides a discount benefit for broadband to low-income and other eligible individuals. After receiving a grant to assist with the program's promotion, we have begun

registering Granges to take part in the work to inform people in the communities in which Granges are located, and beyond, about ACP.

Please remember that taking part in this outreach program is **community service**.

Certainly, we want all Grange members to know about the benefit and sign up if they are eligible, but this cannot stop within our doors. Just like giving nonperishable items to the food bank is important, so is taking the information about ACP to the director of the food bank and asking for it to be placed in the boxes and bags of recipients.

Please take the time to register your Grange to take part in this outreach service, which will allow you to receive free materials to give to your local food bank, to senior centers, to veterans' organizations in your hometown, to place on bulletin boards in your halls and in other community spaces, to put on tables at events your Grange takes part in and more. From placemats that can be used at your community breakfasts and dinners to yard signs that can be placed on the lawns of members whose properties are on well-traveled roadways, there are many ways your Grange can increase awareness about the ACP program.

When you register through grange.biz/signupgrange or by texting or calling National Grange Membership and Leadership Development Director Amanda Brozana Rios at 301-943-1090 and leaving a message, you will be assigned a Community Navigator - an individual that works with our partner, Oregon Institute for a Better Way, to help Granges plan for the outreach, order and packaging the materials, perform data collection and more.

Navigators - all of whom are also Grange members - will also work to collect more information about your Grange, its outreach, goals, and needs. This data will help us create future grant proposals and allow us to search for grants and other funds that may directly benefit individual Granges.

Granges that take part in this program may even be eligible for a small financial incentive, but it all starts with the first step of registering your Grange to become an outreach partner. Registering through this link does not commit your Grange, but will instead allow you to receive further information and connect with a navigator to brainstorm and talk about your Grange.



Carol Carpenter, President of Bethlehem Grange #137 in Albany, New York, displays the banner they received as a part of the National Grange's Affordable Connectivity Program project.

[Register for National Grange Convention –Early Bird registration savings end soon](#)



We are just three months away from when we “Flow into the Future” in Niagara Falls, New York as we celebrate the 157th Annual Session of the National Grange. ***We want you to be there!***

This year's Convention will be just blocks from the Falls! The [Sheraton Niagara Falls](#) is an incredible hotel which will also house the hospitality room, and the convention itself and many of the evening activities will be held at the [Niagara Falls Convention Center](#), just across the street!

Use [this link](#) to book your stay at the main Convention Hotel using our group rate.

For guests who would prefer to call, as opposed to making their reservations online, please call **716-285-3361 x2295** to reach Reservation Coordinator Cierra Duck. She is typically in the office Monday through Friday 8am – 4pm Eastern).

We invite ALL Grange members to participate in the Convention activities, so please make plans to attend from November 14-18, 2023.

Stay tuned over the coming weeks and months for more information about speakers, tours, and other opportunities (both fun and educational!) for all Grange members during the Convention.

Learn more about this year's Convention and register today on the National Grange website! **Early Bird Registration** - \$32 – open through September 4th, 2023.

Register for Convention

The Host Committee has chosen [Community Missions of Niagara](#) as the recipient of this year's community service collection. Granges and attendees are encouraged to send or bring socks, hats, or mittens for men or women to this year's Convention. If you would rather make a financial contribution, please contact Paula Turner.



Participate in Multigenerational Panel Discussion on Rural Mental Health

Everyone attending the National Grange Convention is invited to attend a session about rural mental health conversations, featuring panelists representing several generations. If you will be attending the convention on Thursday, November 16 from 3:00 – 4:30 pm ET and are interested in being considered as a panelist, please complete [this form](#).

This panel is co-presented by the National Grange, [Rural Minds](#), and [NY FarmNet](#).

Note that due to a limit on the number of panelists, your reply does not confirm your participation as a panelist. We will follow up with an email to provide you with more information.

5 Ways to Make the Most of Your Health Coverage

This article was written by [CMS](#) and was printed, published, or produced and disseminated at U.S. taxpayer expense.

In the United States, [16.3 million](#) people signed up for coverage in the 2023 Open Enrollment, allowing them to gain or renew access to the health coverage they need. Enrolling in a health plan, however, is only the initial step.

To help you go from coverage to care, the [Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services](#) has created resources in multiple languages, available at no cost, to help you understand your benefits and connect to a primary care provider and preventive services.

Here are five ways to make the most of your health coverage:

1. **Confirm your coverage:** Be sure your enrollment is complete. Contact your health plan and/or state Medicaid office. Pay your premium if you have one, so you can use your health coverage when you need it.
2. **Know where to go for answers:** Contact your health plan to see what services are covered, and what your costs will be. Read the [Roadmap to Better Care](#) to learn about key health insurance terms, like coinsurance and deductible.
3. **Find a provider:** Select a health care provider in your network who will work with you to get your recommended health screenings. Remember you might pay more if you see a provider who is out-of-network.
4. **Make an appointment:** Confirm your provider accepts your coverage. Talk to your provider about preventive services. Ask questions about your concerns and what you can do to stay healthy.
5. **Fill your prescriptions:** Some drugs cost more than others. Ask in advance how much your prescription costs and if there is a more affordable option.

[Share these tips](#) with your family and friends so they too can make the most of their health coverage and live a long healthy life. Also, check out the [Roadmap to Better Care](#) for a step-by-step guide on how to use your coverage and more detailed health insurance information. For more information about Coverage to Care, visit go.cms.gov/c2c.



SUPPLY STORE

www.grangestore.org



NEW GRANGE SOCKS

Limited quantity available!

Show and wear your Grange Pride at various events and activities, especially at State Session!

These Grange socks feature the Grange emblem on a navy blue sock. They are 80% combined cotton, 15% nylon and 5% elastane.

One size fits most

For each pair purchased, National Grange will donate a pair of socks to the National Grange Community Service Project - Community Missions of Niagara

\$16.00 plus shipping

Get yours by ordering online through the Grange Supply Store at www.grangestore.org or by calling Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109.



SUPPLY STORE

www.grangestore.org

"A GRANGE STORY" COMIC BOOK



This newsprint comic book is a perfect introduction for children, new members, or potential members to tell them about what the Grange is and how YOU can find your place in it!

The perfect giveaway item for fairs, dinners, carnivals, or other special events.

Order by calling Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109 or emailing Lwashington@nationalgrange.org

FREE!

(just pay shipping)



SUPPLY STORE

www.grangestore.org

"RAISED RIGHT HERE" VINYL STICKERS



Great way to celebrate Grange month and to have at other Grange activities and events.

Die-Cut Vinyl Stickers - in two designs, celebrating the National Grange "Raised Right Here" theme

25 stickers of each design

\$12 for 50 stickers stickers plus shipping

Get yours by ordering online through the Grange Supply Store at www.grangestore.org or by calling Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109.

Grange Member Benefit: MemberDeals



We are excited to announce our new partnership with **MemberDeals**! Now you'll have access to exclusive savings on theme parks, hotels, attractions, movie tickets, tours, shows & more. Be sure to visit often as new products and discounts are constantly being added! Scan to access savings

- Disney World
- Universal Orlando Resort
- Sea World
- Six Flags
- Bush Gardens
- Water Parks
- Hotels
- Shows & Events Shopping Deals



Access Savings Here: <https://memberdeals.com/nationalgrange/?login=1>

SUPPLY STORE

GRANGE JEWELRY

Grange Jewelry is now in stock at the Grange Store. Pins include years of service and member recognition pins from 5-80 years, past officer pins, Degree recognition pins, and much more!

Some jewelry is now on clearance!

Prices vary

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

www.grangestore.org

NATIONAL GRANGE

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