



The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

May 19, 2023

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Gardens: Good for the environment and your community

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

Have you started your garden yet? Depending on the region of the country you live in, it may be still early, or you may be almost ready to pick lettuce and peas. Remember to take a photo when you plant, to enter in the [Lecturer's Garden Design Contest](#).

Does your Grange sponsor a community garden?

The [National Initiative for Consumer Horticulture](#) states in their newsletter:

In the United States, there are over 29,000 recognized community gardens in the 100 largest cities. These spaces have multiple benefits to a community: they improve access to healthy foods, aid individuals and families in building connections, educate individuals on making healthy choices, improve food security, improve mental health and promote relaxation, and can even help reduce the risk of obesity and other related diseases. Community gardens can have a more positive impact by being placed in lower income areas and areas with high levels of food insecurity. Many programs implemented by community gardeners allow people to have firsthand experience with cultivating their own food, developing further appreciation for the time and effort it takes to grow food. For people who have never seen a fruit or vegetable grow, this is a life changing experience. Additionally, this experience can foster a sense of wonder and further curiosity for the natural world and those around them. There are multiple other benefits to a community garden focused on the environment.

Katie DeMuro with [Greenleaf Communities](#) lists some of these benefits. Community gardens can:

- help improve air and soil quality
- increase biodiversity of plants and animals
- reduce “food miles” that are needed to transport nutritious food
- can replace impervious structures and improve water filtration
- reduce neighborhood waste through composting
- positively affect the urban micro-climate

More greenspaces in cities have been linked to better physical, mental, and social health of the people living there. Community gardens can serve as both a place for healthy food, and as a park where individuals can enjoy their surroundings. So whether your Grange is in a rural, suburban, or urban area, a community garden would be an excellent community service project for your neighborhood. It's not too late for this year!

Struggling to make plans for the summer? We can help!

By Samantha Wilkins, National Grange Junior and Youth Development Director



Summer is just about here in South Texas. My kiddos have one week left of school and they are already making plans to create the 'best summer yet.'

I love their enthusiasm and as a busy mom with four rambunctious boys, I want to find as many things to keep them busy as possible. But like many families finding those fun and busy activities can take a toll on the pocketbook. Maybe this summer isn't going to be full of vacations and day trips around the state, but we are making plans to be a little creative and utilize some of our Junior Grange programming to bring in some fun this summer.

This summer we are going to really work to see how we can incorporate the National Junior Grange [Agricultural Awareness Project](#) in our daily lives. This year's focus is '**Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.**'

Now, I am sure some of you can imagine how much trash gets taken out each week with 4 boys, 3 dogs, and a nonstop schedule - and our community doesn't offer recycling. So, nearly everything is getting thrown in the trash. And I feel so bad about it.

So, this summer we have a goal to reduce our trash to as little as possible... and how are we going to do that? And how are we going to make that fun?

Our Ag Awareness project lays out some fun ways for us to start.

1. At the beginning of the summer, we will start by going to the library so we can grasp a better understanding of what the **3 R's** mean. We are going to learn ways that we can reduce waste, reuse items, and recycle the rest.
2. We are going to take a look at our current trash situation and see what we can change. We will make a list of those changes and get to work.
3. On top of just reducing the output of trash we are going to pick at least two or more activities listed on the project. For sure we will be creating some art with recycled items, while it is a fun activity for us, it will also double as an entry into our State Grange contests later this year. Does your Grange have a recycled craft category? This would be a great time to check!
4. Next on our list will be putting those boys to work by building a compost station. This can look different in many different homes- so we are going to search online for some ideas and use some recycled items from around the farm to build this.
5. We are also going to come up with a few ways that we can collect recyclables in our community at the Grange Hall.
6. Then, we are going to challenge each other to not create any waste for at least 10 days. We are going to get 4 trash cans (1 for each kiddo) and they will be challenged to not create any waste. At the end of the 10 days, we will see which kiddo won the challenge and do something fun.
7. Some other things we may do is organize a trash pick-up with some of our friends (and fellow Grangers)

While participating in this project is just one of the fun things we will be doing this summer, there are many other ways your family can create fun and inexpensive activities through the Junior Grange program.

We have [several contests](#) that can be entered at any time throughout the year. Your entries do not have to go to your State first - so as soon as you are done, pop it in the mail and send it in! Your State Granges have contests that you can start preparing for as well. This would be a great time to start preparing for your regional sign-a-song and/or public speaking contests - Regional Conferences start in June and run through the beginning of August so check out the events page on www.nationalgrange.org to find your conference information.

While planning for summer activities can be stressful, it doesn't have to put a strain on your bank account, as the Junior Grange provides countless resources for fun and free activities that both you and your entire family can participate in. We really want to encourage any Junior Granger who is interested to enter the National Contests. We hope that you also take part in what your state offers.

Happy Summer Y'all! I am looking forward to a rewarding summer full of fun activities and would love to see what guys are doing too. Please post your summer activities to social media using **#SummerwiththeGrange**.

Participate in a new Affordable Connectivity Program with your Grange

Would your Grange like to take part in a grant-funded outreach program to provide information to your community about the FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program? If so, please [fill out this short form](#) to receive an invitation to an upcoming meeting (by Zoom or phone) introducing the program, our wide range of ways you can take part for free and potential financial incentives your Grange may receive from participating.

Register for National Grange Convention



This November, we are going to “Flow into the Future” in Niagara Falls, New York as we celebrate the 157th Annual Session of the National Grange. ***And 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. You can also call (716) 285-3361 and let them know that you're with the Grange when booking your rooms.

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

This is your early warning to ensure your passport is up to date. You won't want to miss the opportunity to pop over to Canada when you're just a few steps away: <https://www.usps.com/international/passports.htm>

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](#).

Additionally, on Monday, May 8, the Host Committee led a Zoom session about some things to expect at this year's Convention. [Watch it here!](#)

[National Grange Convention reimagined – and better than ever!](#)

The National Convention Advisory Work Group has been charged with identifying how to make our National Grange Convention an amazing Grange experience that is the single most important event on every member's calendar.

We value your input and invite you to participate in this survey which should take no more than 5 minutes of your time.

Take the survey here:

<http://www.grange.biz/conventionsurvey>



[Apply to be a SHIPmate](#)

by [Amanda Brozana Rios](#), National Grange Membership & Leadership Development Director

SHIPmates will be selected from each region; applications now open



You're unashamed of your love for the Grange and belief that it is necessary perhaps now more than any time since its founding.

You can talk easily with people you don't know, or as your mom might say, you've "never met a stranger."

Box? What box? You are creative and committed to finding solutions that others may see as impossible.

You enjoy fellowship with other Patrons and will make your rounds to talk to as many Grange Brothers and Sisters as you can at an event.

You're unafraid to express your opinion in a civil and respectful manner.

Servant leadership is not just a concept you've heard, but something you've embraced.

You don't mind reading books that may be relevant to leadership development and membership growth.

You're a confident communicator who can jump on a Zoom meeting, visit with others by phone, respond in a timely fashion to emails and be part of the hype squad the Grange needs.

You're a workhorse, but not overcommitted to the point where you'll be unable to dedicate time and energy to a passion project.

Does this sound like you? If so, consider applying to be part of the inaugural class of SHIPmates – the membership and leadership development fellowship program *sponsored by Potomac Grange #1*.

SHIPmates may also participate in some combined workshops with the Communication Fellows, especially those where National Officers or other Directors are providing context or guidance important to program participants. Fellows may present workshops for SHIPmates prior to convention or after it closes, such as "writing a press release" and "using Canva to design brochures and flyers."

SHIPmates will begin with remote training in September. The program will include a 9-day hands-on experience at the 157th Annual National Grange Convention in Niagara Falls, New York, from Friday, November 10 to Sunday the 19th.

Participants will continue their work in 2024 with additional training, outreach and participation in various internal and external activities.

[Learn more about the SHIPmates and apply here](#)

Stay safe online

Recently, a number of Grange members across the country have been reporting getting emails “from” National or State Grange Officers. They say things like “Could you help? I’m in a meeting and need something done,” or “I have a sensitive topic that requires your assistance. Please keep this confidential.”

If you look at the email address from which the email came, there’s a 99% chance it does *not* match the email you typically use for this Officer.

This is a form of a **phishing** scam – trying to get you to respond, and potentially to “help” by buying gift cards or verifying sensitive information to give them access to your email account, utilities accounts, or even your bank account.

If you **ever** have a question about whether an email you receive is legitimate, please reach out to the person the email is “from” to verify – for example, “Betsy” was “sending” emails earlier this week – but if you know her email address or cell phone number, it would be easy enough to check in with her in a new thread.

[Here are some additional tips from the Federal Trade Commission](#) on keeping yourself safe from being the victim of a scam.

Submit your holiday programs to Good Day!

The next issue of *Good Day!* magazine is going to feature “Christmas in July” in our Perspectives feature! Did your Grange have a successful holiday program, toy/food drive, community event, volunteer opportunity, etc.? If so – no matter how big or small – please send a write-up and a few high-resolution pictures to [Philip Vonada](#) by May 31st.

We want to feature as many stories and Granges as possible, sharing ideas from each corner of the country with hopes that other Granges will get some ideas and perhaps replicate your program!

‘Grotesque Catch-22’ – Sickest Rural Adults Are the Least Likely to Be Able to Pay for Healthcare

By Liz Carey, for [The Daily Yonder](#)

Rural people who need medical care the most are the least likely to be able to pay for it, according to a new report from the University of Southern Maine.

[Research on cost barriers to health care](#) found that rural adults were more likely than urban adults to report being unable to pay their medical bills or have problems paying their medical bills. Rural adults also were more likely to use medications in ways not prescribed (like taking pills every other day or only filling prescriptions every other month) to save money on medication.

Most concerning, said Erica Ziller, one of the study’s authors, was that rural adults with the worst health were more likely to report not getting the care they needed because of the cost.

“It’s almost like a grotesque Catch-22, right?” she said in an interview with the Daily Yonder. “We’re talking about the people who need health care the most, presumably, and also who are experiencing the most difficulty in getting the services they need.”

Using data from the 2019 and 2020 [National Health Interview Survey](#), researchers looked at nearly 36,000 adults between the ages of 18 and 64, nearly 5,000 of whom lived in a rural county. Researchers were interested in seeing if rural adults were more likely to have cost-related barriers to healthcare, like problems paying, delaying or going without healthcare, or rationing medication to save money.

The study found that nearly a fifth of the rural residents (18%) said they were uninsured and 13% said they delayed getting care or went without because of the cost.

Ziller said the research showed that women were more likely to report that they had trouble paying for medical care.

“If we took women and men and we made their income and health status and where they live and their insurance coverage look the same... women still have more trouble affording care,” she said.

Rural residents are more likely to have trouble regardless of their income, she said.

“You expect where the lower your income, the harder affording care would be,” she said. “But there was still a really big effect for middle income people. Those in what we might think of as middle class still reported significant issues paying for care compared to higher income people.”

Ziller said the data for the study comes from the very beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic and doesn’t necessarily reflect measures that went into place to increase affordability for healthcare coverage under the Affordable Care Act or through Medicaid.

During the pandemic, the [federal government implemented several policies](#) to improve access to healthcare including keeping people on Medicaid and expanding eligibility and increasing financial assistance for those seeking healthcare coverage through the Affordable Care Act. As a result, Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) enrollment grew from 71.2 million in 2020 to 84.8 million in September 2021, and the uninsured rate across the country fell to 8.9%.

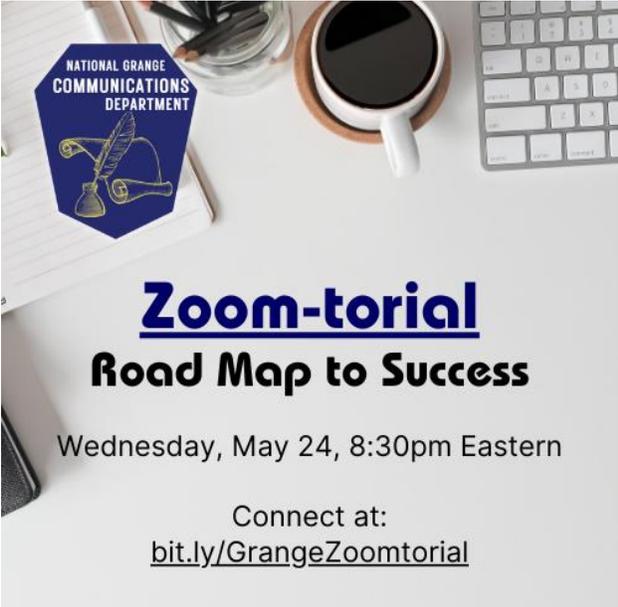
The results of the study are concerning, Ziller said, for what will happen when emergency pandemic measures to make healthcare more affordable expire. The Covid-19 public health emergency ended earlier this week (May 11, 2023).

“This is an important thing to be thinking about as we go into ending the public health emergency because certainly people who have been relying on Medicaid, once the continuous eligibility provisions go away, we’re going to see a rise in the number of uninsured,” she said. “Whether that’s going to be more dramatic in rural or urban places, I don’t think we know. But, I’m certainly concerned for people out in rural America that are struggling with the cost of inflation and then facing the prospect of losing health insurance benefits.”

More research on the topic is needed, she said, but it’s clear to her that the ability to be able to afford care is a policy issue for rural Americans that needs to be looked at further and addressed in some way.

Upcoming Events

We encourage all members to tune into these upcoming events on Zoom! Please join at the links in the images. These events are open to all who are interested in the topics!



NATIONAL GRANGE
COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT

Zoom-torial Road Map to Success

Wednesday, May 24, 8:30pm Eastern

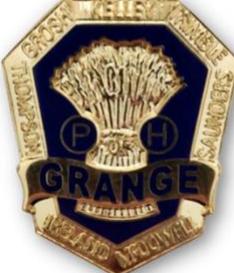
Connect at:
bit.ly/GrangeZoomtorial



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***NEW* 4TH DEGREE PIN**



This is a **BRAND NEW** 1" pin with 1/4" clutch back. Perfect for welcoming new members into the Grange, celebrating milestones, and more. Featuring the Grange emblem, surrounded with the names of the 7 Founders.

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Grange Member Benefit: Lenovo

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Be sure to check the website often – special offers change frequently.



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 HQ | 1616 H St. NW, Washington, DC 20006 | (202) 628-3507

Publisher Betsy Huber, National Grange President. Available to members at betsy@nationalgrange.org or by phone at (484) 459-1957

Editor Philip J Vonada, National Grange Communications Director. Contact to submit a story idea for Patrons Chain or *Good Day!* magazine, request assistance with publicity, business cards, and more. Email pvonada@nationalgrange.org or call/text (814) 404-7985

Leadership Training and Membership Development Amanda Brozana Rios, National Grange Membership, and Leadership Development Director. Contact to learn more about membership recruitment or how to start or reorganize a Grange, leadership training and more. Email at abrozana@nationalgrange.org or call/text (301) 943-1090

Legislative and Policy Issues Director Burton Eller, *National HQ*, ext. 114 or email beller@nationalgrange.org; Assistant Sean O'Neil, *National HQ*, email soneil@nationalgrange.org

Membership Recognition, Grange Supply Sales, Grange Programs and Member Benefits Loretta Washington, *National HQ*, ext. 109 or email sales@nationalgrange.org

Free Grange Websites, Emails, *Good Day!* subscription questions and Membership Database Stephanie Wilkins, *National HQ*, ext. 101 or email swilkins@nationalgrange.org

Lecturer Ann Bercher, lecturer@nationalgrange.org or (612) 501-1231

Junior and Youth Programming Samantha Wilkins, samantha@nationalgrange.org or (210) 838-7892

Community Service Pete Pompper communityservice@nationalgrange.org or (609) 820-6239

Grange Foundation Chairperson Joan C. Smith ngfb@grange.org or (571) 662-7220