

152nd Annual Convention of the

NATIONAL GRANGE

Journal of Proceedings



**Journal of Proceedings
of the
National Grange
of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry**

152nd Annual Convention
Stowe, Vermont
November 13-17, 2018

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www.nationalgrange.org*

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The Grange strengthens individuals, families and communities through grassroots action, service, education, advocacy and agricultural awareness.

NATIONAL OFFICERS

Master	Betsy Huber 362 University Rd., Lincoln University, PA 19352	(484) 459-1957
Overseer	F. Philip Prelli 12 Alexandria Drive, Barkhamsted, CT 06063	(860) 379-1017
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Gatekeeper	Christopher Johnston 6241 Grand River Road, Bancroft, MI 48414	(989) 666-6648
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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairman (2018)	Leroy Watson 298 Watkins Hill Road, Walpole, NH 03608	(603) 903-9012
Secretary (2018)	Lynette Schaeffer 10041 Rieder Road, Lebanon, IL 62254	(618) 537-4237
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NATIONAL DIRECTORS

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Wilber Heath

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CONVENTION COMMITTEES

Agriculture

Wayne Campbell, PA (Chair)
Melanie Bostwick, KS (Secretary)
Bill Johnson, MT
Martha Stefenoni, CA
John Plank, IN
Kevin Cooksley, NE
Allen Stiles, MD
Sue Roy, OH
Lynette Schaeffer, IL
Leroy Squires, CA, Trimble Youth Rep.

Audit & Budget

John Benedik, NJ (Chair)
Judy Sherrod, TN (Secretary)
Dwight Baldwin, IA
Duane Hamp, WA
Patty Thomas, MA
James Owens, ME
Chip Narvel, DE
Phil Prelli, CT

Citizenship & Taxation

Harry Greer, CO (Chair)
Sherry Harriman, ME (Secretary)
Eileen Javaux, ID
Christine Hamp, WA
Earlene Foster, WV
Bruce Roy, OH
Michael Lynch, DE
Buddy Overstreet, TX
Barbara Narvel, DE

Conservation

Jimmy Gentry, NC (Chair)
Kay Stiles, MD (Secretary)
Marilyn Johnson, MT
Richard Javaux, ID
Don Schaeffer, IL
Tom Gwin, WA
Jim Foster, WV
Richard Harriman, ME
George Russell, CT

Education & Health

Mark Noah, OR (Chair)
Debbie Gegare, WI (Secretary)
Brenda Rousselle, VT
Barbara Borderieux, FL
Eileen Hebert, RI
Wilber Heath, NH
Sharon Russell, CT
John Crippen, MN
Sharon Croucher, NY
Lisa Goodrich, VT
Philip Vonada, PA, Trimble Youth Rep.

Grange Growth & Development

Susan Plank, IN (Chair)
Debbie Campbell, PA (Secretary)
Joe Goodrich, VT
Pete Pompper, NJ
Karen Overstreet, TX
Kathy Baldwin, IA
Chris Heath, NH
Connie Johnston, MI
Lena Shufeldt, OK

Grange Law

Chris Heath, NH (Chair)
Cindy Greer, CO (Secretary)
Susan Noah, OR
David Bryant, WA
Bruce Croucher, NY
Roger Bostwick, KS
Leroy Watson, NH
Kent Westwood, CA

Labor, Judiciary, Transportation & Postal Policies

Christopher Johnston, MI (Chair)
Joan Smith, Potomac (Secretary)
Anita Gentry, NC
Stephen Coye, NY
Walter Hartley, RI
Billy Shufeldt, OK
James Taylor, VA
Helen Lynch, DE
Duane Scott, WI
Maureen Prelli, CT
Cheri Watson, NH

OFFICIAL CONVENTION PROGRAM

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12

- 8:30 a.m. Executive Committee Meeting
- Noon Executive Committee & New Masters Lunch
- 1 p.m. New Masters/Delegates Workshop
- 3:30 p.m. Committee Chairs & Secretaries Meeting
- 4 p.m. Convention Overview and Budget Meeting & Foundation Meeting
- 6 p.m. Host Banquet
- 8:30-11 p.m. Committee meetings

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13

- 8 a.m. Committee Meetings
- Noon Legislative Lunch
- 2 p.m. Opening of the 152nd Convention
- 2:15 p.m. Admission of Fourth Degree Members
- 2:30 p.m. President's Address
- 5:45 p.m. Session Recess; Delegate Photo
- 7 p.m. Committee Meetings

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14

- 8:30 a.m. Session Opens in Fourth Degree
- Noon Session Recess
- 12:15 p.m. Salute to Agriculture Luncheon
- 2 p.m. Committee Reports & Actions
- 5 p.m. Session Recesses
- 5 p.m. Showcase & Mercantile Open
- 5:30 p.m. Distinguished Grange Awards & Grange Legacy Families Presentation
- 7:30 p.m. Session Reconvenes & Quilts of Valor Presentation
- 9 p.m. Session Closes
- 9 p.m. Committee Meetings
- 9:30 p.m. Youth – Get Acquainted Party
- 10:45 p.m. Vespers
- 11 p.m. Youth Officers Practice

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15

- 8:30 a.m. Session Opens in the Fourth Degree & Election of Officers
- 9 a.m. General and Youth Tour
- Noon Session Recesses
- 12:15 p.m. Past Delegate Luncheon
- 2 p.m. Session Reconvenes in Fourth Degree
- 3:30 p.m. Past Delegate Recognition & Memorial Service
- 5 p.m. Session Closes
- 6:30 p.m. Junior Get Acquainted Games
- 7 p.m. Youth Community Service Project
- 7 p.m. Youth Directors Workshop/Meeting
- 7:30 p.m. Junior Games and Costume Party
- 8 p.m. Assembly of Demeter Meeting & Election
- 9:15 p.m. Committee Meetings
- 9:30 p.m. Youth Costume Party & Dance
- 11 p.m. Vespers

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16

- 7 a.m. Chairs/Secretaries Breakfast
- 8:30 a.m. Session Opens by Youth Officers & Junior Presentation
- 10 a.m. Youth Workshops
- 10:15 a.m. Junior Sign-A-Song and Public Speaking Contests
- Noon Session Recesses
- 12:15 p.m. Grange Foundation 1 in 1,000 Club Lunch
- 12:30 p.m. Junior Tour
- 1:30 p.m. Community Service Workshop
- 2 p.m. Session Reconvenes
- 3 p.m. Youth Workshop
- 3:30 p.m. Communications Workshop
- 5 p.m. Session Closes
- 5:30 p.m. G.R.O.W. Club/AOLE Dinner
- 7:30 p.m. Evening of Excellence
- 10:30 p.m. Youth Program & Vespers

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17

- 8 a.m. Junior Grange Breakfast & Program
- 8:30 a.m. Communications Workshop
- 9 a.m. Parliamentary Procedure Contest, Grange Jeopardy & Youth Awards
- 9:30 a.m. Junior Grange Activities
- 9:30 a.m. Junior Grange Leaders Workshop
- 10 a.m. Sixth Degree Conferral
- 10:30 a.m. Grange Youth Fair Program Workshop
- 11:30 a.m. Lecturer's Workshop
- 1 p.m. Junior Grange Lunch and Activities
- 1 p.m. Seventh Degree Conferral
- 3:15 p.m. Convocation of the Assembly Demeter
- 4 p.m. New State Masters & Officers Photos
- 6:30 p.m. Grange Celebration Banquet
- 11:30 p.m. Vespers

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE 152nd ANNUAL NATIONAL GRANGE CONVENTION

PRE-CONVENTION ACTIVITIES

152nd National Grange Convention

Monday, November 12, 2018

Arriving prior to convention were National Grange Master Betsy Huber, and staff members Amanda Brozana-Rios, Stephanie Tiller, Loretta Washington, Stephanie Wilkins, and Burton Eller. Board of Directors members arrived prior to convention also, as did several delegates, with the remaining delegates set to arrive by 4 p.m. on Monday Nov. 12. The Board of Directors met with the National Master on Sunday, Nov. 11.

The Board of Directors and National Master met beginning at 8:30 a.m. New delegates were welcomed to the 152nd National Grange Convention for a luncheon with the National Master and Board of Directors at noon followed by a workshop 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. led by Joe Stefanoni, National Membership Director (CA), Pete Pompper, National Community Service Chairman (NJ), and Roger Bostwick (KS). New delegates are Karen and Buddy Overstreet (TX), John Crippen (MN), George and Sharon Russell (CT), Eileen and Richard Javaux (ID), Joe and Lisa Goodrich (VT), Eileen Hebert and Walter Hartley (RI), Sue and Roy Bruce (OH) and new second delegate Richard Harriman (ME).

Beginning at 3:30 p.m. Burton Eller, Legislative Director, and National Grange IT Director, Stephanie Wilkins, conducted a workshop for committee chairs and secretaries.

Beginning at 4 p.m., a convention overview for officers and delegates, and budget meeting was held. Attorneys Jeff Skinner and Jim Bikoff, gave an update on the status of litigation in California via electronic communication.

Phil Prelli (CT) introduced the new Masters and announced their mentors for the week. Mentors are as follows: Chris Heath (NH) for Karen and Buddy Overstreet (TX); John Benedik (NJ) for John Crippen (MN); Allen and Kay Stiles (MD) for George and Sharon Russell (CT); Marilyn and Bill Johnson (MT) for Eileen & Richard Javaux (ID); Jimmy Taylor (VA) for Joe and Lisa Goodrich (VT); Sherry Harriman (ME) for Eileen Hebert and Walter Hartley (RI), as well as mentor for husband Richard Harriman (ME); and George and Patty Thomas (MA) for Sue and Roy Bruce (OH). Mentors for the Legislative Experience members Philip Vonada (PA) and Leroy Squire (CA) are Kevin Cooksley (NE) and Tom Gwin (WA).

Copies of the budget income and expenses were handed out and Chairman of the Board, Leroy Watson (NH), gave updates regarding income and expenses of the National Grange. The Treasurer of The Grange Foundation, Duane Scott (WI) gave a breakdown of the assets and liabilities. The Grange Foundation Chairman, Stephen Coye (NY), presided over the annual meeting of the Foundation. Board members made motion and second to accept financial report, which was adopted.

Word was received that Brother Ed Komski (CA) had passed away at the Burlington, VT hospital after emergency open heart surgery, following his collapse at the Convention Hotel in Stowe. New delegates from California will make their way to Vermont for the Convention.

The host banquet began at 6 p.m. with opening remarks from Jody Cameron, host committee chairman (CT). He explained that the food for this banquet was entirely from products from Vermont. The hosting states are Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, New York, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. Invocation by National Chaplain, Barbara Borderieux (FL).

Committee meetings from 8:30 p.m. to approximately 11 p.m. National officers practice began at 8:30 p.m. Hospitality room hosted by Connecticut.

FIRST DAY

152nd National Grange Convention

Tuesday, November 13, 2018

Committee meetings began at 8 a.m. until noon. The Legislative Luncheon was held at noon with Steve Janson, Vice President of Pfizer, as the guest speaker.

At 2 p.m. the 152nd Annual Convention of the National Grange was called to order in the Seventh Degree by High Priest, Bruce Croucher (NY). The session was held at the Stoweflake Inn in Stowe, Vermont.

The National officers marched in and formed an altar circle, before going to their stations. The singers for the opening were a trio composed of Gene Edelen (IA), Melanie Bostwick (KS), and Kendal Holden (VT).

National Master, Betsy Huber (PA), opened the Grange in the Seventh Degree, followed by the High Priest Bruce Croucher (NY) leading the salutation of the Seven Degrees. The American Flag was presented. There being no further business to come before the Grange in the Seventh Degree, High Priest Bruce Croucher (NY) and Priest Annalist James Owens (ME) were escorted from the hall to make preparations for the conferral of the Seventh Degree. The Grange was then lowered to the Fourth Degree and Fourth Degree members were admitted to the hall.

The Grange flag was presented by Steward Chip Narvel (DE). Each of the flags from the host states were presented by members of the Host Committee from each state as follows:

Vermont – Ann Gray
Connecticut – Jodi Ann Cameron
New Hampshire – Kerriann Heath
Maine – Sharon Morton
Rhode Island – Danielle Hartley
New York – Laura Magrum
Massachusetts – Glenn Gibson
Opening song was “This is My Country.”

Master, Betsy Huber, announced the death yesterday of California’s delegate, Brother Ed Komski. A charge was read by Ceres, Cindy Greer (CO), followed by a moment of silence. Master Huber showed a large gavel that Brother Komski had brought to this convention. It is made from one of the original two Navel Orange trees that William Saunders brought to the U.S. to see if these trees would grow in the U.S.

The roll call of officers and assembly officers found all present, and the roll call of delegates showed all State Granges represented. Also present were the John Trimble Legislative Experience Representatives Philip Vonada (PA) and Leroy Squire (CA), followed by a roll call of National staff members.

Chairman of Audit and Budget committee, John Benedik (NJ) gave a partial credentials report, which was adopted. A motion to adopt the printed convention schedule was made and adopted.

Worthy Overseer, Phil Prelli (CT) assumed the Master’s station, declaring the Grange at ease as Worthy National Master, Betsy Huber (PA) gave her annual address. Worthy Overseer Prelli then assigned sections of National Master’s Address to various committees.

The Grange was called to order by Overseer Prelli and Master Betsy Huber then gave her Internal Address. Phil Prelli then assigned sections of this report to several committees for review. Both of these reports will appear in the Journal of Proceedings.
Recess.

Following recess, a presentation was made by Lecturer Chris Hamp (WA) to Worthy Ceres Cindy Greer (CO), giving her a chocolate “Ceres on a Stick”, which was part of a fundraising activity to raise money to replace the statute of Ceres atop the State Capitol dome of Vermont.

Announcements by Overseer Prelli (CT).

Jimmy Gentry (NC), Chairman of the Conservation Committee gave some changes the committee desired to make in the Present Policy. Consent calendar set after 4:30 p.m. tomorrow. He proceeded to make a partial report on resolutions. Transfers of resolutions between committees were made.

Wayne Campbell (PA), Chairman of the Agriculture Committee gave a partial report.

Susan Plank (IN), Chairman of the Grange Growth Committee gave a partial report.

George Thomas (MA), Chairman of Grange Law Committee gave a partial report.

It was announced by Gatekeeper, Chris Johnston (MI) that a fee of \$20 would be charged for a cell phone ringing in session. The funds collected from phones ringing will be divided between the Youth and Junior Departments.

The Grange was closed at 5:45 p.m. Closing song “Father, Lead Me”.

A group photo of delegates and officers was scheduled to be taken immediately after close.

A “Friendship dinner” was held beginning at 6 p.m.

Pianist was Lester Gibbs (VT).

Hospitality room hosted by Rhode Island.

The committees met to work on resolutions during the evening, and National officers practiced.

SECOND DAY

152nd National Grange Convention

Wednesday, November 14, 2018

Master Betsy Huber (PA) opened the second day of the 152nd Annual Convention of the National Grange in the Fourth Degree at 8:30 a.m. following an entrance march by the National officers.

Roll call of officers found all present, and a roll call of delegates found all states were represented. Also in attendance were the John Trimble Youth Representatives Leroy Squire (CA), and Philip Vonada (PA). Opening song was “Pass It On.”

Betsy read a letter she received from Cynthia Komski. A motion was made that the letter be printed in the Journal of Proceedings. The letter is as follows:

“Dear fraternal Brothers and Sisters,

Although we are at a total loss for words, please know how important this organization was to Ed. He thought so much of so many of you. Many of you were true friends in supporting the California State Grange in its conquest to survive. I pray that you will carry on as Ed would expect you to do as ethical, moral and persevering patrons who will reach out to others as Ed has set a precedent to do, working for the cause and survival of this great organization. This unexpected change of events has truly changed our world forever. Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers. We will miss you all this year. Continue your work thinking of Ed this week and all that he stood for.

Love to all of you, Fraternaly,

Cynthia, Aspen and family.

Thank you again for all of your love and support.”

The minutes from pre-convention activities and first day of session were read and adopted as corrected.

Jimmy Gentry (NC), Chairman of the Conservation Committee, gave a partial report.

Harry Greer (CO), Chairman of the Citizenship Committee, gave a partial report.

Recess - National Grange delegate photo taken during recess.

Following recess, Overseer Phil Prelli (CT) called the Grange back to order.

Lecturer, Chris Hamp (WA), had a quick Lecturer’s moment by reading a story entitled “Little Green Tin” (referring to Bag Balm), which is made in Vermont. She had a quiz with the first correct answers getting a little green tin. More facts about Vermont were shared by the Worthy Lecturer.

Master Betsy Huber (PA) recognized Chairman of the Audit and Budget Committee, John Benedik (NJ) for a time certain for the budget at 11:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Chris Johnston (MI) gave a partial report of the Transportation, Labor and Judiciary Committee.

Mark Noah (OR), Chairman of the Education and Health Committee, gave a partial report.

Susan Plank (IN), Chairman of Growth and Development, gave a partial report.

Announcements.

Recess until 2 p.m.

Salute to Agriculture Luncheon at 12:15 p.m. with guest speakers Anson Tebbetts, Secretary of Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets; Wendy Wilton, Vermont State Executive Director for USDA-FSA (Farm Service Agency). Comments also from Ms. Erica Campbell, State Outreach Representative, office of U.S. Senator, Bernie Sanders (VT), and Ryan McClaren, Agriculture Outreach Representative, Office of U.S. Representative Peter Welch (VT).

The Grange was called back to order at 2 p.m. Wayne Campbell (PA), Chairman of Agriculture Committee, gave a partial report.

Susan Plank (IN), Chairman of Grange Growth and Development, gave a partial report.

We sang “This Old Grange.”

Steve Coye (NY) reported that the words to “This Old Grange” have their roots in the Northeast in that Margaret Pryor the author of the words was a member of Norwich Township Grange in New York.

Jimmy Gentry (NC), Chairman of Conservation Committee, gave a partial report.

Harry Greer (CO), Citizenship Committee Chairman, gave a partial report.

Grange Law Committee Chairman, George Thomas (MA), gave a partial report.

Session recesses at 5 p.m.

Distinguished Grange Awards were presented at 5:30 p.m. in the Stowe Ballroom. The 2018 Distinguished Grange Awards were presented by Phil Prelli, National Overseer (CT) to the State Granges of Colorado, Idaho, Maryland, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Washington, and to 35 Subordinate Granges.

Following the awards for Distinguished Granges, 16 Grange Legacy Families were recognized. Legacy families are those with five or more generations in the Grange.

The session reconvened at 7:30 p.m., called to order by Master Betsy Huber. Past National Master Ed Luttrell (OR) was escorted to the Master’s station, who gave a few comments urging us to share our passion for the Grange.

Master Betsy Huber (PA) welcomed the youth and guests to the session. Roll call of states was called and Grangers representing their states were recognized.

Gary Brumbaugh (OH) Chairman of the Hall of Fame Committee gave some history about the Grange Virtual Hall of Fame and nomination process. The 2018 inductee into the Grange Hall of Fame was announced by Joseph Stefanoni (CA). Honored with induction into the Hall of Fame for 2018 is James William Abert Wright, author of the Grange Declaration of Purposes and first Master of the California State Grange in 1873.

The first year’s inductees into the Hall of Fame were Oliver Hudson Kelley, Frances McDowell, William Saunders, and Caroline Hall. Second year were Aaron B. Grosh, William Ireland, John R. Thompson, and John Trimble. Last year’s inductees were Eugene A. Eckert (IL), Charles M. Gardner (MA).

Besides Gary Brumbaugh, other members of the Hall of Fame Committee are Mary Johnson (ID), Arthur Merrill (NH) and George Spies (Potomac).

The Grange was then declared at ease.

National Lecturer, Chris Hamp (WA) told about the Quilts of Valor organization. She introduced Lynn Carrier, the Vermont State Coordinator from Quilts of Valor Foundation. Quilts of Valor were presented to 20 veterans, who are Grange members:

U.S. Army:

Hirum E. Allen, 1956-58 (VT)

Harold Henry Bergeron, 1943-46 (VT), 103-years-old

Roger Allen Bostwick, 1979-85 (KS)

John Jesse Cottrell III, 1965-67 (RI)

Lester Burton Gibbs, 1958-81 (VT)

Douglas Arthur Hall, 1977-84 (MA)

Richard Allen Harriman Jr., 1966-69 (ME)
Alma Jean Heidenreicht, 1968-92 (NY)
Richard M. Henry, National Guard, 1961-67 (MA)
Peter R. Ivers, 1967-72 (ME)
James Dwight Martin Jr., 1954-62 (MA)
Frank Philip Prelli, Reserves, 1970-76 (CT)
Robert W. Trombi, 1978-99 (NH)

U.S. Navy:

Thomas Michael Hebeisen, Navy Reserves 1963-76 and Army 1980-2005 (NY)
Lawrence Erwin Thompson, 1966-74 and 1975-89 (VT)

U.S. Coast Guard:

Lincoln A. Cooper, 1963-67 (CT)
Steven Wilson Logan, Reserves, 1965-68 (RI)
William Floyd Overstreet III, 1979-2009 (TX)

U.S. Air Force:

Wilber E. Heath, 1965-69 (NH)
Darrell M. Huff, 1966-69 (ME)

Lynn Carrier then read a poem about the quilts that were made especially for these veterans in appreciation for their sacrifice and service.

The Grange was called back to order by Worthy Master, Betsy Huber. Closing song "Blessed Be The Tie That Binds".

Session pianist was Lester Gibbs (VT), and Martha Stefenoni (CA) during closing.

Hospitality Room hosted by Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

The resolutions projected on the large screen in the session room were taken care of by Deborah Ploof (VT).

Committees were to meet until approximately 11 p.m.

The Youth Check-in and Orientation began at 6:30 p.m. with Ambassador interviews beginning at 7 p.m. The youth enjoyed a get acquainted party in the evening, followed by vespers at 10:45 p.m. The Youth Officers practiced beginning at 11 p.m.

THIRD DAY

152nd National Grange Convention

Thursday, November 15, 2018

The third day of the 152nd Annual Convention of the National Grange opened in the Fourth Degree at 8:30 a.m. following an entrance march by the National officers. Opening song was "Welcome Song."

Roll call of officers found all present, and roll call of delegates found all states represented except Idaho, who left session early. Also in attendance were the John Trimble Youth Representatives, Leroy Squire (CA) and Philip Vonada (PA).

Worthy Master Betsy Huber (PA) called for the election of officers for the National Grange. This year the election process will allow suggestions from the delegates. Ballots will be for election of two Executive Committee members whose term is complete. First vote will be for the office currently held by Duane Scott (WI). Balloting proceeded in due form.

Susan Noah was elected to Executive Committee for a term of two years. Susan then resigned from the position of Pomona. Amanda Brozana-Rios, Communications Director, gave her annual report, followed by the report of Joseph Stefenoni, Membership Director. For membership news Text GRANGE to 24365.

Suggestions open for second position on the Executive Committee currently held by Leroy Watson. Leroy Watson was re-elected to a two-year term on the Executive Committee.

Convention Planner and Operations Director, Stephanie Tiller, gave her annual report, reporting on this convention and also thanking everyone for donations for the building fund.

Legislative Affairs Director, Burton Eller, presented his annual report, stating that the profile of the Grange is increasing. He challenged us to update addresses for our Granges, or appropriate Grange leaders, as well as a need for e-mail addresses of our members, so that communication can come to local Granges.

Loretta Washington, Director of Sales/Benefits/Programs and Membership Recognition gave her report. She is introducing a new program, called Grange in Action, designed for any Grange, large or small. All you need to do is submit photos of sponsored activities taking place from December 2018 to September of 2019 on one page. Put captions underneath the photos. These Granges in Action will be given a certificate and recognition at National convention.

Chris Heath (NH) announced Ida Hutchins from New Hampshire is in the hall and today is her birthday. We sang to her on this her 81st birthday.

Voting continued. Suggestions were taken for a one-year term for the office of Pomona. Kay Stiles (MD) was elected to a one-year term for Pomona.

Recess for 15 minutes.

Following recess, Pete Pompper (NJ), Community Service Director, gave his annual report, stating that he saw an increase in the number of contest entries this year.

Winners: 1st Humptulips (WA), 2nd Avon (MT), 3rd Richmond (RI).

Honorable Mention: Clear Lake (MN) and Valley Grange (PA)

Minutes from Day Two were read and adopted as corrected.

Chairman of Labor, Judiciary & Transportation, Chris Johnston (MI) gave a partial report.

John Benedik (NJ), Chairman of the Audit and Budget Committee, moved to adopt the budget as presented by the Executive Committee. The proposed budget for 2019 was adopted.

Steve Coye (NY) reported the Past National Membership Director, Roger Halbert (NY), is in attendance.

Jimmy Gentry (NC) had a request for the Board of Directors to take a look at sharing financial reports with State Masters on some regular basis during the year.

Recess at noon.

National Grange Flora, Lena Shufeldt (OK) was emcee at the past delegates luncheon at 12:15 p.m., at which past delegates were honored. Guest speaker was Mary Jordan, past Master of the Massachusetts State Grange.

Following recess, Harry Greer (CO), Chairman of the Citizenship and Taxation Committee made a final report, which was adopted.

Jimmy Gentry (NC), Chairman of the Conservation Committee, gave a final report which was adopted.

Grange Growth Committee Chairman, Susan Plank (IN), gave a final report which was adopted.

John Benedik (NJ), Chairman of Audit & Budget Committee, gave a final report which was adopted.

Mark Noah (OR), Chairman of the Education and Health Committee, gave a partial report.

The Chairman of Labor, Judiciary and Transportation, Chris Johnston (MI), gave a final report, which was adopted.

Recess.

Following recess, Master Betsy Huber (PA) called the Grange to order and past delegates of the National Grange were welcomed into the hall. At the office of the Overseer, each delegate introduced themselves and gave their years of service and positions held.

Bruce Croucher (NY), High Priest, reminded that the Business Meeting of the Assembly of Demeter is scheduled tonight beginning at 8 p.m.

The Grange was placed at ease for the memorial service.

The Grange memorial service was conducted by National Grange Chaplain, Barbara Borderieux (FL), assisted by Master Betsy Huber (PA), Pomona Susan Noah (OR), Ceres Cindy Greer (CO), Flora Lena Shufeldt (OK), Secretary Judy Sherrod (TN), and Lady Assistant Steward Brenda Rousselle (VT). Soloist Melanie Bostwick (KS). State Masters representing the states of the deceased members placed flowers on the altar in memory of their respective members. Pianist Lester Gibbs (VT) provided the music for the memorial service.

Those honored in the Memorial Service were:

Mary Bergeron (VT)

Ellsworth "Bud" M. Beecher (CT)

Larry Wayne King (TN)

John Hagen (CO)

Marjorie M.J. Tucker (RI)

Clyde G. Berry (ME) and (VT)

Mark Noah (OR) Chairman of the Education and Health Committee gave a final report, which was adopted.

Brother Tom McKern, Chairman of the Board of Grange Insurance Association, was escorted to the Master's station to give some comments.

Chris Johnston (MI) moved that the business conducted yesterday be released to the public, which was adopted.

Lecturer Chris Hamp (WA) reminded everyone of the items for sale in the Mercantile, showing off some of the items for sale.

Steward Chip Narvel (DE) reminded all officers to leave their sashes for use by the Youth officers who will open the session in the morning.

The Grange was closed at 5 p.m. Closing Song, "Let There Be Peace on Earth."

Pianist for the day was Lester Gibbs (VT).

Hosts in the hospitality room today are New York.

Deborah Ploof (VT) was responsible for displaying the resolutions on the large screen in the session room.

The screening of "Rooted: Cultivating Community in the Vermont Grange" took place at 6:45 pm. It is an hour-long documentary film about Granges in Vermont.

The Annual Business Meeting of the Assembly of Demeter met at 8 p.m.

Youth and Junior activities during the day included Junior Get-Acquainted Games, the Community Service Project by Youth, and a workshop for Youth Directors. The Youth and General Tour took place during the day. The Youth Code Reading Contest took place, and the Junior Sign-a-Song and Speech Contests were held. Youth had their costume party during the evening. The Youth officers held a practice and all youth members closed the evening with vespers at 11 p.m.

FOURTH DAY

152nd National Grange Convention

Friday, November 16, 2018

A breakfast for Committee Chairs and Secretaries was held at 7 a.m.

The fourth day of the 152nd Annual Convention of the National Grange opened in the Fourth Degree at 8:30 a.m. following an outstanding entrance march by the Youth Officer Corps.

The following Youth served as officers:

Master – Gail Switzer (PA)
Overseer – Matt Horton (NY)
Lecturer – Mandy Bostwick (KS)
Steward – Lexie Suing (OR)
Asst. Steward – Derek Snyder (PA)
LAS – Hanna Ogle (WA)
Chaplain – Jaycee Jette (MT)
Treasurer – Tyler Leonard (NC)
Secretary – Hannah Gentry (NC)
Gatekeeper – Cole Settle (NC)
Ceres – Samantha Hanson (IA)
Pomona – Ashley Drop (NC)
Flora- Lacey Rude (WA)
Exec- Alejandro Cisneros (WA)
Amber Long (NC)
Jonathan Pittman (WA)
Skyler Zaborac (WA)
Musician – Joey Brenneman (WA)

Roll call by Youth secretary of the youth team members. The opening song was “Baby Shark.”

Escorted to the Master’s station were Riley Reynolds Junior Ambassador (OR), Youth Ambassador Jacob Gwin (WA), Youth Ambassador Tessa Taft (NY), Outstanding Young Patron Jennifer Nauss (PA), Abby Kulpa, Past President of National Junior Horticulture Association (NJHA), and Samantha Wilkins (TX), National Junior Director, and Charlene Espenshade (PA), National Youth Director. Each Junior and Youth member spoke, as well as the NJHA representative.

Samantha Wilkins, National Junior Director, gave her annual report.

The Youth Team Assistants brought all Junior members who have participated in activities during this session in a march around the session room.

Charlene Espenshade (PA) gave the annual report of the Youth Department.

National Master Betsy Huber (PA) announced that Charlene will be retiring at the end of this year, and presented a plaque thanking her for 11 years of service as Youth Development Director of the National Grange.

National Master Huber then presented a gavel to the Youth Master, Gail Switzer (PA).

Grange was declared at ease for the departure of the Youth Officer Team. Youth officers exited the session with another excellent march. Youth and Junior activities will be going on throughout the day.

Recess until 10 am.

Master Huber called the Grange to order in the Fourth Degree.

Roll Call of Officers and Delegates found some absent because they were preparing for the Seventh Degree off site. Delegates from Idaho and Delaware had approval to depart the session early.

George Thomas (MA), Chairman of the Grange Law Committee, gave a final report, which was adopted.

Wayne Campbell (PA) Chairman of the Agriculture Committee, gave a final report which was adopted.

Philip Vonada (PA) thanked us for the privilege of joining during the session this year. A round of applause for both Philip and Leroy Squire (CA), John Trimble Legislative Experience participants, was given.

The minutes from Day Three of the session were read and adopted as corrected.

Recess at 12:15 p.m.

Called to order at 2 pm for installation service. Installing officer Joe Stefenoni (CA) installed Kent Westwood, Master of the California State Grange.

For National Grange officers the Installing officer was High Priest, Bruce Croucher (NY); Installing Master, James Owens (ME); Installing Chaplain, Sharon Croucher (NY); Marshall, Roger Bostwick (KS); Regalia Bearer, Joe Stefenoni (CA); Implement Bearer, Peter Croucher (NY); Pianist, Lester Gibbs (VT). The National Grange officers installed were Executive Committee members Susan Noah (OR) and Leroy Watson (NH), and Pomona, Kay Stiles (MD).

Duane Scott (WI) was escorted to the Master’s station where he received his Past National Officer pin.

Roger Bostwick (KS) gave some information about the area where the Grange Revival will be July 23-28 at Mulberry Mountain in Ozark, Arkansas. He stated that this is a chance for us to get to know each other in our Grange family in a relaxed setting, mostly unstructured event plans. There are camp sites and cabins available, and you don't have to be there all week long, just come when you can. More information is available on the National website. Go to Grangerevival.com for registration.

Distribution of annual passwords by National Master, Betsy Huber (PA).

Motion made and adopted that the Executive Committee be tasked to review and correct minutes of last day's meeting, make grammatical corrections, and release the results of the final actions to the public.

Many thank you's given all around.

The 152nd Session of the National Grange was closed in the Fourth Degree at 3:15 p.m. Everyone present formed a circle, joined hands and sang "Bless Be the Tie That Binds".

Officer group photo after closing. Open forum discussion just after closing with delegates and officers for about an hour.

Delegate (individual) photos will be taken tomorrow.

Hospitality room today was hosted by Maine and Vermont.

Pianist for today was Lester Gibbs (VT).

Deborah Ploof (VT) was responsible for displaying the committee work on the large screen in the session room.

Youth workshops were held throughout the day as well as a Community Service Workshop, and a Communications Workshop for all those in attendance, as well as Junior Grange Sign-A-Song and Public Speaking contests. The Junior tour today was cancelled because of snowy roads, but the Juniors had activities at the hotel and went bowling.

Grow Club dinner began at 5 p.m.

At 7:30 p.m. the Evening of Excellence was held at the Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center. Three Junior Grangers from the Northeast Region presented the colors followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. National Lecturer Chris Hamp (WA) introduced participants in the talent portion of the evening, and National Youth Ambassadors introduced the participants in the Talent, Public Speaking, Sign-a-Song portion as well as introducing State ambassadors.

The winners in the Evening of Excellence were announced. There was voting on-line taking place throughout the evening, with the results being announced as follows: Speech: Ashley Drop (NC); Sign-A-Song: The Bellas group (NC); Vocal: Philip Vonada (PA); Variety: Angelina DeDominicis (CT).

The National Youth Ambassadors winners for 2019 were announced. The winners are Zac Mazag (NC), and Rylee Furr (NC). 2019 Outstanding Young Patron winners are Katie Fallon (NY) and Brittney Oliver (WA).

Several youth members conducted a vespers service to close the evening.

A youth pizza party was held at 10:30 p.m. hosted by the Eastern Regional Youth.

POST-CONVENTION

Saturday, November 17, 2018

A Junior Grange breakfast and program was held beginning at 8 a.m. The Youth participated in a Parliamentary Procedure Contest beginning at 9 a.m., followed by the Grange Jeopardy Contest, followed by the award ceremony. A Junior Grange Leadership Workshop for adults was also held at 9:30 a.m. while at the same time there were Junior Grange activities for children, followed by awards ceremony for Juniors at the Junior Lunch at noon.

The Sixth Degree conferral began at 10 a.m. by Vermont State Grange assisted by the Northeast region.

A Lecturer's workshop was led by National Lecturer, Chris Hamp, at 11:30 a.m.

The Seventh Degree conferral began at 1 p.m. at the Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center, followed by the Convocation of the Assembly of Demeter.

The Grange Celebration Banquet began at 6:30 p.m. Welcome by National Grange Executive Board Chairman, F. Philip Prelli (CT), followed by the singing of the National Anthem and pledge to the U.S. flag, and the invocation by Chaplain Barbara Borderieux (FL).

Following dinner, Master Betsy Huber introduced the National Grange staff members, national officers and Assembly officers, as well as past National Master, Ed Luttrell. Introduced also from the Grange Insurance Association, Tom McKern and wife Carolyn.

As has been our practice for many years, a handmade quilt was given to the National Foster Parents organization to be raffled off at their annual convention for their scholarship fund. The annual donation check was presented to Ann Bercher, the representative from the Kelley Farm.

The National Grange community service awards were presented by Pete Pompper, National Community Service Director, as follows: Honorable Mention went to Valley Grange (PA) and Fear Lake (MN), with prize money of \$50 each. Third place was Richmond (RI) with prize of \$100; Second place was Avon (MT) prize of \$150; and First Place is Humptulips (WA) with prize of \$200. Congratulations to these winners. Firefighter of the Year Brother Ray Midkiff (OH); Police Officer of the Year Sheriff Brian Begole (MI), and Teacher of the Year Myken Poorman (PA).

Junior Grange Community Service awards were announced: First place Humptulips (WA); second place Marvel (CO); third place Kirkland (NY). This is the first year for these awards and each winner received a certificate.

Billy Greer (CO) was announced as the 2019 National Youth Ambassador.

Youth awards were announced. The Youth CS Project of the Year winner was Marissa Yager (OR). Her project was called cuddle cots, which are refrigerated bassinets. The Youth Outstanding Community Service winner was Amber Long (NC), who completed several service projects throughout the year. The winning teams in the Youth Parliamentary Procedure Contest were announced: Teams: 1st Pennsylvania, 2nd North Carolina, 3rd New York. Individual winners: Derek Snyder (PA) and Katie Leonard (NC). Grange Jeopardy winners were 3rd place Phil Vonada (PA), 2nd Derek Snyder (PA), and 1st Chris Szkutak (MA). Code Reading contest winners: Novice – 1st Philip Vonada (PA), 2nd Matt Horton (NY), 3rd Mandy Bostwick (KS); Patron level 1st – Jennifer Nauss (PA). The Youth award to a Junior Mentor was received by Andrew Kieffer (PA). The Youth silent auction for college scholarships received \$2,751.

Membership Director, Joseph Stefenoni (CA) announced net gains in 429 Subordinate Granges in the past year. State Granges with net gains were California, Florida, Kansas, Montana, Oregon, Virginia, and Potomac #1 in Washington, DC.

Communications Director for National Grange, Amanda Brozana Rios, introduced the 2018 Communications Fellows and presented each with a certificate. Amanda also announced that the "Herd member most active on social media" winner is Debbie Gegare (WI).

National Master, Betsy Huber (PA) thanked Team Leader, Jody Cameron (CT), and all of the Host Region for their hospitality and hard work in bringing this convention to the Northeast, and taking care of all of us in the snow. Team members from the Northeast Region were recognized – Laura Magrum (NY), Sharon Morton (ME), Glen Gibson (MA), Danielle Hartley (RI), Kerriann Heath (NH), Ann Gray (VT), and Jodi Ann Cameron (CT).

An invitation from the 2020 Host Committee was given for next year's convention to be held in Bloomington, Minn., November 5-9.

Raffle winners of the host region gift baskets were announced.

An auction was held by auctioneer, Marty Billquist (MT) which included several items. Special beneficiaries of the auction were the Bill & Lillian Booth family (CA) in the loss of their home to the wildfires, and Junior member Lillian Sharpe (CT) who is fighting leukemia.

The benediction was given by National Chaplain, Barbara Borderieux (FL) and the evening's events were concluded, followed by a dance. Youth vespers were at 11:30 p.m.

Annual Business Meeting

152nd National Grange Convention

Thursday, November 15, 2018

The Business Meeting of the Assembly of Demeter was held on the above date in the Pinnacle Room of Stoweflake Mountain Resort and Conference Center at 8 p.m. with the High Priest of Demeter Bruce M. Croucher calling the meeting to order. He welcomed all. The Priestess Hierophant Barbara Borderieux led all in prayer followed by all joining in the Salutation of the Seventh Degree, saluting the flag of the United States of America and singing "America the Beautiful"

In addition to the High Priest, the following officers were present: Priest Archon – Roger Bostwick, Priest Annalist – James Owens, Priest Treasurer – Dwight Baldwin, Priestess Hierophant – Barbara Borderieux, Priestess Ceres – Cindy Greer, Priestess Pomona – Susan Noah, Priestess Flora – Welina Shufeldt and National Master – Betsy Huber.

Priest Croucher pointed out the gavel and gavel block with marble from the ruins at the Temple of Demeter. He also commented on the Youth Code Reading Contest today in which nine participated. The results will be announced tomorrow. All entrants did a fine job.

Seventh Degree directors Gene and Maria Edelen were called upon. They updated us on how the preparations are progressing for the Seventh Degree this Saturday. Keep Donna Keaton in your prayers as she is having health issues and was unable to be here. Arthur and Beth Merrill of New Hampshire and Claire and Steve Logan of Rhode Island are assisting this year.

The High Priest spoke about work on reducing the cost of the Seventh Degree and the challenges involved.

Priest Ed Luttrell, Past National Master was called upon. He reminded all that this a fraternal order and the Seventh Degree is the highest Degree. We need to keep the integrity of each of the degrees as they build upon each other.

The High Priest continued on stating that we are concerned with the lack of knowledge concerning our ritual. Members need to be opening and closing Granges in ritualist form and to practice our ceremonies. The State Granges need to assist by sponsoring degree days.

Remarks were given by National Master Betsy Huber. She commented that for her as a Juvenile Granger, it was a big event going to Grange twice a month. We need to memorize or read our ritual well. We all need to take pride in the Grange. A new PBS movie has been released about the Grange in Vermont and DVD is for sale here at the convention.

The High Priest led all in the Salutation of the Seventh Degree and all joined in singing "Blest Be the Tie".

The Worthy High Priest declared the meeting closed at 8:40 p.m.

Fraternally,

James A. Owens

Priest Annalist

Annual Convocation

152nd National Grange Convention

Saturday, November 17, 2018

The Convocation of the Assembly of Demeter was held at the Spruce Peak Arts Center on the above date at 3:05 p.m. following the conferral of the Seventh Degree.

Priest Herald Kevin Klenklen (Kansas) conducted to the stage the officers of the Assembly as follows: Priest Archon Roger Bostwick (Kansas), Priest Annalist James Owens (Maine), Priest Treasurer Dwight Baldwin (Iowa), Priest Interpreter George Thomas (Massachusetts), Priest Archivist Maurice Wiles (Maryland), Priestess Hierophant Barbara Borderieux (Florida), Priest Orator Christopher Johnston (Michigan), Priest First Mystagogue Chris Heath (New Hampshire), Priest Second Mystagogue Stephen Coye (New York), Priest Conductor Mark Noah (Oregon), Priest Guardian Chip Narvel (Delaware), Priest Announcer Gary Brumbaugh (Ohio), Priestess Ceres Cindy Greer (Colorado), Priestess Pomona Susan Noah (Oregon) and Priestess Flora Welina Shufeldt (Oklahoma). The Priest Herald then conducted High Priest Bruce M. Croucher (New York) and National Grange Master Betsy Huber (Pennsylvania) to their stations.

The Worthy High Priest then opened the Convocation in full form and the Priestess Hierophant gave the ritualistic prayer.

All were welcomed to the Convocation by the Worthy High Priest.

The minutes of the 2017 meeting in Spokane, Washington were read and adopted.

National Master Betsy Huber was called upon. She welcome the new Seventh Degree members and encouraged all to see the degree over and over again and to study the other degrees of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry.

The High Priest talked about the Sacred Record which was displayed on his station. About the only change made to it in recent years is the addition of the annual location of the Seventh Degree and the number of candidates receiving the degree. He requested all to think about the last half of the Seventh Degree. It is full of symbolism going deep to the roots of the Grange and based on ceremonies of ancient times. It is based on Eleusinian Mysteries except that today we no longer have the pagan rites.

93 Patrons received the Seventh Degree this afternoon.

The Convocation of the Assembly of Demeter was closed in form at 3:30 p.m..
 Fraternally Submitted,
 James A. Owens
 Priest Annalist

2018 SEVENTH DEGREE CANDIDATES BY STATE

CALIFORNIA	2	NEW YORK	12
CONNECTICUT	13	PENNSYLVANIA	2
MAINE	13	RHODE ISLAND	13
MASSACHUSETTS	15	VERMONT	14
NEW HAMPSHIRE	6	WASHINGTON	<u>2</u>
NEW JERSEY	1		
		TOTAL	93

2018 SEVENTH DEGREE CONFERRAL CAST

High Priest	Bruce M. Croucher (NY)	Priest Conductor	Mark Noah (OR)
Priest Archon	Roger Bostwick (KS)	Priest Messenger	James Taylor (VA)
Priest Annalist	James A. Owens (ME)	Priest Herald	Kevin Klenklen (KS)
Priest Treasurer	Dwight Baldwin (IA)	Priest Guardian	Chip Narvel (DE)
Priest Interpreter	George E. Thomas (MA)	Priest Announcer	Gary Brumbaugh (OH)
Priest Archivist	Maurice Wiles (MD)	Priestess Ceres	Cindy Greer (CO)
Priestess Hierophant	Barbara Borderieux (FL)	Priestess Pomona	Susan Noah (OR)
Priest Orator	Christopher Johnston (MI)	Priestess Flora	Welina Schufeldt (OK)
Priest 1 ST Mystagogue	Chris Heath (NH)	Ceres Attendant #1	Susan Plank (IN)
Priest 2 ND Mystagogue	Stephen Coye (NY)	Ceres Attendant #2	Sharon Russell (CT)
National Master	Betsy Huber (PA)	Sacred Oracle	Duane Scott (WI) (slide presentation)

TRUMPET GIRLS

Angelina DeDominicis (CT)	Jasmine Richards (RI)
Ava Grenier Riley (RI)	Lauren Kenyon (RI)
Shasha Secor (NY)	

MARCHING CANDIDATES

Shelley Cameron (CT)	Gary Mason (VT)
Allison Colson (ME)	Ayden Slominski (NY)

DIRECTORS

Gene and Maria Edelen (IA)
New Asst. Directors Arthur and Beth Merrill (NH)

WARDROBE, MAKEUP & BACKSTAGE ASSISTANTS

Melanie Bostwick (KS)	Judy Sherrod (TN)	Donna Wiles (MD)
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Video Technician	Patty Dyer (OH)
Soloist	Richard Perkins (MA)
Pianist	Irene Fassett (NY)

COURT LADIES

Karen Overstreet (TX)	Lynette Schaeffer (IL)	Kerriann Heath (NE)	Mary Bryant (WA)
Patti Thomas (MA)	Kay Stiles (MD)	Sue Roy (OH)	Martha Stefenoni (CA)

Fraternally Submitted,
 James A. Owens
 Priest Annalist

STATE OF AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Delivered By Betsy E. Huber, National Master

2:30 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 13, 2018

Washington continues to be a new experience every day – both in and outside of the office-- and much of the time that's not a good thing. On any given day and on any given issue, there are multiple competing forces in play. The liberal and conservative media report on the same topic from such differing perspectives that it's hard sometimes to believe they're talking about the same subject. Social media at times is more important than factual articles in influencing public opinion. Caucuses within political parties seem to be divided as much as competing parties once were. Every time a bipartisan solution begins to develop, there's a rush to discredit it no matter how good or bad it is. There are no signs that the extreme partisanship in Congress will end anytime soon. This is the climate in which we live. As Grangers who have taken pride in a century and a half of discussing hard issues, talking through them from different perspectives, deciding an action and moving forward in a united, nonpartisan manner, it is hard to understand, and even harder to accept. So while the battles in Washington rage on, we try to set good examples in hometowns across our nation. And from our headquarters in D.C., we take on issues, not individuals, and push for work to get done.

National Grange activities in Washington have been both massive in number and intense in action this year. National Grange policy covers an enormously wide range of issues. Burton monitors all National Grange policy and we get actively involved with as many issues as we possibly can. Some of these, like farm and food policy, rural broadband expansion, health care and the opioid crisis are top priority and require intense time and effort. Your National Grange was successful in driving action on many of these key issues during 2018. Unfortunately, the timing and politics were just not right this year to accomplish much on things like immigration, farm labor, research, infrastructure such as highways, bridges, locks and dams, term limits and several more longstanding concerns of Grangers.

Lawmakers couldn't pass a budget five months late but they did manage to pass an omnibus spending package in March that authorized government spending through the end of the September 2018 fiscal year. The final omnibus did contain several Grange issue priorities including \$600 million of new money for USDA broadband grants, \$1 billion of new money for state and tribal grants to address the opioid epidemic, and it updated and overhauled the dairy Margin Protection Program (MPP). This additional money into MPP along with restructured premium rates are meant to benefit small to medium size producers. When the margin between the average milk price and feed costs falls below a dollar amount selected by the insured dairyman, MPP makes payments to the producer. The National Grange worked closely with the National Milk Producers Federation to get these updates included. These funding offsets will not now have to be accounted for in the 2018 Farm Bill baseline, thus removing a huge obstacle from Farm Bill negotiations.

Agriculture

We expected a Farm Bill by now but Congress has not been able to get it to the finish line. I do want to give credit to the chairmen and ranking members of the Senate and House Agriculture Committees for continuing to hammer out compromises between the Senate and House bills during October when most politicians were home campaigning. There's some optimism that a Farm Bill can pass during the lame duck session that begins today (November 13) in fact. National Grange has been advocating for fair and equitable treatment for all commodities, for all regions of the country, and for all farm sizes.

The Grange and the dairy industry got a big win in the U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade pact when Canada agreed to eliminate its class 7 pricing system and phase in increased access for U.S. dairy products.

This coming year, our big dairy issue will be standards of identity labeling for cows' milk versus plant protein substitutes labeled as milk. Milk is clearly defined as a product of lactating animals. How does the Commissioner then handle almond milk, soy milk, pea milk, and more? Instead of "Got Milk?" the slogan might become "What's Milk?" How important is this fight to Grange members? The Ag Committee will be discussing this issue.

Considering the dire situation of the dairy industry in the last couple years, what action should we recommend at this Session to ensure we have a U.S. dairy industry in the future? Several personal friends of mine in Pennsylvania, in dairy farming for generations, sold their herds and went out of business this year because they could not continue losing money any longer. Comparing costs, the average worker's salary in 1998 was \$28,861 and increased to \$48,642 in 2018. The price of a postage stamp increased 56.3%, houses are up 91.9%, gasoline increased 126%. But the milk price to the farmer dropped 5.4% over the last 20 years. What policy can we adopt this week and advocate for in Washington that will help farmers at least cover their costs of production and stay in business?

Another issue in the news right now is lab-grown meat or whatever we are going to call it. The FDA wants to be the regulator of lab-grown protein when it becomes commercially available, and FDA Commissioner Gottlieb wants to look at standards of identity definitions for food items. The definition of meat in the statute appears to clearly give USDA jurisdiction over any and all meat products. Meat producer and processor organizations are advocating for USDA oversight. We need to take a stand on how we believe cell-cultured protein and seafood that is grown in laboratory conditions should be named, marketed and otherwise regulated. These are all pressing issues and the Grange needs defined policy to continue our legacy as a leader in American Agricultural Advocacy.

Similarly, we do have policy encouraging FDA and USDA to establish a standard definition of “natural.” Should there be definitions and standards of identity for marketing foods and non-food items as “natural,” or is that just government over-regulation and the buyer should take responsibility for determining the truth in advertising?

Food waste is a rampant problem, especially in the U.S. Should the Grange dive into this issue and develop programs to address the different ways we waste food in today’s world? I believe agriculture has a big stake in this issue and we should be involved in recommending solutions. With so many hungry people in this country it is unacceptable that 40% of the food we produce ends up in the trash. Here is where policy and programming intersect, and our actions through community outreach and education in our local Granges can speak for our values as Grangers in the years to come.

Health Care

The omnibus financial package also accomplished a goal we had been working on for years-- permanent repeal of the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB). IPAB, contained in the Affordable Care Act, was to be a board of Presidential appointees charged with recommending cuts to Medicare if spending growth reached an arbitrary level. The Health & Human Services Secretary would implement recommendations. Neither the recommendations nor the actions would be subject to administrative or judicial review. This is rationing health care, and we are very pleased that it was finally repealed. Also included in the budget deal was funding for Community Health Centers and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). The National Grange supported these initiatives also.

The opioid epidemic is very real to those of us in rural and small-town communities. The National Grange partnered with the Rx Abuse Leadership Initiative (RALI) to begin building a network of state and local coalitions of community groups, community leaders, first responders, school officials, the medical community, law enforcement and others to focus on awareness, prevention, treatment and cure at the local level. We’ve seen a growing consensus that winning the drug addiction epidemic begins with family, friends and the local community. Several State Granges have been recruited to join with RALI, the first being Maryland which really took off in the summer with press events and exhibits at several fairs—thank you Allen! Most recently Illinois had a great kickoff with Lynette taking a leading role.)

Drug Costs and Patient Access

Health care is always on the daily calendar at the National Grange. Drug prices, out-of-pocket costs, and the growing concern that pharmacy benefit managers may actually be responsible for raising the cost of drugs to patients dominated our summer health agenda. However, the importation of unregulated prescription drugs without verification of safety or effectiveness is not the answer. We also spent a great deal of time on future patient access to Medicare and Medicaid in the era of ever-increasing costs for medical attention. We urged Congressional action to fix the looming Part D out-of-pocket cliff coming in 2020. The 340B program was created to help hospitals and safety net clinics get access to discounted prescription medicines for uninsured and vulnerable patients. In recent years, the 340B Drug Pricing Program has seen explosive patient growth against a backdrop of weak oversight and lax program rules by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (in HHS), which allowed hospitals and middlemen to profit without the requirement to help low-income patients. The Grange applauded the Department of Health and Human Services for its recent commitment to fix 340B.

For next year, what are Grange members’ biggest concerns with health care? Four of the current issues are:

- Drug pricing
- Drug availability
- Affordable insurance coverage
- Rural Hospital closings, consolidations, and elimination of critical departments

We have taken some action in most of these areas this year, but it’s difficult to keep up with all the issues. What should be our priority? Should we concentrate our efforts on one or two of these, or continue to dabble in all areas? What are you and your local Grangers most concerned about? And what are you seeing? Our advocacy efforts are helped immensely when we can put a “face” to the problem and tell a story of a real person facing the issue.

Immigration

The Senate had an open-ended immigration debate for four days in February but no solutions developed. Agriculture producers are still desperate for a fix to the ag workforce crisis. Ag lobbyists (including the Grange) were hoping for an immigration package to pass the Senate so the House could include Congressman Goodlatte’s (R-VA) Ag Act creating a new and simpler H-2C two-year work permit program for agriculture. Those on the Hill who insist on major comprehensive overhaul of immigration fear that fixing ag will set the precedent for other piece-meal attempts. It now looks like immigration reform has faded off into the sunset once again, along with the infrastructure legislation that was talked about early this year.

I ask our committees to look again at our policy on the various issues of immigration. Specific items under discussion are

- Availability of immigrant farm and ranch labor
- Acceptance of an e-verify system to document workers as legal non-citizens
- Shorten the time to process applications for legal citizenship
- Enforce existing immigration laws and border crossing conditions.

How does the Grange feel about these items and do we have policy to express our opinions? We supported Congressman Goodlatte's Ag Act but is there a better way to solve the farm labor crisis that could make it into law next year?

Telecommunications

The National Grange advocates continually for the deployment of high speed broadband to the unserved and underserved areas of rural America. I continue to serve on Federal Communications Commission's Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee—we've had three meetings this year and have another meeting December 6 and 7. Our committee is looking at ways to break down legal, jurisdictional, political, economic and regulatory barriers that greatly hinder broadband expansion into the rural landscape. The FCC has already taken some of our suggestions and started them through the regulations process. Personal privacy for online internet users is an emerging issue for the Grange as we address the recent high-profile online privacy scandals. To quote South Dakota Senator John Thune, "The question is no longer whether we need a national law to protect consumers' privacy. The question is what shape that law should take."

Net Neutrality

Net Neutrality is a tough issue, principally because it sounds good that everyone should be an equal customer at an equal price for equal service. But everyone doesn't need the same service at the same price for the same priorities at the same speed. Rural unserved customers would be happy to receive any internet service that would enable them to do business; they may not be interested in streaming the latest movie or downloading video games. Net Neutrality defines broadband as a **communications service** that essentially makes it a public utility. Since 2015 and until the FCC overturned those rules, investment in rural broadband expansion declined sharply. With the latest FCC open internet rules in place, interest in investing in rural broadband is growing again. FCC Chairman Pai is proposing to classify broadband as an **information service** not subject to 1930s telephone monopoly regulations. The Grange has supported Chairman Pai's proposal at the FCC and to several members of Congress. The Grange's mission is to connect rural and small-town America's schools, libraries, farms, hospitals, clinics, first responders and start-up companies. For rural America, it's all about getting connected, not how fast or how cheaply movies, games or other apps download.

Grange Activities

150th Anniversary Gala

The National Grange recognized four members of Congress with our Champion of Rural America award during the December 4 Gala at the Decatur House in Washington, DC. The recipients are leaders on rural issues and are bipartisan in their legislative advocacy. Those recognized were Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), Chairman of the Special Committee on Aging; Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), ranking Democrat on the Senate Agriculture Committee; Representative Greg Walden (R-OR), Chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee; and Representative Collin Peterson (D-MN), ranking Democrat on the House Agriculture Committee. It was a pleasure to get to know these Members and their staffs and to form working relationships for the Grange.

This year the National Grange and Grange Advocacy are jointly hosting a mini-Gala reception for our advocacy partners this December 4th to recognize and thank them, and to announce three more Champion of Rural America Award winners: Chairman Ajit Pai of the Federal Communications Commission; Senator Pat Roberts, Chair of the Senate Ag Committee, and the National Rural Health Association, a national nonprofit membership organization providing leadership on rural health issues through advocacy, communications, education and research.

National Grange Fly-In

The National Grange Fly-In April 15-18 in Washington was deemed a great success by the attendees. A total of 34 Grangers including 3 Juniors, from 14 states had 30 meetings with their Senators, Representatives and staff liaisons. Grangers discussed the Farm Bill, rural broadband, health care, the ag workforce crisis, the opioid epidemic, commodity prices, Lifeline communications, infrastructure and local back-home issues. We visited USDA for a briefing on their Rural Development programs, and the Juniors spent some time at the Verizon headquarters to see their Innovation Center and sit in the mock combine.

Summer Interns

The National Grange hosted three college student interns this summer who were participating in the Fund for American Studies' Institute on Business and Government Affairs. Because of class and seminar time requirements, the interns were at the Grange approximately half time. They were exposed to the staff functions of the Grange, wrote for the magazine, helped with several projects, attended Hill meetings and gained an appreciation for the Grange and grass roots organizations. Interns are so helpful to us in completing projects and research that our small office staff just doesn't have time to do.

Coalitions

The National Grange is still an active member of several major coalitions concerned with health care, telecommunications (Broadband, Lifeline, Net Neutrality), rural schools, farm policy, immigration, infrastructure, tax reform and other coalitions on lesser issues. The Coalition for Paper Options was formed to assure citizens continue to have the option to receive government information, investment reports and questionnaires via paper rather than electronically if they so choose. The campaign by

federal agencies to quietly force the public to go paperless before they're ready ignores the fact that over 23 million rural and small-town folks lack broadband access.

We've been active with the Connect Americans Now Coalition that proposes to use available broadcast spectrum or "TV White Spaces" to deliver broadband to rural areas. This technology can carry communications over far greater distances and penetrate walls and other obstacles and go across and around hills and mountains. The Federal Communications Commission has not yet acted to approve reallocation of this unused spectrum. The only opposition seems to be the broadcasting industry.

Grange Advocacy

Grange Advocacy is expanding its reach, profile and effectiveness. Coalitions in Washington and in the states are again looking to the Grange grassroots membership network for help in reaching rural and small-town America. The National Grange and partnering State Granges have worked together on opioids, prescription drug pricing, Medicare and Medicaid issues, health care access for seniors and rural citizens, high speed rural broadband expansion, low cost wireless service for the disabled, veterans, seniors and people in remote areas, the Farm Bill, taxes, the definition of "milk", and much more. In some cases, Grange Advocacy is able to share funding with State Granges to support advocacy efforts. However, it's critical that states coordinate early and closely with Grange Advocacy before launching an advocacy effort on a national issue.

Good Year for Grange Profile

Your National Grange and several State Granges have experienced a great year building profile in Washington and around the country as we've tackled issues and relationships. Numerous National Grange op-eds on priority advocacy issues were published by major media outlets. Several of our state Grange partners were published at home on these same subjects. Official letters were sent to committee chairmen and ranking minority members of congressional committees on the Hill; issue statements and policy positions were sent to all members of Congress; official filings, statements and petitions were sent to the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission and the Assistant Attorney General. We are limited in what we can do by lack of staff and not enough hours in the days. Hopefully some day we can add a clerical person desperately needed to research and draft letters and editorials so we can increase our visibility in the capitol. This added staff person would also complete other day-to-day tasks, freeing time for all our directors to do more high-level work to provide excellent service to current members and attract new members to the Grange.

Critical Issues in 2019

Opportunities may be limited for critical issues in 2019. Politics override statesmanship in Washington these days. Major issues are begging for attention and resolution. While policy makers from both parties and all regions of the country see the urgent need to fix these, they cannot agree on how to go about it. Beginning in January, we will already be in presidential campaign mode for 2020 and that adds another layer to an already mean-spirited political divide.

Your National Grange has strong policy to rebuild ailing locks and dams, roads and bridges and we will continue to lobby for these on the congressional agenda. A rewrite of our immigration laws and a solution to our farm worker shortage dilemma are serious economic issues but may be too politically charged to get serious action by Congress any time soon.

It is more important than ever that Grangers get involved in their communities and take responsibilities in government, from the township or town, to the school board, fire and ambulance companies, as county commissioners, State Legislators, even Congressmen. Grange members are knowledgeable about the issues, believe in American values with hometown roots, are honorable and sincere citizens that we need so much in our country's leadership. Granges over the past year have reported 852,136 hours of community service—and that is only from the 427 Granges that reported their hours. The real number is in the millions of hours. This is an amazing fact that we should really brag about! There are many people out there that want to help make a difference and would love to join with a wonderful group like the Grange if they knew about the work we do. We need to publicize our efforts, not to brag, but so we can enlist more DO-ers and be able to do more.

Is your Grange involved in your community? Do even your smallest projects give people a reason to come together and get to know their neighbors? Do people look to you for civic leadership and direction? Do you work at forming coalitions with other community groups and working together on service projects? Is your Grange a pillar organization? Most of all, do you believe and work to make sure your local Grange can help restore respect, civility and patriotism to local communities and thus to our beloved country? I believe for each of us the answer is a resounding yes. We are heroes in our hometowns! Superheroes in fact, who can improve our hometowns, improve our country and restore civility and unity once again.

As National Master Sherman Lowell said in 1923, "A buoyant, optimistic spirit of leadership is our greatest need as an organization, and this need extends all along the line, from the subordinates through the various higher channels. People will not affiliate themselves with any organization simply by virtue of its past reputation. The Grange must continue to deliver the goods, must courageously face new conditions, tackle new issues and prove itself worthwhile if it expects to gather new support and even to hold its old backers." Let's unleash our power in 2019, put on our superhero capes, and show the world what we Grangers can do!

STATE OF THE GRANGE ADDRESS

Delivered By Betsy E. Huber, National Master

3 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 13, 2018

Last year I started my Master's address with- "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." This year continued that theme! We survived the whole winter with a temporary boiler, and the entire summer until September 13 with no central air conditioning. The purchase of 35 window air conditioners made the offices bearable, but we lost \$177,000 in rental income because of the uncomfortable conditions.

Our contractor not only did not complete the chiller and boiler jobs, but much of what he did do was incorrect or violated code, so a lot of the work had to be torn out and re-done. We are actually still working on re-connecting the piping to make the two existing boilers work again, and then the new boiler needs to be hooked up. We are gathering the evidence on all this to file suit against the contractor and hopefully recoup some of our costs.

I am so grateful to the Granges who loaned us funds to complete the chiller and boiler work—Potomac Grange, Red Lion Grange in PA, the New Jersey, Vermont, Indiana, and Oregon State Granges, and the Grange Foundation and Grange Advocacy. In addition, three weeks ago we completed paperwork to add \$1 million to our previous loan to complete the boiler, chiller, and electrical work and to consolidate some of the smaller loans.

There are other projects in the building that need to be done in the near future. The electrical system is unsafe for any contractors who are not familiar with it. Just the engineering work to prepare for updating is \$85,000. The sump pumps in the subbasement were supposed to be replaced but were not. We do not want to risk water flooding the area and damaging the equipment as well as our historic records. Then there are the less urgent but important projects: The conference room needs new carpet and paint; all lights in the building should be replaced with LED fixtures; and the original single-pane, metal windows need to be replaced. Our building is 60 years old and needs a lot of money spent on it to make it more energy efficient and attractive to tenants. This is a large source of our income.

In our ongoing legal matters in California, we continue to win every court proceeding but the Guild continues to stall and appeal. We were delighted that the CA State Grange finally regained possession of their headquarters property, bank accounts, and corporation this year. They held a rededication ceremony in June and are continuing to welcome Community Granges back to the fold. We participated in a mediation conference with the Guild's insurance company on October 12th but no agreement was reached. Lines of communication are still open and we are still hoping for resolution soon to put an end to all the legal actions.

Our 150th birthday December 4th was celebrated in elegant style with the Gala, including 150 Grangers, friends, and partners in attendance. Thank you to our great office staff for their hard work and expertise in planning and executing this special event. You heard more about this event in my external report. We realized a profit of over \$50,000 and had a lot of fun. Grange Advocacy and the National Grange are holding a mini-Gala reception this year, again on December 4th, to recognize three more Champions of Rural America and thank our partners for their support. This is not a fundraiser but a thank you event to build the profile of the National Grange in Washington.

Other special events this year were Ag Day when the youth team came to town, and the Fly-in with 34 attendees. We were able to brighten up the lobby of the headquarters building with fresh paint and historic photos of the building construction. We completed renovation of several spaces prior to new tenants moving in. As of October 1 the building is again fully occupied except for a small office on the first floor; however, two tenants will be leaving in January and we are currently showing that space.

I was able to attend four regional leaders' conferences and five state sessions this year. I also participated in Fredonia Grange #1's 150th anniversary celebration in April, Oregon's library exhibit reception in May, and Farm Aid and the Big E in September. A small group enjoyed the Grange cruise to the western Caribbean in February. I initiated the monthly Zoom membership meetings which are appreciated by a small but dedicated group of members across the country. We certainly welcome more to participate on the third Tuesday of every month at 8:30 pm Eastern time. Burton and I are increasing National Grange visibility by attending monthly lunch meetings of two groups in DC and numerous other events.

The Executive Committee has been discussing for years the need for all of our volunteers working with children and youth under 18 to have background checks and child abuse clearances to protect the Grange at all levels from liability. I am happy to announce that we have registered with a nationwide service called "Safe Gatherings" to standardize our system. Safe Gatherings was created by the Methodist Church and discovered by National Junior Director Samantha Wilkins, who has worked tirelessly to research them and others and get us registered at no cost to the National Grange. Thank you Sam! We will be sending out the website link for any Granger to use to request their complete background check—federal, state, county, and local records check as well as contacting individual references. The cost is \$35 per person for a two year clearance, and I strongly encourage each State Grange to reimburse your volunteers for this cost. We do not receive detailed results of these clearances, only a yes or no. Safe Gatherings stores the information confidentially so we do not have to have files in the National Headquarters or in your State offices. We have been strongly urged by all our attorneys to put a system in place right away, so I hope you will publicize and use this easy way to protect our organization.

In December 2017, the staff met and created a Strategic Plan document that looked specifically at how our National Grange staff functions, our goals for the two-year period, and the ways in which we are accountable in relation to those goals. In May we met again led by Kendall Lott, President of MPowered Strategies, a company that is headquartered at the National

Grange building and works on planning and success for organizations and groups. Lott led our team through discussion and assessment of our work thus far, and helped us focus, prioritize, and pare down to what is feasible given our limited staffing and resources. This has been very helpful to organize work flow in the office, but it also pointed out how short-staffed we really are and how much better we could serve the Grange with another person or two. A huge thank you to Kendall for spending many hours on this effort at no cost to the Grange.

We have struggled for two years without a membership director. Amanda and I have tried to fill some of the duties of membership but we had no budget and little time with all our other responsibilities. I am happy to report that on October 15th we hired Joseph Stefanoni on a temporary basis until the end of the year. He has been compiling the membership statistics report for this session as well as working with contacts who are interested in starting new Granges in Florida and Louisiana. I am hopeful that the Board, the Audit & Budget Committee, and the delegates can find funds in the 2019 budget to put Joe back on staff. He will not be traveling to all of your states to do workshops, but will be working with regional membership workers to train the trainers. Our membership continues to decline and we must work harder to ensure survival of the Grange in the future.

We have talked previously about Robert Putnam's book Bowling Alone, and how generations since the Baby Boomers are not joining organizations and "younger people just don't want to join our Grange." I have challenged Joe, and I challenge all of you, to examine our structure, study the characteristics of the younger generations, and be willing to make some changes to attract them to Grange.

Joe, Amanda and I have read Knowing Y by Sarah Sladek, who states it is not true that Generation Y does not join—they're just looking at organizations in a different way. It was interesting to me to learn that this generation hates to be sold anything, so our sales pitch membership work and elevator speeches are not the right way to approach them. Generation Y is looking for associations to deliver continued, quick, and easy access to new information, valuable services and products, meaningful relationships, and experiences that deliver a real return on investment. We need to start thinking less about getting people to join, and more about what we offer that is truly engaging and worthwhile.

They actively research everything on the internet before committing to anything—so that's why it is so important for every Grange to have an up-to-date website and Facebook page. But the purpose of social media is not to beg for members; it is to help people achieve personal satisfaction through Grange experiences that you offer. Generation Y is busy, but they will invest in making a difference for their communities and the world.

We have some excellent youth and young adults, many of them here this week, who are dedicated Grange members committed to this organization for life. For example: This year's National Outstanding Young Patron Jennifer Nauss of PA is a speech language pathologist at an elementary school. She is a leader in the effort to digitize and preserve all of the PA State Grange's historical documents.

Mandy Bostwick, KS, last year's OYP, is a 4th grade teacher.

Robert & Jen Beamon, PA, also recent OYPs, are both chemists at the pharmaceutical company Bayer Healthcare as well as the parents of two young children.

Caroline Tart of NC underwent a heart transplant and then returned to teaching as a high school agriculture educator.

Victor Salazar is a Farm Bureau field rep in TX.

Darby Madewell, NC, student at NC State in electrical and electronics engineering and is assistant stage manager for a production at Theatre Raleigh.

Brittney Oliver, WA, is a civil engineer, works for Western Pacific Engineering. Reorganized a Grange in her community.

Nolan Strawder is a nuclear engineer at a power plant in KS.

Kennedy Gwin, last year's Youth Ambassador, is a political science college student studying in London this year.

J. Allen Cameron, CT, is assistant herdsman at a dairy farm.

Gail Switzer, who will be Youth Master on Friday morning, teaches severely autistic children and just returned last week from a trip to India with the Global Autism Project.

These are just a few of our fantastic younger members; I could mention many more but time won't permit. Most of these young people will be here this week, taking off work or school because they are dedicated to this Grange and want to serve. Please talk to them! Ask them about their life, their dreams, their opinions. You may be amazed.

I have formed a Young Leaders Council to meet this week and continuing electronically, to brainstorm ideas about all aspects of Grange. We need to hear from them what made them join, what keeps them interested, and what would make their friends want to join us. I don't want them to feel constrained in their discussions by tradition, by history, by current programs. It's a cliché, but I want them to think outside the box or even outside the *galaxy* and give us their best ideas.

Also part of the Young Leaders Council's job will be to suggest ways the youth officers and ambassadors can participate more in the real action of the convention, actually seeing what we the delegates do here all week. Currently the youth only spend an hour or two with us Wednesday evening in session. Is an all-day tour on Thursday the best use of their time and talents? Could they participate in committee discussions on resolutions, or listen in to floor action and debate? I'm sure our youth have a great time and love to come to convention but they could be learning so much more to make their time and expense worthwhile, and experience a program that qualifies for grant funding to assist with costs and bring in great speakers. This year's youth team expressed the desire to work on a project for Safe Schools. On Friday afternoon representatives from Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) will come to unveil a training program for Grange youth to lead their

peers in fighting addictions. This is a professional leadership training beginning in February in DC, and scholarships will be provided by one of our partners. A great opportunity for our youth and for the Grange—stay tuned for more information. With all of this talk about our youth, I am NOT saying that we are only interested in young members. We just need to approach each group differently as we ask them to join us. Each group has different interests so we need to adapt our membership work to fit them. We have room in the Grange for all ages, and always have! Recent retirees who are looking for new focus in their lives; middle-aged people who want to go “back to the farm;” citizens of all ages who are interested in making a difference in their community or the world—all of these need the Grange.

In fact, we have a great opportunity for a member benefit for those interested in a special Grange Medicare Supplement policy through United Healthcare. This is a guaranteed issue policy, no physical exam required and no preexisting conditions. Only four states currently have guaranteed issue Supplement policies—this could be really big and could attract a lot of young 65-year-olds to join us, but we need your help. In order to set up the policy for us, the company needs statistical data on our membership—just birth dates and ZIP codes. If State Granges will help us gather and give us birth dates of your members, we will be able to offer a very valuable service to our membership, saving them more than enough money to pay their Grange dues.

2019 Theme

Building upon the themes of the last two years—the Doers and That’s the Grange Way—this year’s theme will be Grangers are Superheroes. Think about all the many ways that Granges work in their communities. Take a few minutes and look through the Community Service books in the Showcase. Talk to any member here about what projects their Granges do throughout the year. This theme references our community service work, but also our legislative efforts to make the country better, our youth and Junior programs that train our children to be good citizens and leaders. All our members who are veterans or service members that we honor. So many scholarships to assist students with their college expenses. Our fraternal concern chain that can activate prayers all across the country when there is a need. We can be called to action locally at a moment’s notice to meet almost any need. I’m sure we do all this without even thinking about it, but this year we want to call attention to the great work our Granges do. We want to increase our pride in our organization, to show the public why we are important to them, why they should join with us if they want to make a difference in their world. We even have capes for you to wear if you need to build your confidence in yourself as a superhero. They will certainly attract attention and start a conversation about Grange in your community!

This positive attitude and our expectation for success will in fact increase our ability to do more and greater things. In closing, I could not say it any better than our own Burton Eller, on **Respect and Civility--**

“I’m constantly struck by the timeless foundation, heritage and principles of Grange. The Grange salutation to conduct its business “in Faith, In Hope, In Charity, and with Fidelity” has endured for the past 151 years. Grangers may not agree at times, but they disagree with respect, civility and humbleness. Grangers navigate by a moral compass with appreciation for their fellow human beings. Grange values have endured 151 years. Sadly, as American citizens, we are in serious danger of losing these attributes as a civilized society. Daily now, we witness disrespect, selfishness, even ruthlessness and violence among citizens who disagree. Disrespect for authority and accountability is growing more common. These trends are bigger than policy or politics or ethnicity or economics. They dig at the very soul of our American culture. Our neighbors in rural and small town America need the fraternal culture of the Grange as much today as in 1867. Can Grangers again bring American values to their hometown neighbors? Therein lies a challenge for every local subordinate Grange’s community service plan of work for 2019 and beyond.”

*California State Grange**Submitted by Ed Komski, Master*

The California State Grange is in good shape. The legal cases have been trying on every single person in this room. I live it. You live it. You are on the front line. Your community is torn, and we, as the California State Grange, do not take that lightly. We have tried different ideas to end this, and different programs. All of the programs are firmly tied to the By-Laws and the Constitution of the State and National Granges. We do not go outside those boundaries. Some have asked how we sued a Brother or Sister of the Grange – we did not. Any individuals sued disaffiliated and are not Grange members. Not one Brother or Sister has been sued in any legal action by the California State Grange or the National Grange.

The National Grange and the California State Grange have Court rulings. Those rulings declare that we exist. We are the chartered organization. Brothers & Sisters, I promise you, every one of you, whether I am the State Master or not, I will support seeing the Court issues through to the end, no matter what.

Be proud of what we have accomplished. The foundation of the organization is as strong as we've ever been. This entire process has set the foundational elements of the Grange in solid law. When we started, some said "Oh, the By-Laws; oh, the National Grange. It's all in the 1870's. Those documents don't mean anything." The Courts have pointed to those documents many times – and they do mean something.

"GROWING THROUGH INSPIRATION" is what we have done over the last four years. We never asked a Grange or a single member to pay a dime other than to pay their dues. If anyone heard us ask for more, raise your hand. No hands up. We are responsible with what we have. We calculate the risk. If you do a good job, you come out whole. In my previous life, I have had a business failure – but then, so did Walt Disney.

Last year's theme, "*MOVING FORWARD*", was the first time we really felt the slogan drove the Grange. Moving Forward was the perfect slogan for last year. We took "What is the Grange?" and used the slogan as our tool to answer that question. There is a really good vibe in this room this year. If you noticed, we did not have a session to discuss healing like the last two years. As many Granges as want to return are welcome. We know those Grange members coming back may be hurting and we understand the hurt. We heal them with friendship, love, and an open welcome. We have moved forward.

This year's theme "*GRANGE: GROWING THROUGH INSPIRATION*" uses the ingredients that make a Grange.

INSPIRATION - is you. You are the tool to growth. Why are we here? I can't answer that for everyone in this room. I know you are here and something drives you to be here. We don't need psychoanalysis to figure that out.

Sometimes you just need to hand someone a card when they say, "What's the Grange?" There are printed tools for you with the theme from this year. Write a card to someone. Drop them a postcard. What is on those items is why they need to be in the Grange.

ENTERTAIN -Do we not entertain our members? Lawrence and Jeanna entertained us yesterday with their talent. It can be singing, dancing, poetry, music. It all entertains.

EVENTS -Our Granges constantly have events in their Grange Halls. We serve the community this way.

COMMUNITY - There has been focus on emergency preparedness lately in serving the communities. Some Granges have not had that issue. Sometimes just providing a meeting venue helps the community.

LIVESTOCK PROGRAM - The Grange Youth Fair Program provides livestock education to younger members. It provides them experience in agriculture that they can grow into.

FARM - Not everyone is actively engaged in farming any more. But many of our members are involved in growing their own food and in teaching others. The School of Adaptive Agriculture is actively involved in farming.

TEAM - Your Grange is a team. The Grange Board is a team. Members of your Grange have a camaraderie and common purposes.

PHOTOGRAPY - Grange Expo is a very hot topic right now. There are all sorts of things to be entered into Expo. We no longer have to run to the trunk to get a camera. We all have them available now. Have some fun with making memories.

HEALTHY FOOD - Sebastopol Grange is really involved in this. The Agriculture Chairman of this Convention is a grower. Healthy food is a hot topic right now.

ARTS & CRAFTS - This is another avenue to the Grange Expo. Some Granges use this to get together for their common interests.

CULINARY - Have you ever thought of the Grange Kitchen as a culinary place? We have Grangers who write great recipes. And we have chefs who are Grange members.

AGRICULTURE - This is the root of our organization. There is hard work put into growing and making use of our food. The results of agriculture meet the requirements to survive in this life, and then be entertained by all of the other things we've been talking about. Remember temperance in work and play – that is the balance of life.

BUILD - This can be so many things, from painting and fixing to building skills and your membership.

DANCES - Mt. Hamilton Grange is known for their dancing and dance groups. This Grange just returned to good standing and we are very proud of the work they do in their community.

ARTS - We have many artisans in the Grange. Share the knowledge with members. The results can be placed into the local fairs or the Grange Expo.

LEADERSHIP - Exemplified by so many members. The National Grange Junior Ambassador from Oregon is a leader. Joseph Stefanoni is a great example of a leader. Leadership is necessary as a mentor.

FAMILY - Biological families do not always understand about the Grange family. Grange is very unique with the family bond among all of us.

ACTIVITY - We have so many activities in the Grange.

ADVOCACY - Members want more of this. We need more resources to bring our policies to the legislature.

ORGANICS - This is a big word. Think of the quality of our food and know what you are eating. It's making sure the same tomato I grow on my own is also safe. The bottom line is to know where the food is coming from.

COUNTY FAIRS - This is self-explanatory. It is an important part of what we do and how we reach people in our communities.

FUN - Gotta' have fun! We work hard. We do the business of the committees. Maybe we argue about actions. We debate and agree to disagree where necessary. If we all think the same, then nobody is thinking. What we accomplish here is good and healthy. And we have fun doing it.

We use all of these things. And with all of these things, that makes us "Grange".

The health of the Grange has not been this strong in a very long time. It can be sensed and felt here. If there is anything you need to help you understand, please call. Pick up the phone at 10pm and I will talk with you.

I must take one more moment to let you know how much I love and appreciate my wife, Cynthia, your First Lady. She has been there for me through all of the ups and downs the last four years. She is an incredible support to me and to the Grange.

Colorado State Grange

Submitted by Cindy Greer, Master

Worthy National Master, National Officers, Delegates and Fellow Grange members, greetings from Colorful Colorado.

The Colorado State Grange received \$500 two different times from the National Grange Advocacy fund for an Op-Ed that I signed, one concerned Health care and the other taxes. We utilized those funds to purchase seed packets to give away at the State Fair. The Ag building is all about educating kids and adults about various aspects of agriculture. We focused part of our display on the Junior Grange Awareness project, "Pollinators."

We've been privileged to make it to a few more Granges this year for a visit and to do some re-visits. We have visited the following Granges this year: Animas Valley, Crescent, Florida, La Plata Pomona, Mount Lookout, Mt. Allison, Progressive Pomona, Pleasant Park, and Florissant. We have traveled close to 6,000 miles this year for Grange meetings, and conferences.

We attended the Great Plains Regional Leadership conference in Grand Island, NE. Elizabeth and Dean Hiner and our two oldest grandsons (Isaac and Billy) joined us for the conference.

The Master's Newsletter has been sent out every other month. I try to get them out on months that the Granger doesn't come out. Many times there is not enough room in the Colorado Granger to share all the information received from National.

After our Election of officers in 2017, I felt the need to create an officers' handbook to ensure that officers and directors knew what was expected of them. In doing that process I decided to create a Master's Handbook that was sent to each Master. I also encouraged the State Secretary to create one for Secretaries. I do feel that there are other officers that would benefit from a handbook for their department. For these handbooks we utilized resources from other states and modified them to fit Colorado.

We were saddened to lose Past Master, John Hagen this year. Dave McCord and I conducted a Grange Memorial Service for him in Beulah on April 22. There were 28 in attendance, many were Grange members.

Unfortunately, two Granges were closed this past year. Deer Trail #412 and Lakewood #172 gave up their charters.

We met with American Income Life representative from Pueblo and mentioned that our members in New Mexico had never had any contact with AIL. The representative did get certified in NM after finding out that the ABQ representatives were not going to service the people in the Aztec, NM, area.

The effects of the drought in Colorado is evident in the brownness of the state. According the Colorado USDA 78% of Colorado's population has been affected by the drought. Monsoon rains have relieved the drought some and the grass has begun to green-up but the water resources are still extremely low.

Every single resident in Colorado has been affected by fire this year in one way or another. Some were evacuated, some had warnings of pre-evacuation and all of us had to deal with the smoke-filled air. Fire mitigation is so very important when one lives with trees surrounding your homes. Fortunately, Colorado State Grange members didn't lose their homes due to fire as far as I know. Animas Valley Grange was evacuated as well as many of their members with the 416 fire. Fifty-eight fires broke out in our beautiful state, burning 140,000 acres to date which is about 218.75 square miles. We should be extremely grateful to the Fire fighters, sheriff's departments, and all first responders who worked these fires. Other major concerns after a major fire are the effects of rain and mud slides which can be just as destructive as fire.

Access for Seniors and Physicians (ASP) Coalition has been diligent in keeping us informed of the changes being proposed for Medicare Part D. I have authorized the Colorado State Grange name to be added to their long list of supporters. They are

looking out for Medicare users by supporting protection of the Part B program and patient access to Part B Medicare. The ASP has sent at least four letters to various officials, each time they send out a letter they request our support.

David McCord has continued to represent the CSG at the Ag Council meetings and has kept us well informed about the issues Agriculture faces. Alan Caldwell has kept the CSG visible to the legislators at the State Capitol.

Southwest Colorado Ag Water Workshop was held in Mancos, CO earlier this year which I attended. For over 125 years, the Colorado Division of Water Resources has been empowered to administer all water rights according to the Appropriation Doctrine (in short, *1st in time, 1st in right*). Most of this work is done by Division Offices located in the seven major river basins of the state. These offices employ water commissioners to ensure the priority system is followed, enforcing the decrees and water laws of the State of Colorado. The Colorado Ground Water Law of 1957 established the permitting requirement of ground water wells, and by 1969, surface and ground water rights were administered together.

Whether water is used simply to drink from your household tap or to irrigate hundreds of acres of cropland, everyone in Colorado benefits from the orderly distribution and management of the state's most precious resource.

In an effort to modernize the Leadership conferences we tried three Zoom conferences, which members could participate in either via computer or their telephone. The Secretaries conference was the only one that was successful. We held a leadership conference on Saturday, Sept. 29 at 3 p.m. at state session. It was a well-attended conference and we look forward to doing one the in The Denver area in the near future.

Today the average U.S. Farmer feeds 155 people. In 1960 a farmer fed just 26 people.

We are in the process of updating Colorado State Grange History which we hope to have compiled by September 2019. We are saddened to report that the Colorado State Grange Museum will be closed this coming year. The Museum Board has opened the Museum several times when the property offered free days. The property has been sold to the City of Aurora. The museum is not set up to accommodate the handicapped or parents with young children. Several Subordinate Granges have stepped up to offer assistance in establishing or adding to displays that they have in their halls. Many of the records will probably be given to Colorado State University as they already have some of the minutes from earlier years.

We had to put a hold on our Capital Improvement Grant program as the funds had been depleted. We were very pleased to have the National Chaplain, Barbara Borderieux as our National representative in Durango at State Session. She had some travel difficulties but finally made it and we enjoyed our time immensely with her.

Our 501(c)3 organization PICK did receive a grant for \$10,000 from the Coors Family Foundation for Golden Gate Grange. The matching grant we were working on for \$5,000 didn't materialize because the Grange applying for the Grant failed to recognize that the paperwork needed to be completed from the viewpoint of PICK and not the Grange. A hard lesson to learn.

We're excited to have our first Junior Ambassador candidate participating in the National convention, and look forward to our Talent entry in the Evening of Excellence.

The founders gave us the ritual as a tool to learn lessons about truth and beauty.

Connecticut State Grange

Submitted by Noel Miller, Past Master

Here in Connecticut 2018 the Executive Committee reorganized the Pomona Granges in the State from 8 to 3 new Pomona Granges, Eastern Connecticut, Mountain Laurel, and Nutmeg. Each new Pomona Grange has written new Bylaws, and elected new Officers. They have received monies from former Pomona Granges to kick start these new Pomona Granges. So far some past Pomona members have yet to support these new Pomona Grange which hold fears that they have strong ties to the disbanded Pomona Granges.

This past year Brother Elsworth (Bud) Beecher had go to the great Grange above. He was Past State Master in the 80's and caretaker of the State Grange camp Maude Isabel Berger, running the camp Brother Beecher was well known as Uncle Buddy to all campers. While he was State Master his wife Marion was Secretary of the State Grange. They are both together again with God.

The Connecticut State Grange has expanded its Membership Committee to a Part time Director who has new Ideas for the future Membership Committee. We have to think out of the box in order to entice the next generation of Grangers in Connecticut.

This year we have been in the real estate business of selling off closed halls. Three Granges have turned in their charters and one Grange Hall was returned to us by the Town of Canton, due to asbestos in the building. We have sold two and the last has an offer as I write this. This is not the path we wish to go down but we are finding that owning a Grange Hall has heavily burdened our Community Granges with high oil bills, increasing insurance cost, and maintenance expenses that are too great to bear.

This year Farm Aid 2018 was in Hartford Connecticut to raise awareness to the trouble down on the farm and raise money to help farmers that are struggling through these tough times. Connecticut Youth and Junior Grangers assisted in the Farm Exhibit display new farm technology and selling fruit and baked goods to concert goers, with National Master Betsy Huber. I wish to thank Ekonk Community Grange #89, Hillstown Grange #87, Winchester Grange #74, Ekonk Junior Grange #101, and Hillstown Junior #101 for helping man the booths at the Farm Aid Concert. They all had a blast.

At the 134th Connecticut State Grange Session, Overseer George Russell was installed as State Master of the Connecticut State Grange. He and his wife Sharon will be representing Connecticut at the 152th National Grange Convention in Stowe Vermont and I know you all will give the welcome that you gave Marcia and I four years ago.

Florida State Grange

Submitted by Barbara Borderieux, Master

It is a great honor to bring you greetings from the state of Florida to this 152st National Session. This year has been a busy one. Our State Session was held the end of January. Our four teenage state officers did a great job. Joan C. Smith from Potomac Grange #1 was able to attend our session. She shared some things they are doing in the DC area. She helped us out by filling in for a Grace who was unable to attend. We were delighted to have her and her sister.

There have been ups and downs this year. Our state has been struggling with membership decline for several years. We are continuing to work on building new Granges but also in adding members to current Granges.

In July the Southeastern Leadership, youth, and junior conference was held in North Carolina. Four adults and one youth were able to attend. Two youth and one junior attended Grange camp in North Carolina along with one adult. We all had a great time.

Our Grangers continue to help out in their communities. They are making things for pregnancy centers, and Salvation Army. Many are helping with scouts and with activities though the agriculture museum.

Hurricane Michael made a visit to our state this fall. He hit our coast along the pan handle with all he could. There is still is lots of clean up for all. Many homes, businesses, trees and branches have come down. Driving across interstate 10 it looked like rows of toothpicks in places. The coastal road and some bridges were damaged. It will take years to rebuild some of the areas hit.

When you visit our state we would love to have you give us a call and visit us during your stay. Our state session will be held at the Gateway Ramada in Kissimmee January 26 and 27. Love to see you there.

Idaho State Grange

Submitted by Harold Eshelman, Past Master

First, I want to thank God for the privilege to be able to be here at this time and enjoy what he has provided which includes some very special people, Grangers. With all the prayers from everyone I have been able to overcome adversity from quite a few different directions.

Overall, with the help of many we have accomplished quite a lot over the past year. Never in the 64 years as a Granger has the Idaho State Grange given away money to a subordinate Grange that I know of. Of course, most of that money came from a very neat couple who donated over \$28,000 of their estate, upon their passing. Ruth and Avery Bright were special people who were members of Cloverleaf Grange for many years and the Grange was their life. The donations they made eventually paid for things that the subordinate Grange where the money went was impossible to get done without a lot of hard work. Two Granges had to have their sewers replaced at a cost of \$7,000 each, one Grange finally got insulation in their building and a cover over their Exit door, another replaced a water pressure tank and the big job that the Bright money paid for was to get rid of bats that had taken up residence in the attic of one of our Grange Halls. This bat problem proved to be bigger than anyone imagined, because it had been ignored for years. Bats are protected so extermination was not an option. The pile of "stuff" in the attic was 3-feet high and like concrete. These projects took all the money the Bright's had donated.

Another project that was sorely needed was Edgemere Grange Log Grange Hall that needed the logs chinked and treated after cleaning. This project cost was over \$20,000 and thanks to Hagerman Valley Grange donating their CD in the "Granges helping Granges" program before they closed we were able to get this done.

On the down side we have had to close two Granges which is a sad thing for me. Where had I gone wrong? Was there anything I could have done to keep them alive? In both cases I made trips to their halls and met with the members and was assured they had tried everything. Once a Grange closes it is very hard to start from scratch and get another Grange started especially when there is no hall. We have had to sell two halls and have another for sale. The two we sold were, I think in pretty good condition. The one we have for sale is not very good condition, a lot of TLC is needed for this one and that most likely is not going to happen.

I visited with members of every Grange Hall in the State except three and two of those do not have a hall. I listened to their desires, wishes, and complaints of which there were two major complaints. One was that they rarely ever saw a State Officer namely Master and the second was they paid their dues, but never got anything from the State or National Granges. We have tried to change this from a negative to a positive by visiting many Granges including attending meetings, getting many Granges money for sorely needed repairs and making suggestions such as--Make your Grange Hall visible (paint it, clean up the weeds around and make little changes), PUT A CONTACT NUMBER ON YOUR HALL SO POTENTIAL MEMBERS CAN CONTACT YOU.

I want to thank everyone for their support and prayers. It currently is in remission and God Willing it will stay that way. Got to stay busy, and positive to keep the mind from the problems at hand.

God Bless you all for what you do for the Grange.

Illinois State Grange

Submitted by Lynette Schaeffer, Master

Worthy National Master Betsy, National Officers and Delegates of the 152th National Session;

It is with enthusiastic enthusiasm that Don and I deliver greetings from Illinois.

Don and I attended the 151st National Grange Session in Spokane, Washington, and thanks to the Granges and Grangers of the region for their warmth and generosity. The session presented me with a monumental opportunity by being elected to the Executive Committee, and then secretary of the Ex Comm. So proud to serve the National Grange and all Grangers.

The Grange Resources Information and Training – GRIT meetings were held in October 2017. At Enterprise Grange and Boone County Community Hall, presentations were made by Carol Neff (Agriculture), Elaine Hecathorn (Communication), Tracey Jones (Community Service) Ruth Blasingame (Editor), Marilyn Hoffmann (Family Activities), Bev Smith (Historian), Mindy Schiefer (Junior), Ethan Edwards (Lecturer), Marion Thornberry (Legislative), LindaKay Ebel (Membership), Sheri Konieczski (Secretary), Mike Ratcliffe (Website) and Karie Blasingame (Youth). I was glad that many Grangers came to discover the upcoming programs for this year.

Several Granges celebrated the December 4, 2017 150th anniversary of the National Grange. I attended the St Clair County celebration that was well attended and everyone had a great time.

Leadership Training was held in March, at Turkey Hill Grange and Boone County Community Hall. Presentations were made by Karie Blasingame, Overseer and Youth Director, Tracey Jones, Community Service Director. We reviewed the National Grange Database, state Community Service project make Linus Blankets.

The National Grange's State Master's Meeting in February in Oregon hosted by Grangers and Oregon State Grange. Thanks to them for their hospitality. It was an educational well-planned event. It was great to reconnect with Sandi and Bob Ludi (OR Membership Co-Directors) we participated in the 1984 Young Couple event in Maine together.

Grange Month was very busy for me with many "The Grange Way" events.

Illinois State Grange held the Second State Grange picnic sponsored by the Youth at the KOA, Springfield, IL. May 19th was a beautiful day. In conjunction with the first State Grange Camping trip May 18-20, 2018. Attendees had a great time and plans are in the works for the Second annual IL Grange Camping and Third annual Grange picnic.

The first Midwest Grange Leadership Conference was held June 15-17, 2018 in Ceresco, Michigan, at Home Grange. There were seven IL Grangers in attendance. We participated in all the events/workshops/crafts. Michigan Grangers were great hosts. During the event, a 2019 planning meeting was held under the direction of Karie Blasingame, Illinois State Grange Overseer and Youth Director. All the states were in attendance or available via phone. It was great discussion.

Junior Grange Days - two Junior Days; one north and one south. I was unable to attend the events. They worked on making craft projects and working on badges. It takes lots of patience to work with Juniors.

The 147th State Session was hosted by the Granges of St Clair County Pomona. The meeting was held at the National Shrine of our Lady of the Snows in Belleville. The delegates were delighted by the National Grange representatives Chris and Connie Johnston, National Grange Gatekeeper and Michigan State Master and First Lady. Past National Grange Secretary, Past Master Henrietta Keller, Past First Man Norm Keller, Past Master David Donley and the Johnstons were presented to start the session. I want to thank the State Officers and Committee Chairs and Directors for their diligent work to make the session a rewarding event. The contest display room was full of Junior crafts, Family Activity; cookies, breads, needlework and crafts, Community Service books, and lots Linus Blankets (210), Lecturer's photography, drawings and writings, Agriculture: vegetables, flowers, antique items. It was great to see how talented Illinois Grangers are. The Juniors director led the group in a ceremony to revitalize the Junior program. The drill work of the "Youth" and several older Juniors was once again extraordinary. The auction of FAC, Ag, Junior and general fund items was advantageous to the Grange committees and lots of fun. Since your resident auctioneer was unable to attend a local auctioneer worked the group. Our Chaplain had an inspiring thoughtful memorial/worship service. We lost two people who had served the State Grange Family Activities as Chairs; JoAnne Calhoun and Carol Buck. According to Tracey, Community Service Director, Grangers and friends in Illinois are busy raising funds for many various community projects and concerns. We had many volunteer hours of community service projects and efforts. The Grange communities in IL greatly benefit from having a Grange in their area. All our Committee chairs, directors, officers organized a first-rate program this past year and I thank them for their efforts.

We lost one Grange this past year. Many Granges held membership drives and gained members but we were unable to have a gain in membership for IL Granges.

Legislative Day in Springfield was attended by Grangers to talk with Illinois Representatives and Senators. We were represented at the Illinois Energy Conference.

I have attended all the National Grange Executive Committee meetings and National Grange Foundation meetings. This first year has been a learning experience. And I hope that I have served the National Grange to the expectation of all Grangers.

Don and I are delighted and proud to once again be delegates for Illinois, at the 152nd National Grange session in Stowe, VT. We look forward to the committee work, session efforts, making new friends, and catching up with Grangers from across the country.

Iowa State Grange

Submitted by Dwight Baldwin, Master

Worthy National Master, officers, delegates, brothers and sisters of the National Grange it is with great pleasure that Kathy and I bring greetings from the members of the Iowa State Grange at this 152nd annual session in Stowe, Vermont.

The 149th session of the Iowa State Grange was held in Muscatine, Iowa with the Muscatine county hosting the session. All officers and delegates were present. And all in attendance were welcomed.

The Lecturer reported on her programs from last year and plans are in motion for the 150th session of the Iowa State Grange.

The Junior Director has a very successful camp with 42 campers, chaperons, and help in the kitchen between the ages of 5 and 14. The juniors also met for an over-nighter at the directors home before serving 2 pancake breakfasts at the Grange camp that help pay for the junior activities for the upcoming activities for the next year. The Junior Director is also our youth director and took three youth to the Midwest Youth and Leadership Conference in Michigan.

Our goals for the upcoming year are to work on Leadership and legislative participation. We are also trying to get more members to participate in our State session.

As National Treasure, I know we are in a financial crisis and we must get our expenses under control. Membership is one of the key items to get us back on the right track and it is imperative that we work to accomplish this and keep this organization growing.

Once again, I extend our thanks to the region for hosting this annual session and hope that this coming year finds us all united for the cause THE GRANGE.

Indiana State Grange

Submitted by John Plank, Master

Worthy National Master, Officers, Delegates and Members of the 152nd National Grange Convention:

It is with honor and great privilege for Susan and me to bring you greetings from the State of Indiana. As I look back on the last seven years as State Master, it has been a great journey for us so far.

We recently held our 148th Annual Session of the Indiana State Grange in October. This was the fourth year we held our session at Pine View Resort in Monticello, Indiana. Our members really like the setting and what the resort has to offer.

Indiana was honored in having National Executive Committee Member Lynette Schaffer and Brother Don as our National Grange Representative this year. Lynette enlightened us with new updates on the National Grange building repairs and the California situation.

In July our Elephant Ear stand was up at Goshen Airport for the Freedom Show. The one day show had our members turning out Elephant Ears faster than a speedy jet. They had an excellent turnout of workers and show attendants. The Cass County Fair on the other hand didn't do as well this year as there is too many elephant ear stands. We decided it is time for a change of product to sale at Cass County fair for next year. The stand is one of our money making projects for our State Grange Committees. Susan and I weren't able to make it to Goshen but we did work most of the week at Cass County Fair. The food stand has been a great opportunity to get the Grange name out for the public to see and get to know us.

May all Granges have a successful year and Happy Holidays to all! Next year National Convention will be in the Midwest region and we are inviting all Grangers from across the country to join us for the 153rd National Session at Doubletree Bloomington, Minneapolis, MN. There will be a special tour to the Kelley Farm that you don't want to miss.

Kansas State Grange

Submitted by Roger Bostwick, Master

Worthy National Master, Officers, Delegates, Members, and Guests of the 152nd Annual Convention of the National Grange: greetings from Grangers in Kansas.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank National Master, Betsy Huber for being our representative to the 147th Kansas State Grange Session. Her influence upon our members was greatly appreciated.

At our session we elected five new officers. I am proud to say that at this time almost half of our officers are of Youth/Young Adult age (under 35). The interest that the younger members of the Kansas State Grange have in our operations is encouraging to the future of our organization. The enthusiasm of our younger members paired with the experienced mentoring of our older members is a welcome combination.

Earlier this year in our GRIT (Grange Resource, Information & Training) meeting, a program I borrowed from Illinois Grange, our youth members presented twenty 8X10 canvas panels with paint and brushes. Those in attendance were asked to take one or two panels, paint them with the colors provided and return them at State Session. The designs on each panel when put together would create a picture. The project reminded me of the "Grange Way" itself. Even though we may work individually

we come together to achieve a common goal. It is this out of the box thinking that will be needed for this organization to meet the needs of today's changing society and be of interest of potential members.

As Kansas State Grange Master, Max Bailey stated in his Master's Address in 1975, "We as an organization must change our style of meetings in the future; we must generate enthusiasm among our Junior, Youth, Young Marrieds and adult programs to become leaders and promoters. Our meetings must become an informative type on current topics with outside speakers occasionally, and the general public invited. We can no longer be known in the public eyes as the organization that eats, meets and goes home."

At last year's Kansas State Grange Session I was tasked with appointing a Developmental Committee for the State Grange. At this year's session they concluded their report with the following statement "Our instructions at the closing of our meetings states, "Let us be quiet, peaceful citizens, feeding the hungry, helping the fatherless and the widows, and keeping ourselves unspotted from the world." Our realization is that the time has come for us to change; it is time to go forth and be heard, be seen, and leave our mark on the world.

Maine State Grange

Submitted by Sherry Harriman, Master

Hello from the Pine Tree State; it is an honor to present my first annual report for the Maine State Grange. I was very pleased to represent Maine in Spokane last November.

One of my goals and accomplishments was the rewriting of paperwork describing ritual floor work in more detail and making it easier to understand. I hosted a School of Instruction for Deputies, Officers meetings, and Director meetings during the year, gaining a lot of input and ideas from those attending. Several public events were held, where we had a manned booth and some unmanned, ag trade show, fairs, and other events where we publicized Grange. Our annual Family Campout Weekend with activities, fun, food and friendly competitions was well attended with about 40 folks, most of them staying for the entire weekend. Maine hosted North East Regional Youth conference this year with good success.

Several successful degree days were held throughout Maine at different times during the year. We had 24 Granges with net gains in Membership, (that's one quarter of our Granges). However, we did not have a net gain overall this year. Maybe next time.

Our Brother Clyde Berry's passing was a difficult time and he will certainly be missed by many here in Maine and all over the country, as he made friends everywhere during his memorable Grange journey.

I changed things around a bit this year and another successful State Grange Session has just completed. We presented Community Service Awards, Membership Awards, Tree Farmer Award, Teacher, First Responder and Policeman of the Year Awards, Scholarships, donated a mountain of "pennies" to a Veteran's Program here in Maine (House In The Woods Military and Family Retreat), donated money and items to Home for Little Wanderers, held our first Agricultural breakfast with a speaker, and another speaker from the Dept of Agriculture spoke at the session. We had a Grand March and insisted Harry & Cindy Greer participate, then served them the traditional cider and doughnuts. We had a great time.

We discussed 19 tough resolutions which were evenly split between Legislative and Good of the Order, elected one new Executive Committee Member, conferred the Fifth Degree and the Sixth Degree.

I am very, very proud to say I ordered 125 Veterans Certificates for the Patriot Program, from National Grange, presenting 20 to those who were at the session in a nice ceremony with Patriotic Poems read and everyone singing all 5 Service Hymns throughout the reading of the entire list. Richard and I also presented all of the Veterans with a Flag Pin with the word Veteran below the flag. Those who did not attend will get their Certificate and Pin at a later time. All of our Veterans that were there were very moved by the presentations. I hope to be ordering more of the certificates again this year for those whom we missed.

Maryland State Grange

Submitted by Allen Stiles, Master

I am going to start with the bad news. This will be the last year that Maryland will have two delegates as two Granges have voted to close. There were people in the area that I thought would make great Grangers but the Grange refused my offer to help recruit new members. Their youngest member said that he joined the year after I joined the Grange. They actually survived 45 years without taking in any new members! I didn't think that was a recipe for success. Unfortunately, sometimes that is the Grange Way! My hope is to soon reorganize a Grange in the area. Both Granges were over 100 years old.

I continue to try to raise the profile of the Grange outside of our group. I get invited to do a welcome to the State FFA Spring Judging competition near me. I said that our National Grange President asked us, "What will happen when all the DO-ers are gone?" I said that I was looking at a whole auditorium full of DO-ers and encouraged them to continue after they become too old for FFA. Many fine organizations in addition to the Grange seeking new workers.

I am rebuilding our partnership with the University of Maryland. I have been appointed to the Extension Advisory Board, which will meet unfortunately during National Grange Session. I am sending a list of things that I would like to see happen at the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Pollinators are an issue that Junior Grange is working

on. I would like Extension to highlight ways that we can improve pollinator health in all of their programs. Bad puns were flying when we debated the issue at Maryland State Grange Session. There is a lot of misinformation being spread to consumers about modern agriculture. Extension can help disseminate the facts to better inform the public.

The Grange takes me in directions that I never dreamed I would go. Thanks to National Grange Legislative Director Burton Eller Maryland State Grange is a founding member of RALI/MD. I participated in the introductory press conference which featured the Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates. Our RALI coordinator made a booth that we used at the Maryland State Fair. We later took it to Grange sponsored Community Shows and the State Grange Session. It promotes awareness of the opioid abuse epidemic and distributed packages for the proper disposal of prescription medications. It has found a new home at New Market Grange, which hosts a Drug Take Back Day in the spring.

Dwindling attendance at our State Grange Session is a huge concern. We made a strong effort to make the convention something worth the time and effort to attend. National Grange Steward "Chip" Narvel was our National rep and was very helpful and well received. We had a speaker on Wills and Trusts at one of our luncheons. Beth Levine our state RALI coordinator and a local pharmacist spoke about the opioid crisis at our annual banquet, as well as a very charismatic FFA leader from my high school. Agricultural education has been a prime focus of Maryland State Grange for a long time. This goes from elementary school through graduate school. There are many off-farm jobs available and unfilled. We are attempting to create better awareness of farm kids who do not wish to enter production agriculture that these opportunities are available to them.

We had one day for Maryland Pride. Since my wife is uber-competitive no one else had a chance. We drew a lot of attention at the grocery store. I left National Grange Session last year inspired by the Quilts of Valor ceremony and determined to do it at our session. I reached out to the QoV people and got no response. Members of our Executive Committee stepped up and got the job done! A local 4-H group did the quilt and helped present it to a long time State Grange officer who retired last year. When the First Lady of the State Grange learned that he was a Green Beret she decided that we had to honor him. Another quilt that was made to honor a Normandy invasion soldier by his wife was donated to our cause when she passed away. That quilt was given to former State Master Maurice Wiles. It was even more moving than I had hoped! I remarked that the banquet showed how varied our interests are. That is the Grange Way.

Maryland hosted a regional Grange leaders' Conference. I was very disappointed by the low turnout from Maryland. Most of my Executive Committee attended and found it useful. I am concerned that we bring in new members and then fail to value their ideas. That is an easy way to lose them. Is that the Grange Way? The so-called millennials live in a different world and if our organization will survive we need to find a way to implement their ideas. I plan to reach out to our members in that age group for more of their input.

I also feel that if we use Community Service, Lecturer's Programs, and legislative action properly they can help with increasing our standing in the community and helping to recruit new members. We need to do projects that the community appreciates and invite guest Lecturers that would be willing to work with us to improve our communities and advocate for causes that are important to the community. I always include some type of Grange promotion in my advocacy.

As a dairy farmer, I am keenly aware of the dire straits of our dairy industry. We are losing more dairy farms every week. The problems are as deep and complex as the opioid crisis. Larger farms have been able to squeeze out small farms in part because of cheap immigrant labor, mostly here illegally. If the last five or six presidents had enforced our immigration laws, things would be different. Walmart is just a symptom of a bigger problem. The processor that stopped accepting milk from some farmers is on record that they prefer the artificial substitutes. They don't have worry about balancing the supply and they make a LOT more profit. There is growing evidence that natural fats are much healthier than we have been told the last 50 years. The flavored sugar-water that is replacing milk is far less healthy. Added sugar does not magically become healthy because it is organic. Returning whole milk to the school lunch menu is vital to improving milk consumption in children.

I am looking forward to productive National Grange Session. I would like to invite the National Master to do a membership workshop in our state.

Michigan State Grange

Submitted by Christopher Johnston, Master

Welcome to the 145th annual session of the Michigan State Grange. We as a fraternity are tending to the future of this great organization. We are still looking for ways to do a better job at attracting new members, as well as retaining current members. When we work together for the common good of our order we will prevail.

This last year we lost a Grange due to many of their membership passing on to the Great Grange above, and those "wiser" members that were no longer able to attend meetings. I am pleased to announce that some of the members did transfer their membership so that they can continue to be a part of our fraternity. Though they may not be able to attend meetings, they will still receive department newsletters and the Michigan Grange News.

On a happier note, we are knee deep in the planning of the 2019 National Grange Session to be held in Bloomington, MN. At this year's National Session in Stowe, Vermont, we are hoping to have a table where we will be promoting the 2019 National Session and will need assistance manning it.

In 2019 the National Grange is hosting a week-long Grange Revival to be held at Mulberry Mountain Campground in Ozark, Arkansas, starting Tuesday July 23 and going through Sunday July 28. During the week there will be many different activities you can partake in or you can just sit back, relax and enjoy being a Grange member.

So many times, when there is a change in the leadership at our Subordinate Grange we need to be respectful of the new leadership's ability into their respective roles, and not undercut their authority. Several times in the last year I have witnessed Granges that have changed leadership positions and yet the former leadership still believes they can make the decisions they once had the responsibility to make. In the near future I would like to see a state-wide meeting or even a few regional meetings that include a school of instruction for our newer subordinate Masters and for all members to learn the roles and responsibilities of the different officers' positions and how committees are intended to work.

This year we were asked to follow thru on an idea that has been discussed the last many years to combine the Midwest Regional Youth/Young Adult/Junior conference and the Great Lakes Grange Leaders conference together. I will be the first to admit that I was reluctant to change from two separate conferences into one, however, it seems to have worked well for all involved. We will be continuing with the combined conference, now called the Midwest Grange Leadership Conference. Next year's conference will be June 28-30th at Camp Alexander Mack in Milford, Indiana. This is open to ALL members and I would love to see everyone take advantage of the experience and learning opportunities from the conference.

As we continue our deliberations over the next couple days let us be mindful of where we have come from, and let us be mindful of where we want to see our organization go over the next year, the next five years and the next 145 years. Let us plan today for the future of our organization and let us leave the organization in a manner that will make our children and grandchildren proud of what we have left them.

Minnesota State Grange

Submitted by John Crippen, Master

Worthy National Master, National Officers, Delegates and Members of the 152nd National Grange Convention:

It is with honor and humility that I bring you greetings and news from the North Star State and the home of founders Oliver H. Kelley and Caroline Hall. And I am excited to come back "home" to Vermont, the location of my first national convention 15 years ago.

It has been a year of change and uncertainty for the Minnesota Grange. A contentious leadership shift has left many trying to forge new paths. And frankly, we have a lot of work left to do to heal the rifts and come together as one again.

This need is underscored by the sad news that we lost the venerable Oak Leaf Grange, which surrendered its charter at the beginning of the year. The State Grange is now determining the best course of action for the Oak Leaf Grange Hall, which needs repairs and a new vision for its use. Any good ideas from others around the country will be much appreciated.

Minnesota's numbers are small, but there are encouraging signs within those ranks. Several Granges are growing their membership. There is a renewed focus on practicing the ritual, and determining how it can have meaning in the present day. And the fundamental connection of Grange with community is the driving force for each Grange, in its own particular way.

A major development that has happened since our last report is the opening of new physical improvements at the Oliver Kelley Farm. A new interpretive center has unlocked huge potential at the site—there are now comfortable, modern amenities that meet 21st century visitor standards; and a learning kitchen and outdoor educational area allows the site to connect people to agriculture through various time periods, up to the present day.

With this development, Grangers in the state are learning to leverage the power of the Oliver Kelley Farm in new ways. We now have Grange displays in the lobby that elicit questions from visitors—and have resulted in a couple new members! We again held our state picnic and state session there this year, and plan to do so for the foreseeable future. This gives us beautiful and functional facilities, and continued visibility to the general public. And last but not least, we partner with the staff for programming (led by Kelley Farm Program Manager and State Grange Lecturer Ann Bercher), enriching us both. In short, our Grange has new and improved access to 35,000 people a year to help attract membership and build our vitality.

We know that Grange members from around the country love to check in on the Kelley Farm whenever possible, and so we are excited to host you all next year. With the leadership and support of the rest of the Midwest Region, we promise to host a great meeting for you in 2019. See you then!

Montana State Grange

Submitted by Marilyn Johnson, Master

Worthy National Master, Officers, Delegates, Brothers and Sisters all; it is with pleasure that Bill and I bring greetings from the Big Sky State, Montana to this the 152nd annual session of the National Grange.

One year ago, I began my retread year as State Master after a hiatus of twenty plus years. How things have changed. I spent much time trying to learn as the "new kid on the block, i.e. ZOOM, paperless process, etc. I did find committee work to be the same process as the prior stint as Master.

In the past year I visited nine Granges in our state. If you are at all familiar with the vastness of Montana, this was a lot of miles. It was helpful to see what our local Granges were doing in their communities. Got to participate in decorating a local community Christmas, stuffing gift packets for children, memorial services, dues paying events, pancake dinner for the community and of course, their regular meetings. A lot of variation in what is done depending on size, need and membership in the area. I plan to continue my visitations through this year.

I traveled to the Idaho State Grange session that followed closely after my election and close of the Montana State Session. It is always an interesting to see what things your neighbors are discussing as well as renewing Grange friendships.

I also traveled to the National Grange Master's meeting in Clackamas, Oregon. This meeting was very helpful in bringing me up to speed in my expectations as State Master. Programs that weren't in place before and things I needed to do to stay in tune with National Grange.

Montana has strived very hard and with perseverance to improve our Grange membership and reinvigorating those Granges that are about to lose their charter. We have successfully got one Grange enthusiastically headed on the path, a second that is starting to turn the corner. This has required a great deal of work by our Executive Committee and Master. The reinvigorated Grange won a certificate and ribbon for community service – the first time in 6 to 7 years.

Membership will continue to be our number one project for the 2018-2019 year. We will work hard not to have another Grange fold into history. We are also planning an officer/director workshop in the Spring to assist our persons who hold those positions know what is expected of them and their responsibilities.

Bill and I are delighted once again to be delegates for Montana State Grange at this 152nd National Grange Session here in Stowe, Vermont. We look forward to our committee work, session business, and renewing friendships and making new friends in this great Grange organization.

Nebraska State Grange

Submitted by Kevin Cooksley, Master

Greetings from the Nebraska State Grange to National Master Huber and the officers and delegates assembled for the 152nd annual National Session in Stowe, Vermont. In September, we held our 130th annual convention of the Nebraska State Grange, in Columbus, Nebraska. We had an excellent meeting and were very pleased to host National Lecturer Christine Hamp and her husband, Duane.

As I sat down to write this report, I went back and reviewed the past year and the past five years, since I succeeded Ted Doane in this office. I must tell you it is challenging, at times, to stay positive about our organization's future in this state. The average age of our membership keeps increasing, our numbers get fewer each year, and I see less and less effort from state leaders to recognize The Grange's presence here in the state. We lost two of our strongest "pillars" this year, with the passing of Lila Tooker and Erv Rolofson. Their contributions to this organization were huge, and their loss is equally difficult to adequately describe.

Lila Tooker's parting gift to the Grange was her invaluable role in helping to plan and carry out the 2018 Great Plains Regional Leadership Conference in Grand Island June 22-24. It was reported to us by everyone who attended, to be the very best Regional Conference put on in the country this year. Upwards of 100 people attended, from Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado, Wisconsin and Nebraska as well as some of our National Officers and Staff. Lila's unexpected passing left us all in shock and disbelief, which was quickly followed by overwhelming grief. Her passing has left a huge hole in our hearts and in our organization, and her absence will be felt for years to come.

Our community Granges and their members continually find ways to get involved in meeting the needs in their local communities. One only needs to read the Community Service Reports to see that we DO make a difference. Our members are providing dictionaries to third-graders, toys and blankets to young children brought in by Child Protective Services, staffing their local recycling center, helping at their hospital rummage sales, and numerous other activities.

The Nebraska State Grange continues to be a part of the coalition still working on legislation to achieve fundamental property tax relief that will carry forward and yet not pull the financial "rug" out from under our schools and county governments. It continues to be a difficult and complex task, compounded by the depressed commodity prices. We continue to co-host a legislative breakfast during the State Legislative Session, which provides us the opportunity to make our presence known directly to the Senators.

On the membership front, Edgar Hicks has continued to "brainstorm" for ways to reach out to prospective members and to identify community issues and needs our organization can assist with which might facilitate membership growth. Edgar's role is, perhaps the toughest one any of us have. He and I have conversed about his ideas several times, and I think he is trying hard, though the obstacles are substantial. Frankly, I agree with Edgar, that perhaps our greatest potential for membership growth these days is in the more urban setting. Finding a way to interact with the inner city FFA and 4-H oriented-folks and perhaps the suburban populations may be our best opportunities.

The 2018 National Grange session is in Stowe, Vermont November 12th-17. It will be the 152nd annual session. I will be serving on the Ag Committee once again. Agriculture is as diverse across this Nation as the terrain and the people who live on it are. The issues facing Agriculture are on-going and challenging. With my fellow Grangers, we will find common ground in order to develop sensible policy that will provide guidance to our National Legislative Director.

In closing, I challenge each of you to keep on making a difference. I wish to thank our officers for a job well-done this past year. Special thanks go to Judy Hansen for the invaluable work she does as Secretary, for without her efforts we couldn't function. Your officers work as a team, and it takes a team to get this job done.

New Hampshire State Grange

Submitted by Chris Heath, Master

The New Hampshire State Grange held its 144th annual session in Laconia NH at the Margate hotel located on the shores of Lake Winnepesaukee. We had the pleasure of hosting National Master Betsy Huber for our session. On Thursday night we opened our session and then conferred the Fifth degree on the candidates that came to receive it. Sister Betsy Huber, portraying Miss Caroline Hall, gave us a history of all things that she did to contribute to the beginnings of the organization. Friday's session found us having our annual memorial service where we honored the Grangers who have gone onto the Great Grange above. Master Christopher Heath gave his Master's address in the afternoon and the State Grange banquet was held Friday evening. During the banquet awards were presented to outstanding educator, firefighter, policeman, state police officer, fish and game officer and outstanding legislator. Saturday morning found many officers in Halloween costumes to open the session. There were two executive committee members who were elected and many reports were given. Saturday night found the officers exemplifying the Sixth Degree for the candidates that were in attendance.

Two weeks after State session, Master Chris Heath and elected delegate Wilber Heath attended National Session in Spokane, Washington. Master Heath was honored by being asked to be a cast member in the Seventh degree. He thoroughly enjoyed assisting in this capacity and looks forward to doing this job for the next three years. In December the directors, committees and deputies gathered at the NH Fire Academy to have a day of training. The day was full of planning for the year as well as instructions for the Deputy State Masters. Kerriann Heath, Ceres and first lady of the NH State Grange, with the help of others, provided a lunch for those who attended. In February the Youth Department held its annual Winter Rally at the State Grange building in Hooksett. Despite having a low attendance Sarah Leclerc and her committee did an excellent job planning and executing this event. The Grange knowledge test was administered to all who wished to participate. They prepared a taco bar for dinner and fellowship of members followed. In March the State Master missed his first bowling tournament since he became a member, due to the fact that he was at Master's Conference in Clackamas, OR. The Grangers, who missed him dearly, carried on and had a fantastic time bowling at Lakeside Lanes in Manchester. This is always a well-attended event and many prizes were awarded to many good bowlers.

In April, the State Lecturer, Jane Trombi and past State Master Beth Merrill hosted the annual Spring Fling at the Taylor Community facility. A day of workshops was enjoyed by all who attended. After Spring Fling, the members travelled to WicWas Lake Grange, located in Meredith, to participate in the Grange Month banquet and Lecturer's talent contest. A delicious meal was enjoyed by all and Adam Terrell won the best of show for the Talent contest.

The Deputies started their spring visits. This year the Granges were requested to exemplify Balloting for candidates. The treasurer was requested to learn the duties of their office and each Grange was challenged to have a membership goal for the year. The Granges and officers will be asked to perform these two actions at their fall inspections.

In July the youth attended the Northeast Youth Conference in Brooks Maine. Adam Terrell represented New Hampshire in the Sign-A-Song and Public Speaking contests. Adam also participated in the Grange Jeopardy and impromptu speech contest. Adam also will be serving as the Male Youth ambassador at National session this year. We are all very proud of this young man and look forward to what his future is in the Grange.

The Grange Family camping which was held at Gunstock Resort in Gilford on July 27-29 was well attended this year. State Overseer Robert Trombi hosts a great event. The resort has many different activities that the Grange members can participate in.

In August, the Junior department celebrated the birthday of the National Junior Program. State Junior director Joann Brandt had a fun filled day for the all the juniors and adults who attended. They decorated flower pots and cards for the local nursing home. They enjoyed a great lunch provided by the Junior committee and held a junior Grange meeting in the afternoon. Once the meeting was finished, they loaded up the cars and went to play some miniature golf. The day finished with a pizza party.

September found the deputies back on the road completing their Inspections of the Granges. The reports were returned to the General Deputy for his annual report. It also found the State Grange gearing up for the 145th Annual session which will be held at The Best Western Plus located in Keene, Oct. 25-28.

New Jersey State Grange

Submitted by John Benedik, Master

This has been another year of growth for the New Jersey State Grange.

Our theme for 2018 was "Grange – Rock of the Community".

Our Granges were encouraged to develop programs to benefit their community while making themselves more visible in the community.

In February, we chartered a new Grange – Bards Grange #225. The 35 charter members are a musical bunch! They get together to play music and can be found entertaining at senior citizen centers, rest homes and wherever else they can find some space and an audience willing to listen. They have undertaken several community service projects and are really making a name for themselves and the Grange.

We held “Another Day of Learning” in March. The idea of the daylong session is to give our members the tools and resources to make our Granges more visible in the community and generate the next generation of leaders and DO-ers. Workshops were focused around generating members, sharing ideas between Granges, creating community service projects and leadership, mentoring and visibility training. Our attendance was not as good as we had anticipated due to several winter weather events but those attending left with enthusiasm and a desire to grow the Grange. Plans are underway for “A Third Day of Learning” in 2019.

This year the State Grange sponsored a Community Service Grant Project. Our Granges applied for funds for community service projects in their community. The State Grange funded projects for 10 subordinate (just under one-third of our total Granges) and one Pomona Grange totaling just under \$5,000.

All sorts of projects were funded: Sponsorship of the 80th annual field day in Columbus, collection of school supplies for less fortunate children, a community awareness talk on Coyotes, financial sponsorship of a 30 second commercial on a local non-profit radio station for 3 months, Open Houses at two of our Grange halls, the collection of supplies to be sent to our troops, a Community Shred Day, and on the craft side, making beanies for preemies (small knitted or crocheted hats for premature infants) and knitted knockers (a hand knitted or crocheted prosthetic for woman who have had breast cancer or breast surgery).

One Grange increased their membership by a third and several others reported increased interest in the Grange. This program was very well received and we will be continuing it in 2019.

While our membership recruitment efforts were not as successful as I had hoped and we did not meet the goal for new members I had set, we continue to see increased attendance at our annual Youth and Junior Camp and our State Session.

Increased visibility of the Grange on all levels and being the “Rock of the Community” will be our theme for 2019. I can’t wait to see what next year holds for us!

New York State Grange

Submitted by Stephen Coye, Master

Greetings from the Empire State! We are pleased to present this annual report to the National Grange. Over the past year we have been involved in a number of activities which we believe will raise the visibility of the Grange and hopefully educate the public that we are in fact a viable organization capable of successfully addressing the issues and needs of the times, which we will be better able to do with their help. We participate in five major venues each year, the Western NY Farm Show, Central NY Farm Show, NYS FFA Convention, Empire Farm Days, and the NY State Fair. It is worth noting that this past year’s FFA Convention was a bit different than in past years, as we saw a substantial increase in the number of students and advisors that engaged us in conversation concerning involvement with local Granges to complement both of our programs. In an attempt to stimulate our folks to reach out, our membership department instituted a program which monetarily rewards Granges that secure FFA members into membership. This program will run at least through the end of the 2019 Grange year.

Legislatively we had a good year, as our State Legislators were visited in conjunction with the Council of Agricultural Organizations, at which time timely topics and budgetary items were discussed. We feel this is a beneficial experience, as our policies are mostly identical in many areas, the State Grange being a member organization that submits policy recommendations to the CAO. Five or Six individuals from as many organizations, talking to Members on the same subject has a greater impact than just one. We were also delighted that we had the opportunity to talk to a number of NY Congressmen in Washington during the Fly-In. We tried a new approach this year in relation to “grass roots” participation in the legislative process, that being email blasts on State issues relating to Grange policy. I’m not sure if the success or failure of this project is measurable, but we will be attempting it for at least next year. The challenge is twofold, one, having a viable email listing, which in and of itself is a major challenge, and two, trusting that the recipients will follow through with the request.

A major accomplishment, though it wouldn’t seem like it should be, was the launching of the new NYS Grange website. It was a year in the making, and we are very happy with the new product. Hopefully it will serve our members and the public well.

Membership continues to be our Achilles heel. We came close this year, and would possibly have had a small net gain had not several Granges closed with significant memberships, who chose not to affiliate with another Grange despite our best follow-up efforts. We have a new Leadership/Membership Director, and efforts are being made to stem the tide of losses.

This coming year we hope to institute a program of Grange visitations by members of the State Grange Leadership Team designed to instruct and encourage. The program is under development, but is slow going as it will be expensive to execute, and therefore we want it to be as effective as possible, and definitely not waste the time of the presenter or those assembled for the presentation. Thus it involves script writing, material development, and workshops for the presenters. Very ambitious for sure, but difficult times require difficult solutions.

It is our hope and desire that 2019 will be a banner year in the life of our Granges in New York.

North Carolina State Grange

Submitted by Jimmy Gentry, Master

We engaged in a new effort during the year by contracting the services of The Stewart Group, a Public Relations firm located in Raleigh, NC. As a result of a staff retreat that we held last year, one of our greatest needs identified was to do a better job of public relations. Our Board listened to a presentation by Dee Stewart, President of the firm and decided to enter into an agreement with him. There is a huge need to let the public know more about our activities and legislative stands, and hopefully become better known in the state.

North Carolina Grange has two state-wide gatherings each year. One is our annual session, and the other is a Family Conference that we typically have in early spring. The Family Conference is typically a relaxed, informal weekend, mixed in with speakers, workshops, a talent show, and community service. For the second year we partnered with an organization called Med Assist to host a free over-the-counter (OTC) drug give away in Asheville. Med Assist is based in Charlotte, and their mission is to help needy families to obtain the medical drugs that they need both OTC and prescriptions. They have a staff of pharmacists to handle prescription drugs, both locally and by mail. In addition, they conduct OTC giveaway days in areas across the state. NC Grange along with Carolina Farm Credit sponsored the event in Asheville, and our Grange members attending the conference volunteered in filling drug orders for those who attended.

We were extremely pleased that one of our part-time employees, Dr. Bill Collins, was presented with The Watauga Medal, which is the highest non-academic award presented by NC State University. The award was presented by Chancellor Randy Woodson at an event held at the university. Dr. Collins spent most of his career with teaching, research, and extension specializing in tobacco production. He is a member of Capitol Grange in Raleigh.

Community service grants were given to South River Pomona and Cape Fear Grange to support projects that they conducted. South River Pomona partnered with the Union High School FFA Chapter to construct display cabinets for the Sampson County Museum Grange Building. They are using the additional display space for Grange items. Cape Fear Grange used their funds to support the Veteran to Farm Training Program. This program helps to transition those who are leaving the military into farming.

North Carolina Grange continues to provide a scholarship program for college students in the amount of \$1,000 per year. These recipients can re-apply for the scholarship each year as long as they are a full-time student, maintain a required GPA of no less than 2.8, meet a community service requirement, and maintain their Grange membership.

For a few years now, the State Grange has sponsored a Farm to School calendar in partnership with the NC Department of Agriculture. Elementary students across the state enter an art contest from which thirteen pieces of artwork are selected for the twelve months plus the front cover. It is a great marketing tool for the Grange and the Department of Agriculture Farm to School food program.

Grange camp continues to be a "happy place" for our youth and juniors. The goal is to help kids learn leadership skills in a fun way. A wide variety of activities during the week helps to accomplish this. One of the big challenges for the week is to get the kids loaded onto the buses on Saturday morning when we close, because they do not want to leave each other and see the experience end!

Two hurricanes took their toll on many people in North Carolina. Hurricane Florence caused a huge amount of destruction in eastern North Carolina, followed by Hurricane Matthew that caused damage in other areas. Some of the NC Grange staff took a tour of member's homes and farms that had suffered damage. NC Grange has a disaster fund to assist our members in times like this, but we fully realize that any monetary help we might offer will be a token compared to the damage that some have suffered. Several of our members have been identified that will receive assistance.

A new strategy has been developed that will be implemented this year in hopes of increasing membership. Teams of volunteer members will be trained and sent out into communities to organize new Granges and save Granges that are on the verge of closing. Those individuals have been identified and the effort will begin in December 2018. Coinciding with this effort will be the appointment of a new Membership Task Force that will develop new strategies for membership development. We expect the members of the Task Force to be appointed before the close of 2018.

Ohio State Grange

Submitted by Bob White, Past Master

NO REPORT SUBMITTED

Oklahoma State Grange

Submitted by Billy Shufeldt, Master

Greetings from the Oklahoma State Grange. Our State will be represented at the 152th National Grange Convention with 7 members attending. Everyone is looking forward to coming to Stowe, Vermont and participating in the Convention activities. We truly hope this will be a great Convention and something to remember for years to come.

Oklahoma has two members coming to join in the Night of Excellence, Tamara Stoelzing will be performing as a vocalist and Mary Krehbiel will give a speech. Also, Junior Granger, Carlie Conrady will give her speech at the Junior's breakfast on Friday morning. Brad and Donna Keeton, Co-Directors of the Seventh Degree Conferral will not be able to attend this year due to medical reasons.

Everyone in Oklahoma has had a wonderful year once again but it has flown by too quickly. Oklahoma State Grange has had an increase of 119 members this year. Thanks to the hard work of our membership directors Jerry Taylor and Carl Shufeldt and all the Subordinate Oklahoma Granges that put in the work to have a gain in members.

This year's Degree Day was hosted by Vinita Grange #360 on Saturday, April 7th, 2018 in Vinita OK. We had a very good turn out with total of approximately 70 people in attendance and had six new members take the conferral of the first four Degrees. They were Lindsey Hackett – Cherryvale # 221, Tarez Willis – OU # 355, Kevin and Wendy Wolford – Vinita # 360 and Bruce and Jennifer Bailey – Big Cabin # 156. We all had a great time and had some great food and fun.

Legislative Director Terry Stoelzing and wife Tamara attended the National Grange Legislative Fly-In 2018 in Washington, D.C. from April 15-18, 2018. They both had a great time and were kept very busy meeting with the different congressman and representatives. Over all a very good experience for Terry and Tamara Stoelzing and I want to thank them for representing the Oklahoma State Grange.

I am happy to announce that we have awarded seven, Oklahoma State Grange Scholarships for the Fall 2018 - Spring 2019 school year. The Scholarships were awarded to: Kennedy Webb - South Coffeyville # 351, Riley Shufeldt – OU # 355, Katelyn Bailey – South Coffeyville # 351, Stephanie Nutter – Cherryvale # 221, Ashely Burrows – South Coffeyville # 351, Olivia Shufeldt – OU # 355 and Krissy Hawk – Elm Bend # 358

The 2018 Great Plains Regional Conference hosted by the Nebraska State Grange in Grand Island, NE. on June 22nd thru 24th was a great success. We had a great response and had thirty-seven Oklahoma State Grangers go to the conference. While we were there Carlie Conrady won the Junior speech contest and Mary Krehbiel won the adult speech contest, they both will be attending the National Grange Convention in Stowe VT. In November. I think everyone that went joined in on almost every event that Nebraska State Grange had planned for us. From the workshops that was given to the trip to the museum and the Youth visit to the V.A. Hospital, it was a wonderful time. However, we were all saddened to hear about the passing of Lila Tooker shortly after we had left the Conference, she will be greatly missed.

This year was our 103rd Oklahoma State Grange Convention held on the weekend of October 19-21, 2018 We had about 120 Grangers in attendance in Claremore, Oklahoma. Our National Grange Representative this year was National Grange Lecturer Chris Hamp and husband Duane Hamp, they helped us with everything from peeling potatoes to putting on the Sixth Degree. Our other honored guests were Priest Archon of Assembly of Demeter and Kansas State Master Roger Bostwick and Kansas First Lady Melanie, they both were very helpful also.

The Oklahoma State Grange Youth Department had a fund raiser of their own again during State Session, they served at our Celebration Banquet and the Saturday luncheon, they worked for tips and raised \$2,938. Our Youth Department continues to grow and get stronger each year.

Thank you to our Youth Department for exemplifying the Fifth Degree on Saturday night. The Youth made us all proud to be part of this great Organization we call the Grange.

Thank you to National Lecturer for giving a wonderful workshop on Friday and exemplifying the Sixth Degree as Master on Saturday night, she did a tremendous a job.

Richard & Marie Volz received the Granger of the Year award during the Celebration Banquet. They have both been dedicated hard-working Grangers for many years.

Lena and I both are looking forward to seeing and visiting everyone at the National Grange Convention and wish you all well and safe travels.

Oregon State Grange

Submitted by Susan Noah, Master

Mark and I are honored to represent the Oregon State Grange here at the 152nd National Grange Convention, and we bring you greetings from our members. 2018 has been a busy year in our state starting off with a gain in membership for the year ending Dec. 31, 2017. This was the first net gain we have shown in 26 years, so I am very proud of our state. The 2017 GrangeUp program was successful in a variety of ways. This was the first year that our leadership team of State Officers, Program Directors and District Chairs visited each Grange to introduce the GrangeUp program. That outreach has brought the state closer together and has helped the State Grange to connect with our Community and Pomona Granges.

That connection led to the 2018 program of "Grange Connections" where we urged our Granges to get connected with their own members, with other Granges and with each level in the Grange. I'm not sure we will accomplish a net gain again this year, but we will be close. Again, the outreach to each Grange has been tremendous. With all of the leadership team taking part, nearly every one of our 167 Granges received a personal visit.

Our convention this year was held in Astoria on the far northwest corner of Oregon. National Youth Development Director, Charlene Espenshade, and National Junior Development Director Samantha Wilkins joined us as our National representatives

and spent quality time with our Directors helping to provide some national perspective to these important programs. One new addition to our schedule was the inclusion of a Trade Show to showcase our committees, rather than the usual conferences. Each Director had a table filled with information about their programs, and time was set aside to allow our members to wander through picking up information and tips from the various committees. We plan on keeping the same format for next year, and perhaps inviting some outside participation as well.

The election of state officers saw a change in eight of the offices, and several new program directors were appointed as well. Our membership program this year is again centered around connecting with our communities and our members, with a theme of *Come Together at the Grange*. In keeping with the face to face connections of the past two years we are already planning on bringing together all of the officers, directors and district chairs to present this program. And as with the 2018 year, there will be financial incentives to each Grange who shows a net gain at the end of the year.

Along with the membership programs I have continued to facilitate training conferences around our state. This year I traveled to 14 Granges to present a "Grange 101, back to basics" conference. This was designed to encourage our Granges to use the opening and closing rituals, to adhere to a parliamentary code, and to answer common questions about what it means to be a Grange, and what should we expect at our meetings. For too long we have taken a well-traveled path of neglect and inattention to our ritual. At best we tend to skip it and at worst we apologize for it. But as I said in my Master's Good of the Order Address to the Oregon State Grange the fun I had with my peers brought me into the Grange, but the lessons I learned from my mentors kept me involved and wanting more, and after 50 years I still see a lot of worth in our lessons as presented in our ritual.

Starting in 2017 and continuing until the spring of 2018 we had a traveling display honoring our 150th anniversary. Sister Marilyn Reiher traveled to many parts of our state to set up these displays in libraries, museums and other community venues. It culminated at the Multnomah Central Library in downtown Portland on the first weekend in May 2018. There we had 12 separate display cases filled with information about the National Grange, the State Grange and Granges in the Portland metro area. Her displays touched on various topics such as legislation, women in the Grange and Youth and Juniors. The library held a reception for us that was well attended and included our National Master Betsy Huber. It was a wonderful way to wrap up the 150th festivities!

In 2017 I appointed a Pomona Grange task force that came together on three occasions in 2017 and 2018 to analyze our Pomona Granges. We discussed the purposes of a Pomona Grange and what holds us back from accomplishing those purposes at the first two meetings. By the third we had identified some ways for ongoing help to the current Pomona Granges. First the group helped to develop a new brochure that highlights the Pomona Grange. Next, we set up a Pomona training day for this coming March, where we will offer information in the following areas: Developing a communications strategy; Creating a legislative program; Ritualism; Team building and how to Effectively share information. It has become clearer over time that we must make time to train our new officers, so this is set to become an annual event.

I had the pleasure of visiting Idaho this year as their National representative and was honored to perform the Master's part in the Sixth degree as well as install their officers. Mark and I were welcomed by all the members and made to feel right at home. Visiting another state reminds me that we are all facing some of the same challenges, and that Grange members are a thoughtful and dedicated group of people.

Mark and I wish to thank the staff of the National Grange and extend an especially large thank you to the Northeast Region for all their hospitality and planning for this session. And to all the delegates, officers and friends in the Grange, have a wonderful holiday season and a great new year and remember to *Come Together at the Grange!*

Pennsylvania State Grange

Submitted by Wayne Campbell, Master

National Worthy Master, fellow Delegates and guests to the 152nd Annual Session of the National Grange. It is with great pleasure that I am here representing Pennsylvania, the Keystone State. Debbie and I were unable to attend the National Masters Conference held in Portland Oregon. A major storm descended on Pennsylvania that weekend and all flights in and out of Harrisburg were cancelled for most of the weekend. We were looking forward to joining many of you to share Grange ideas and learn new ones and enjoy fellowship with all of you.

Pennsylvania was able to add 261 new members in the past year. This is not a large number, but it is certainly an increase over previous years. We continue to look for new ways to promote the Grange and to find new benefits.

We continue to struggle with Grangers allowing their membership to dwindle before asking for help. We have consolidated or closed more Granges in the past year. This bothers me in that I emphasize wherever I speak to contact the State Office and ask for help. We as an organization have so much to offer to our members and our communities. National and State Grange have really good benefits to make us appealing financially. I continue to urge people to just ask. We have been able to re-organize two Granges and are working on a third. We have had a few Granges ask for help and with their dedication they have re-grouped and are on a steady growth pattern.

The Pennsylvania State Grange has been very active in the past year legislatively. The following is a recap of our legislative work: BROADBAND Cell Phone and Internet Access: I testified before a joint hearing of the Senate and House Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committees on August 15 to remind legislators that this is critical to rural Pennsylvania, in educating our children, enabling telemedicine to work, farmers being able to utilize modern equipment to help increase efficiency and production,

and promoting economic growth by giving prospective employers the technology they need. This was the fourth testimony on Broadband at hearings this year presented by the Pennsylvania State Grange. The Pennsylvania State Grange hosted a program at the January 2018 Pennsylvania Farm Show to make the issue more visible and received significant media coverage through the PA Radio Network, Pennsylvania Cable Network and others. We are lobbying for legislative action of a package of bipartisan bills introduced by Rep. Kristin Phillips-Hill and Rep. Pam Snyder. In addition, the Pennsylvania State Grange is pushing for Senate Bill 740 which would preserve land-line telephone service to rural Pennsylvania. We support House Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee Chair Rep. Martin Causer's House Bill 2293 that would make sure that Broadband access monies are sheltered from being used for another purpose. We submitted testimony to the House Consumer Affairs Committee on Aug. 9 in favor of installation of wireless facilities.

DAIRY: Pennsylvania State Grange focuses on increasing demand for fluid milk and constructing more plants to process fluid milk into cheeses, yogurts, etc. as our approach to helping dairy farmers. We are advocating that whole milk be served in school meal programs. This spring, Pennsylvania State Grange commented on a proposed USDA national regulation on school meals and achieved media exposure on its linkage of National AG Day to good health through dairy consumption. We support efforts to secure more processing capacity in the state. We have testified four times in the last two years to the PA Milk Marketing Board where we urged policymakers to look at what other states like Massachusetts have done to help dairy farmers.

EDUCATION: A strong supporter of education (FFA, 4-H, and our own Grange youth programs), the Pennsylvania State Grange promotes careers in Agriculture. In August 2018 the Pennsylvania State Grange submitted testimony to two separate hearings held by the House Democratic Policy Committee on workforce development bills. Pennsylvania State Grange urged the PA Department of Labor & Industry to include occupations related to agriculture in their list of priority jobs vocational education should be pursuing.

EMINENT DOMAIN: The Pennsylvania State Grange took a strong position opposing a school districts ability to seize farm land preserved in private land trusts. House Bill 2468 was signed into law as Act 45 of 2018. This law makes it harder for school districts to take preserved farmland.

FARM BILL: Working with the National Grange, Pennsylvania State Grange is defending the Farm Bill's vital programs like Crop Insurance, adequate funding for the Farm Services Administrations, rural development and more. On August 15, we urged US House Ag Committee members to remember Broadband.

HEALTH FOR RURAL PA: Wellness care and Internet medical care (TELEMEDICINE) are crucial to rural residents who live farther away from medical facilities and doctors. Telemedicine allows the health care provider to, through the Internet, monitor someone's condition, observe symptoms, and direct treatment. Pennsylvania State Grange supports telemedicine bills. Of course, you need Broadband access in order for telemedicine to work.

HUNGER: Pennsylvania State Grange worked with other groups in the PA State Council of Farm Organizations to increase funding for the PA Agricultural Surplus System (PASS). In this State Budget, funding was increased from one million dollars to \$1.5 million. PASS integrates fresh farm products with food banks' distribution to give the needy a better selection of healthier foods.

JUDICIAL (TORT) REFORM: Pennsylvania State Grange supports legislation that streamlines our judicial system by enacting legislation designed to reduce the potential for frivolous lawsuits to be filed. One of these bills provides civil liability immunity for farmers who wish to engage in agri-tourism or agri-entertainment. An urgent need for many farmers and particularly dairy farmers is to diversify income. Agri-tourism and agri-entertainment are promising but the fear of frivolous lawsuits holds them back.

PENSION REFORM: On July 23, the Pennsylvania State Grange testified against House Bill 465 sponsored by Rep. Mike Hanna (D-Clinton) which would force participation of smaller employers into a state-run pension plan where workers would automatically have contributions taken out of their paychecks unless they opt out.

PROPERTY TAXES: A targeted property tax issue on which the Pennsylvania State Grange is working is to secure a sponsor of legislation that would exempt Grange Halls over 100 years old from property taxes.

STATE BUDGET: In the enactment of the State Budget for FY 2018-19, Pennsylvania State Grange believes that for the first time in several years' Agricultural programs fared well. We are tenacious advocates for full funding of PDA programs as well as for Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences research and Extension. We also try to make sure that other programs such as conservation, County Fairs, farmland preservation, etc. are protected from the budget knife. Earlier this year, Pennsylvania State Grange also weighed in against proposed cuts in USDA's budget but applauded an additional \$600 million for Broadband expansion.

TRANSPORTATION: An April 3, hearing by the House Transportation Committee heard Pennsylvania State Grange testimony on dangers associated with distracted driving caused by texting, cell phones, putting on makeup, reading a newspaper while driving, etc. Legislation advocated by Pennsylvania State Grange was House Bill 1684.

Debbie and I attended both Youth and Junior camps this year. We assisted in the kitchen all week at Junior Camp. We enjoy this so much. It's really relaxing for us to be able to just help. To see the friendships that are developed and nurtured at these camps really makes me feel good. I believe Pennsylvania has among the best Youth and Junior departments in the Nation. These are not the Grangers of tomorrow; they are the Grangers of today. We need to promote and support these programs now and into the future.

The 146th annual session of the Pennsylvania State Grange was held in Cranberry Twp. It was a wonderful time of fun, fellowship, and developing policy for our future. We had resolutions introduced that would restrict the use of Food stamps to nutritious food items only and two resolutions were introduced and passed dealing with the new cell cultured products that

are being developed in laboratories right now. We reiterated our support of the dairy industry and again encouraged that only milk from mammals should be allowed to use the term milk. We urged more regulation of the use of drones over public venues like fairs and public concerts and passed a resolution calling for better regulation pertaining to service animals. These were just a few of the many resolutions acted on.

The Youth and Young Adults and Juniors displayed their many projects that were made during the year. Many participated in the Sign-A-Song and public speaking contests. I'll even bet Pennsylvania had a first in public speaking this year, one of our members proposed during his speech. It certainly made history for us! It's amazing the talented speakers we are blessed with in this organization.

We concluded our convention with our All Grangers Banquet. Phillip Vonada performed the song he will use to represent Pennsylvania at the National Convention during "The Night of Excellence program." James Scott of Hookstown Grange #1980 in Beaver County was honored as our Granger of the Year. Jim has been a very active and dedicated Granger over the years, not only to the Grange, but to his local community.

Debbie and I have travelled thousands of miles this past year supporting and promoting the work of the Grange. We have been received by Grangers statewide with open arms. We truly are a Fraternal Organization! It's the Grange Way!

Rhode Island State Grange

Submitted by Eileen Hebert, Master

Greetings from Little Rhody!

It is my honor to report the activities of the Granges of Rhode Island, even though activities of the last year were under the administration of Past Master Larry Spencer. In his Master's Address at the recent state session Larry reflected on the last four years, stating that it had been an honor to follow in the footsteps of his father, Milton Spencer and his uncle, Kenneth Thomas, as Master of the Rhode Island State Grange.

We started the Grange year in our finest – we replaced all state officer, deputy and director sashes. There had been an ongoing budget item to replace two sashes a year, but it hadn't been done in many years. So, the executive committee decided to bite the bullet, and purchase all of them in one year, for the hefty sum of over \$19,000.

In November, department directors presented their programs for the year at the annual statewide meeting. This meeting is an opportunity for subordinate and Pomona department chairman to receive their program books for the Grange year, and to ask any questions they may have.

All of our directors have kept us busy with excellent programs and events. Joyce Bastien, Agriculture Director, challenged us with contests for birdhouses, scarecrows, compost kits, and upside-down planters. She also had a great display at the Rhode Island State House for Ag Day, where she stressed the importance of supporting local agriculture. Joyce and State Master Larry Spencer passed out milk, cookies and muffins to visitors.

Our Community Service Director, Marie Robidoux, has been diligent in promoting community service throughout the state. She also urged Granges to recognize and honor outstanding law enforcement individuals, fire fighters, and teachers in their communities. She held four fund raising nights at Papa Gino's at different locations around the state to raise money for the Words for Thirds Project. Granges throughout the state donated over 2000 dictionaries to schools.

The Deaf and Health Department, under the direction of Jennifer Lawson, supported the R.I. School for the Deaf with donations of "Box Top" coupons worth ten cents each. The school's "Project Close-Up" fund received money from a year-long contest in the Pomona Granges, "All Change Counts," and donations from individual Granges. Her department also sponsored a bowl-a-thon that raised money for the Kidney Cancer Association.

Kathy Stedman, Director of Women's Activities was a very busy lady. Her department sponsored a Women's Activities Day in May, which included judging baking contest entries, making items for Big E, and packing personal items in ditty-bags for New England Seafarer's Mission. They also collected pull tabs for the Ronald McDonald House in Providence, as well as items for the house and monetary donations. And the list goes on – manufacturers' coupons for military families, head warmers, booties and baby afghans for hospitals, lap robes and afghans for nursing homes, hats, mittens, gloves and scarves for needy families. Another major project was the packing of macaroni and cheese meals to be distributed to needy families. A group of members met at a local Grange, and using an "assembly line" technique, packed several thousand macaroni and cheese meals.

Kathy and Jen co-sponsored a tour of the Ronald McDonald House in Providence for 20 Grange members and friends. The Rhode Island State Grange has been long-time supporter of RMH since its opening in 1989.

For the Information department, whenever something is happening in the Grange, Howard Pastor is there – gathering publicity information and taking photos. He works persistently to get Grange news into local newspapers, which can be a challenging Task at times.

Our State Lecturer, Danielle Hartley, provided us with a family game night, a movie night, Rummikub tournament and the popular "My Favorite Anything" contest, which was enjoyed by all.

Youth co-chairman Joyce Chase and Arthur Manchester Jr. planned a busy year for youth in the state. However, some events had to be canceled due to weather or lack of participation. The ever-popular drill team took a hiatus this year due to other commitments on the part of team members. Bean Bag Baseball was the popular event of the year with five teams participating.

The four Pomona Granges conferred the degrees at Degree Day in April, but we only had three people taking the degrees. I believe the Obligation/Welcoming Ceremonies are partly responsible for this, because people now have immediate membership, and it is very difficult to convince them to spend another day to witness the degrees.

In June, the annual State Grange Church Service was held at First Congregational Church in Bristol. The service was sparsely attended, and those who didn't attend missed visiting a piece of Rhode Island history. In 1785, the church's pastor, Reverend Henry Wight, organized the first Bristol 4th of July parade, now recognized as the oldest July 4th parade in the country.

Washington County Fair, owned and operated by Washington County Pomona Grange, celebrated its 52nd year of operation in August. This year, the food booths and the carnival concessions solicited donations for the Hasbro Children's Hospital, which resulted in over \$26,000 being collected. The State Grange runs a food booth selling corndogs, which is a major source of income, largely through the efforts of Walter "Mr. Corndog" Hartley and his wife Danielle. A tremendous thank you to both of them for their work.

Junior Awards Day, held in September, was attended by over 60 Grangers, family members and friends. Juniors received their awards for all their hard work during the year, and many of their contest entries and projects were displayed.

Despite all the encouraging news, there are several less than positive items to report.

The goal of increasing membership continues to be ever elusive, despite the enthusiastic efforts of Membership Director Diane Andrews. She ran the membership booth at the fair, and talked to many people about the Grange, which resulted in only a few applications.

In recent years, and again this year, we lost members due to the closing of a Grange. Other than Golden Sheaf members that were transferred to another Grange, none of the other members joined other Granges. The executive committee had put in several years trying to work with this Grange to get it back on track as a functioning Grange, but apparently in the end there was not enough interest by the existing members to continue.

Granges also continue to downsize their membership, dropping members that owe dues sooner than they would have in previous years.

Loss of members to death is always a sad event, especially when they are members who have contributed a lifetime of service to the Grange. This year we lost Sister Hope Bryant, a Past State Women's Activities Director and Past State Lecturer. For those of you who remember her from Lecturers' Conferences, the thing that probably stands out was her beautiful voice. Another member gone from our rolls is Sister Marjorie Tucker, Past First Lady of the Rhode Island State Grange, and wife of Woodrow Tucker. Margie was our first historian, recognizing the importance of saving items from our Grange past for the future. Both will be profoundly missed.

I do not wish to end my report on a pessimistic note, so I will conclude with two highpoints of the year for subordinate Granges.

Hope Valley Grange, which sustained heavy damage from flooding several years ago, is well on their way to a comeback. Their hall has been completely renovated and updated through various grants, and they now open their hall as a community center. I had the honor of installing their officers at their first meeting in their upstairs hall. Rebuilding membership is the next task for this Grange, and they are hopeful about attracting new members.

Another subordinate Grange making an impact on their community is Chepachet Grange. Last year they held the first scarecrow festival in the village of Chepachet, in conjunction with libraries in the area. They sponsored a scarecrow contest for individuals and groups to build scarecrows that would decorate the main street in the village. On the second Saturday in October, judging was held at a day-long event featuring food, displays and entertainment. This year's event is already on track to be twice the size. The Grange has received much positive publicity and exposure in the community and has raised funds for community service in the area.

I would like to thank the members in Rhode Island for their confidence in electing me as their first female Master. I cannot promise to solve all the problems of the Granges, but I will do my very best to put all Granges from the juniors to the state level in a more positive position.

Tennessee State Grange

Submitted by Judy Sherrod, Master

Greetings from the Volunteer State of Tennessee.

Our 110th annual convention was held in Greene County with all meetings, contest entries and some meals held at the Wesley's Chapel Grange Hall. It was a full election year with a change in three officers.

Unfortunately, our membership director announced at session that we were not able to attain a net gain in membership this year, but after a lengthy discussion in committees, we adopted resolution to hopefully help with membership, and we will be working on a plan to help each Grange with not only membership growth, but also member retention.

We again had great participation in the Community Service contest. All Granges are working in their communities and have a great deal of enthusiasm for service projects. The winner was Wesley's Chapel, the oldest Grange in the state, whose members continue to work diligently in their community. All notebooks and/or reports supported the tremendous number of hours of work completed throughout the year.

We had excellent participation in the contests sponsored by the various departments. The Lecturer reported nearly 100 entries in the photography contest. She presented certificates to those Lecturers who turned in reports of their work during the year. She also presented certificates to those who read books from the annual reading list, and she urged us to continue to save aluminum soda can tabs for the Ronald McDonald House. The Family Activities Director reported around 40 entries in the needlework and craft contests. We also had many entries in the canned goods and baking contests. Our state-wide community service project this year was the collection of socks for agencies for homeless and veterans.

This year we lost Past State Master, Larry King, who passed away in February. He and his wife Dorothy are 50-year members of Volunteer Grange, where he held many positions in Grange before being elected State Master in 1984. He served as State Master until 1990. Dorothy served as National Grange Lady Assistant Steward from 1985-91.

During the year I attended the President's Conference in Oregon, the Mid-Atlantic Leaders' Conference in Maryland, and the Southeast Youth/Junior Conference in North Carolina. I also attended events sponsored by our Granges across the state.

This next year promises to be a challenge as we work to grow membership in our State. It is important that we increase our membership numbers, and it is imperative for the future of our State Grange to organize a new Grange (or Granges) in our State. Although our State is small in both the number of Granges and members, we have strong leaders in all of them. Our goal is to make a difference in the lives of those around us and leave those communities better than we found them.

Texas State Grange

Submitted by Karen Overstreet, Master

Worthy National Master, Officers, Delegates, members and guests of the 152nd National Grange Convention; greetings from the wonderful state of Texas!

I feel very honored and humbled as I represent Texas as the first female State Master. I walk in the shoes that my father, Archie Knight and my uncle Frank Knight have done many years ago. Buddy and I are extremely excited to be here and look forward to meeting and getting to know each of the delegates from across this great nation.

Since July, I have appointed department chairpersons for the various committees and State Deputies to assist our local Granges when needed. A Youth Team has already met and begun making plans for our 2019 Great Plains Regional Conference which will be held June 14-16 in Waco, Texas. This team is AWESOME and is already making plans for the tour, workshops, meals and activities.

Severe weather has recently devastated many of Texas' southern cities. Texas Grangers have donated food and supplies to individuals in the affected areas. Also, various state Granges from across the nation gave money to assist one specific family that lost their home and business. They greatly appreciated the assistance to be able to rebuild.

As we develop goals for this next year, I hope to attend each subordinate Grange and visit with its members about their strengths and concerns they see their Grange having. I am a firm believer that communication is the key to success and that we should take time to encourage and nurture the connections among our members and their communities. In addition to our regular projects, Texas is also making plans to assist Kansas, wherever needed, with the 2021 National Grange Session.

I am excited about the future of the Texas State Grange and look forward to working together as well as trying new and fun ideas in Texas and across our wonderful nation.

Vermont State Grange

Submitted by Brenda Rousselle, Past Master

Worthy National Master, time flies when you're having fun—even when you're not having fun! Looking out my window this morning I saw snow falling. Way too early. The dahlias in the backyard are still in full blossom.

State Session went well last year. It was a non-election year, so we were not held up from our Committee and Departmental reports by balloting for candidates. November brought National so I was on a plane heading west. I was placed on the Education and Health Committee that I chaired. It was a busy time going from Lady Assistant Steward duties to Chair duties of the committee, but the other members on the committee were more than helpful in moving the business of the committee forward. My thanks to them.

Planning for the 2018 National Convention was an on-going process throughout the entire year, with the monthly ZOOM meetings changing to weekly ZOOM meetings in September. Working with my people on fund-raising for Vermont's share of the Northeast Connections monetary commitment went well. We were able to raise the required funds and then some. There will probably be some left over to begin the fund for the next visitation of National to the Northeast.

March found me once again on a plane heading for the West Coast for the Masters' Conference held in Clackamas, Oregon. Good weekend. Well worth the trip.

At this time, I'd like to spend some time taking a look at ourselves and what we have and have not been able to accomplish this past year.

Departmental Meetings - As mentioned in my report last year, the Department Chairs are under a resolution passed by the Delegate body to meet with their committee members for a minimum of two meetings a year. The first meeting was held on a cold winter's day in January. For being very cold and recovering from a recent snowstorm, the attendance was very good.

Much good work was accomplished that day. Because the weather was not ideal and because so many braved the elements to be there and to assume their responsibilities, it was decided that for those Granges that sent their committee members to meet with the Program Directors, they would get a special seal on their Annual Report Certificate. Our Information Director came up with a seal with a drawing of a snowflake on it. Perseverance above and beyond the call of duty should be rewarded! Most committees held their second meeting at their convenience, in some cases piggy-backing on other Grange events. Anything to increase the attendance at events!

Educational Aid - The Educational Aid Committee was asked to look at their policy on scholarship awards and grants and to look at the feasibility of increasing the awards. They very diligently did this and were able to raise some of the scholarship/grant aid. A decision much appreciated by recipients.

The Vermont State Grange also has two scholarships that are awarded through the Executive Committee, one for Agriculture and one for Nursing.

Legislative - As I mentioned in my Master's Address to the Delegates at the annual session, one of the biggest disappointments for me was the inability to find a replacement Legislative Director for my previous Directors who had to give up the position. I searched for almost a year trying to locate a good candidate to no avail. I think it comes down to an aging population with younger members already stretched to their limits with their own families, work and, of course, Grange. I have great hope that the new Vermont State Grange Master will be able to fill the position.

With that being said, we had a very successful Legislative Day in Montpelier this year. The Governor signed the Grange Proclamation naming April Grange Month. Attendance was good. There was a guest speaker from the Vermont Department of Agriculture. Excellent presentation! Good work was also done on the FDA's plan to change the labeling on maple syrup and honey, as well as other products. My people really came through on my request for comments from them.

Information - The Information Director has worked hard this past year trying to get information out to the Granges as fast as possible. More Granges are opening web pages on the Vermont State Grange web page. It's a slow process, but progress is being made. Our second vehicle to getting information out to the Granges is the Monthly Activity Calendar that is sent to as many e-mail addresses as possible listing any and all activities happening at Granges throughout the State every month. Many rely on that calendar to keep them abreast of activities.

Membership - This year I am very pleased to be able to tell you that Vermont broke even in its membership numbers, we neither went up nor went down. Perhaps if the few Granges had submitted their Quarterly Reports in a timelier manner, the membership number might have gone up. Who knows?

Junior Program - The Junior Program is doing well. Camp attendance this past July was up from last year. There are two Granges in the State with a Junior +1 program. Both with at least five young people. One of the +1 Juniors actually took a Blue Ribbon for the art project at the Big E.

Youth Program - I had hopes that this program might be a little further ahead by this time. However, it is an uphill struggle. The Director has been active getting information out and this year at least two Granges received awards for work done in the Youth Department. The Director did travel to Maine for the Youth Conference this summer.

Grange Resurrections, Consolidations and Closings - I've spent time with two Granges trying to get them back on their feet and back to working Granges. Bartonsville Grange #481 was having severe cash flow problems and meeting attendance problems. I had them call a meeting and send out word to all of their members that I was going to be there and that we needed to talk. Surprisingly, members showed up that had not attended a meeting in quite some time as well as one or two interested people. We had a long discussion on their financial situation and their programming process. A plan was worked out to delay repayments to the State Grange for a loan they had received in favor of keeping the heat and electricity on. There were several younger members there who had the energy and desire to work on programming and before the night was over, had sketched out a schedule of monthly events that could be held at the Grange Hall to help raise money. On their own accord, they all agreed to meet again as a body between the meetings to continue working on their calendar. A good sign. Activities were planned for every month throughout the summer.

Maple Valley Grange #318 in Wallingford had been re-organized a little over three years ago. While the re-organization went well, the proceeding months did not. Meetings were not held, reports not submitted, dues not paid. After several attempts, the Master of the Grange finally confirmed a meeting date and I drove down almost two hours to attend their meeting. When I entered, I found the Master sitting at a table near the door with the other members sitting around a table—a common practice for their Grange. I invited the Master over to the table so we could all talk. The Master confessed that he knew all day that I would be coming down and would be taking their Charter away from them. You could almost feel the air change when I assured him that this was not the case. We spent a good deal of time talking about membership—they do have the minimum number of members of a Grange plus one or two others, the lack of Quarterly Reports and dues payments to the State. They do have money, a little tight, but are able to pay the bills for their Hall. We worked out a deal where they would begin by submitting monthly one past due Quarterly Report with the dues payment attached. It was also decided that they would attempt to submit current Quarterlies so as not to get behind. We left on a positive note. I'll be going back down (hopefully it will be me) in December to give the Obligation to three to five new members. I was able to find them a set of Stations and will be looking for a new set of Sashes when I can get back to the Grange Center in the spring. (The mice got into theirs.)

Two struggling Granges met and began the process to consolidate. This was a lengthy process, but successful. A new Charter was issued to them at State Session.

I, unfortunately, had to close down a Grange, Florona Grange #540. That Grange had not met for several years. In communication with them, it was always their hope that with the help of town officials who did not want to see the Grange close down, that they would be able to pull themselves together again. It was not to be. I closed them, requested their Charter and regalia and an audit of their accounts. This is in the process of being completed.

Real Estate, Regalia, Records, Etc. - The sale of the Connecticut River Grange Hall was completed and papers for the sale were filed. The hall is currently under re-construction to become an educational theatre.

The last hall to be cleaned out and prepared for sale is Hawks Mountain Grange Hall. I and several other hearty volunteers spent a blistering hot day this summer beginning the process to clean out the hall. When the Grange closed down, they basically moved the Stations in front of the stage, turned off the electricity and locked the doors. It wasn't in as bad a shape as Connecticut River Grange Hall, but still took a great deal of time to do what we were able to do on that very hot day. There is at least one more day's work before the hall will be almost ready to put on the market.

A very old and very rundown Grange Hall in Rupert was finally signed over to the Town of Rupert. They may do with it as they please. It was/is in terrible condition. Probably not even safe enough to enter. Sad to see a Grange not take care of its property.

In Summary - All in all, it has been a good year. A little frustrating at times trying to keep up with State Grange responsibilities, my own Subordinate and Pomona responsibilities as well as the Subordinate and Pomona Granges around the state and responsibilities to the 2018 National Convention. On top of this, I spent a lot of time thinking about the upcoming elections at State Session. I've been Master of the Vermont State Grange for four years and it was time to re-think the situation. Even though National is just around the corner, I felt that it was time for me to turn over the Master's sash and to go on to other responsibilities. In addition, four years of working with one person and their vision of the Grange is probably long enough. It is time for someone with new ideas to take the helm and it was for this reason that I decided to decline the Office of Master for another two years. These past four years have been the most rewarding of my life. The friends that I have made can never be replaced. What I have seen and done can never be duplicated. It has been a joy and an honor.

Washington State Grange

Submitted by Tom Gwin, Master

Greetings from the Evergreen State of Washington! It is indeed a pleasure to represent our beautiful diversified state at the 152nd Annual Session of the National Grange.

We chose the theme "Crossing the Horizon to Grange Growth" to represent our year. Following the success of "Charting Our Voyage" and "Setting Sail Toward a Brighter Future", we worked to develop growth in our Grange activities, the number of active Granges, and membership development. We held 18 leadership conferences across the state working to increase communication, develop leadership skills, promote our Grange programs, and receive feedback as to the direction we were heading as an organization. I was joined at these conferences by our Lecturer and department heads (Family Living, Membership, Community Service, Juniors, and Youth) to assist in sharing information with our Grangers and to receive feedback to improve our programming.

We held our 129th Annual Session in June at the Skagit County Fairgrounds in Mount Vernon. We truly enjoyed being in this agriculturally diverse county. Our delegates worked through the sun and the rain as they considered nearly 50 resolutions and revised our legislative policy book. There were more than 1,000 contest entries. A large group of youth and Junior Grangers attended the convention. We are so pleased to have more than 500 members in attendance at this year's state convention.

The Washington State Grange is proud of our recognition as a Distinguished State Grange for the seventh consecutive year. We are also proud of our six Distinguished Subordinate Granges: Five Mile Prairie #905 and Humptulips #730 for the ninth year; Mossyrock #355 for the fifth year; East Hill #786 for the second year; and first year recipients Deer Lagoon #846 and Goldendale #49.

Our Grange departments are continuing to thrive. Our State Grange Youth Department will be recognized as a Distinguished Grange Youth Program. The Annual Youth Weekend was held in Toledo at the Lewis and Clark State Park Retreat Center. The youth group completed two service projects at this year's retreat: clearing the trails after a stormy winter; and sewing 72 fleece hats for the Keep Washington Warm Project. The Keep WA Warm project included the collection of 1,777 stocking caps, mittens, gloves, and socks that were distributed to service programs in Northwest Washington.

The Junior Grange Programs are gaining strength. Nearly 480 Junior Grangers attended camp this summer, with the assistance of 85 youth counselors and 90 adult staff members. This represents a 7% increase in camp attendance. The positive memories created in our camping program are sure to benefit the organization for years to come. Junior Grangers, across our state, collected new and gently used children's books for various reading programs. Nearly 600 books were collected this year. The 1+ Junior Program continues to grow as well. Our total Junior Grange membership, including the 1+ members is nearing 800 members!

Legislative activities continue to remain a priority for the Washington State Grange. Our legislative day was held in February. Grangers from across the state came to our headquarters building for a day of speakers and workshops. We facilitated tours of the capitol building and made appointments for our members to meet with their legislators. Our 2019

Legislative Day will be January 29. The State Grange Legislative Committee determined our legislative priorities, while our lobbyist carries out the goals and objectives set forth by the legislative committee and the State Grange Executive Committee.

Our State Grange's Legislative Priorities for 2019 are:

- We believe it is critical that the legislature implement solutions to address the crisis created by the Hirst Decision that also protects rural and agricultural water use and economic development. Maintaining access to water is essential to our rural communities.
- We oppose a carbon emissions tax.
- We support increased agricultural fair funding and believe that our agricultural fairs are an integral component in teaching basic agricultural concepts to education consumers as to where food comes from.
- We support maintaining the Snake River Dams as an integral part of our transportation infrastructure. Our dams provide clean energy, recreational opportunities, and assist in flood control.
- We believe sound forest management practices include wildfire prevention programs and support revision of current firefighting methodology for increased efficiency at reasonable costs.
- We oppose bans or restrictions on the use of agricultural chemicals until suitable alternatives have been developed.
- To spur economic development, we support increased funding for the expansion of broadband capabilities across the state.

The educational arm of the state organization, the Washington State Grange Foundation, experienced tremendous support this year. We returned that generosity by awarding 16 college scholarships, ranging from \$750 to \$1,000 each, to Grange members and children of Grange members. We also supported Washington Ag in the Classroom with a \$5,000 scholarship.

We tried increasing our social events for the State Grange this year. Our Grange Travel Adventure Program started with a bus trip to the Skagit Valley Tulips Festival in April and Grange Day with the Seattle Mariners in June. Our next event is a bus trip to the Leavenworth Christmas Lighting Festival on Dec. 8.

Our State Grange Headquarters building is located in Olympia, six blocks from the state capitol building. Two floors are rented out, while the State Grange occupies the third floor. To remain an attractive rental property and to assist in improving the image of our organization, we have spent the past two years making the following building improvements: replacing the tile roof with an asphalt shingle roof; repairs to the heating and ventilation system; a new telephone communications system; upgraded energy efficiency; and a complete overhaul of the landscaping. We will continue to work to improve our hall and making all Grange members proud of our headquarters building.

We will continue to work toward "Crossing the Horizon to Grange Growth" through the upcoming year. We are making progress, but we haven't quite reached the point of membership growth. Throughout the State of Washington, we are working to revitalize Granges and experiencing a resurgence of Grange activity. Granges and Grangers are working together to make their communities stronger. Our leadership team will continue to provide a diversified program and a wide range of tools that will allow our Granges to flourish in their communities.

Best wishes for a successful convention. We hope for an exciting year of progress for all Granges across the nation!

West Virginia State Grange

Submitted by Jim Foster, Master

The West Virginia State Grange has completed their 147th year for the people of the Mountain State. We find ourselves in a very precarious position. The membership continues to decline, as the members that are left are not willing to assume a leadership role in Subordinate or State Grange. It is a struggle to muster enough members to have a proper Grange meeting or to have an election.

On a more positive note, we are in the process of reorganizing a Grange. The prospects are looking positive, but only time will tell if we succeed.

In an effort, the delegate body at our state meeting voted to offer a monetary incentive to the Granges that show a positive growth. The State Grange will pay our Subordinate Granges, \$10 for each new member. If a Grange acquires five new members, they will receive a bonus of \$50. In addition, there are certain conditions and reports that the Subordinate Membership Director must meet in order to receive their bonus.

The West Virginia State Grange continues to partner with other organizations with similar interests at our State Legislature, by attending Conservation and Agriculture Day at the Legislature.

The leadership in West Virginia will continue to pursue our goals to represent the rural citizens of West Virginia.

Wisconsin State Grange

Submitted by Debbie Gegare, Master

NO REPORT SUBMITTED

MINUTES OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

November 5-6, 2017

152nd National Grange Convention

RL Hotel by Red Lion

Spokane, WA

Submitted by Duane Scott, National Grange Executive Committee Secretary

The meeting of the Board was called to order at 7:33 p.m. PST by Chairman Phil Prelli. Present were Betsy Huber, Phil Prelli, Jimmy Gentry, Joe Fryman, Leroy Watson and Duane Scott.

Prayer was led by Joe Fryman.

Leroy Watson moved to accept the August 17-18, 2017 minutes. Seconded by Betsy Huber and approved.

Leroy Watson moved to go into Executive Session to discuss the Master's report on attorney matters, State Grange concerns and personnel issues. Seconded by Joe Fryman and approved at 7:36 p.m.

Leroy Watson moved to come out of Executive Session. Seconded by Jimmy Gentry and approved at 9:03 p.m.

Betsy Huber reports that she hopes to have the results of the insurance adjuster's testing of the chiller tubes in the next couple of days.

Recess at 9:10 p.m.

Executive Board meeting reconvened at 8:30 a.m.

Phil Prelli led the prayer.

Leroy Watson moved to adopt the October 24, 2017 ZOOM meeting minutes. Seconded by Jimmy Gentry and approved with corrections.

Phil Prelli asked whether we should advise the Delegates of the proposals the Board had received to sell the building, mechanical upgrades and financial needs. Discussion followed on the Board's actions and proposals.

8:50 a.m. High Priest Bruce Croucher joined the meeting.

Discussion was held on the rewriting of the Seventh Degree. Bruce reports that with the theater venue in Vermont, the change in Directors and Assistant Directors, not much solid work have been done but some thoughts had been discussed by the group. The Original Seventh Degree was basically a soliloquy by the High Priest. The hall was divided into an inner and outer sanctuary and the audience moved between scenes. The original degree was for State Masters and their spouses, so the audience was limited. Bruce advised that they would be looking in the trunks and what needed to be shipped for 2018. He also advised that 2019 may be the year that the degree is changed as that year will require a ballroom presentation. Bruce also has a report to be presented to the delegates on what was done with the historical records in the basement and sub-basement of the National building.

At 9:23 a.m. Bruce Croucher left the meeting.

Department Reports

Building – Afterschool Alliance will be vacating the 8th floor Nov. 20, 2017. December will be used for updating and advertisement to rent in January 2018.

Discussion was held on tenant use of the Goss conference room.

Trademark – Several licensees need to be contacted to pay their license fees.

At 10 a.m. Stewart Hughes joined the meeting telephonically.

Discussion was held on the 2018 proposed budget.

Recess at 12:05 p.m. for lunch with the New Delegates.

Reconvened at 1:10 p.m. and Stewart Hughes again joined the meeting by telephone.

Discussion continued on the proposed 2018 budget.

Stewart Hughes left the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

Leroy Watson moved that the proposed Staff salary line item be \$452,000 with the National Master to decide how raises would be distributed amongst the staff. Seconded by Phil Prelli and approved.

Jimmy Gentry moved to proceed with splitting the Goss conference room. Seconded by Leroy Watson and defeated. Jimmy Gentry moved to reduce the attorney's fees line item to \$525,000. Seconded by Leroy Watson and approved.

The next meeting will be after the close of session to reorganize the board.

The next regular meeting will be March 1-2, 2018 in Portland, Oregon.

Leroy Watson moved to adjourn, seconded by Jimmy Gentry and approved.

Meeting adjourned at 3:52 p.m. PST.

November 10, 2017

152nd National Grange Convention

RL Hotel by Red Lion

Spokane, WA

Submitted by Duane Scott, National Grange Executive Committee Secretary

Reorganization meeting of the National Grange Board of Directors: Present National Master Betsy Huber, Overseer Phil Prelli, Executive Committee members Leroy Watson, Duane Scott, Lynette Schaeffer and Stephen Coye

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 p.m. PST by Betsy Huber for the election of officers.

Leroy Watson was elected Chairman of the Board.

Lynette Schaeffer was elected Secretary of the Board.

Next meeting will be held at the Masters' Conference March 1-4, 2018 in Portland, OR.

Discussion was held on the need to have a ZOOM meeting in regard to the insurance payment for the chiller repair and planning of payments.

Lynette Schaeffer moved to forward the names of Phil Prelli, Leroy Watson and Betsy Huber to the Advocacy Board. Seconded by Stephen Coye and approved.

Discussion was held on who may be attending the Gala on December 4, 2017 in Washington, D. C.

Phil Prelli moved to adjourn. Seconded by Lynette Schaeffer and approved.

Meeting adjourned at 5:21 p.m. PST.

December 14, 2017

Zoom Meeting

Submitted by Lynette Schaeffer, National Grange Executive Committee Secretary

In attendance National Grange Master Betsy Huber, Overseer Phil Prelli, Executive Committee Chair LeRoy Watson, Secretary Lynette Schaeffer, Members Duane Scott and Steve Coye. Meeting called to order by Chair Leroy.

Chairman Leroy Watson asked Brother Steve Coye to lead the group in prayer.

Adopting the Executive meeting minutes from November meeting were tabled until next meeting, as they were not sent to past Overseer Jimmy Gentry and past Executive Committee member Joe Fryman for review.

Address officer compensation issues from the National Convention for the 2018-19 terms of office. It was discovered that the Audit and Budget committee overlooked having a resolution for the salary for the National Master, Lecturer and Secretary. According to bylaws this should have been set prior to election. The belief of the group was that since the session audit and budget committee had the amounts in the budget of \$55,000 for the Master, and \$500 each for Lecturer and Secretary, that that was the intent of the committee. The delegate body accepted the budget as presented by the committee.

Motion made by Phil Prelli, second by Lynette to have the salary for the National Master as \$55,000 per year for the elected term. All in favor of the motion except Betsy Huber who abstained.

Motion made by Steve Coye, second by Duane Scott to have the stipend for the National Lecturer and Secretary to be \$500 each per year for the elected term of office. Motion carried.

Motion by Phil Prelli, second by Lynette Schaeffer to reaffirm the email vote to continue compensation to National Master to the end of December 2017. All in favor of the motion, except Betsy Huber who abstained.

The National Grange Secretary's minutes of the last day of the 151st National Grange Session in Spokane, WA, were tabled to next meeting as they were not yet ready for distribution to the committee.

Master Betsy mentioned a request by Minnesota State Grange to have a National Representative to Session in January 27, 2018. TJ Malaskee, Minnesota State Grange Master, also sent an email to Betsy stating that he had suspended three Granges. She was unsure if the local Granges had been notified, she had not received a copy of the individual Grange letters. If those three Granges are suspended the State Grange status would be in jeopardy. Motion by Phil, second by Duane to go into executive session to discuss internal Grange matters. Motion carried.

Motion by Phil, second by Duane to come out of executive session. Motion carried.

Everyone has received the email from National Grange about the next Executive Committee meeting in Oregon prior to the Masters' Conference.

Betsy forwarded via email the information on the chiller replacement and boiler repairs. As with old buildings when start repairing something more issues are found. The mechanical blue prints have now been found and Mike Laciny, contractor, believes that this information will help with getting more money from the insurance company. The insurance company wants to settle for \$250,000 and Mike believes that \$300,000 would be possible. The insurance will not be paying until the job is complete. When asked about the finances, it was stated that it is believed that all will be fine for now. The hotel bill for National Grange 151st Session has arrived and is about \$125,000. The bill will be less when Grange Foundation pays the amount for Youth and Junior expenses. Mike is getting \$87,500 each month. It is unsure when the new chiller will be delivered. Still working off the temporary situation. Some of the updates

cannot be completed until the chiller is installed. One of the tenants – Bruce Beddow is an engineer and he suggested having the boiler and water heater in the same unit. This would be energy efficient. Betsy would be talking more with him next week.

Trademark licensee Grange Kitchen and Bar in Ann Arbor, MI has not paid the last two years' license fee. It is believed that the fee is \$1,000 a year. Phil made a motion to move forward with enforcement and cost after seeing a budget for the estimated expenses. Duane seconded and motion carried. Not sure if the case will be in MI or WDC if we proceed.

The search has concluded for a new property insurance company, the previous company would not renew with us because of the open claim with California. The new policy would be saving \$2,000 because the building was initially insured for \$15M and now \$7.6M. Betsy said that she asked several times if this would be enough coverage and was told by the agent it would be.

Next meeting will be in conjunction with Master's Conference March 1, 2018.

Adjournment motion made by Betsy and second by several at 9:27 p.m. CT. Motion carried.

January 29, 2018

Zoom Meeting

Submitted by Lynette Schaeffer, National Grange Executive Committee Secretary

In attendance National Grange Master Betsy Huber, Overseer Phil Prelli, Executive Committee Chair Leroy Watson, Secretary Lynette Schaeffer, Members Duane Scott and Steve Coye. Meeting called to order by Chair Leroy Watson.

Chairman Leroy Watson asked Brother Phil Prelli to lead the group in prayer.

Master Betsy Huber emailed the information for the National Convention options for 2021. The two options were Hotel Elegante Conference & Event Center- Colorado Springs, CO (November 12-21, 2021) and Hyatt Regency Wichita, KS (November 5-14). On many items they were of equal value and filling National Grange Convention needs. Discussion points: the Wichita Convention and Visitors Bureau is covering about \$6,000.00 in some of the Grange expenses, the cost of the flights to Wichita were a slightly more expensive, the Wichita CVB has worked with Holiday Inn Wichita on drastically reduced rate for Masters' Conference, Kansas and Oklahoma Granges would host. Stephanie Tiller has been to both sites and feels either would be capable to host the 155th Session. The Wichita hotel is more compact. The early dates for Wichita could cause some of the States with sessions in October to need to be quick getting resolutions to National Grange office. The later dates for Colorado will be right before Thanksgiving.

Motion by Duane Scott second by Phil Prelli that the 2021 National Grange convention be held in Wichita, KS. All voted aye, motion carried.

It was suggested that all the State Granges in the region be notified soon, and that the notification include some of your reasoning.

Duane Scott reported on Minnesota State Grange Session on January 27. Seven of the state officers were not in attendance. Seven Granges were listed only five attended. John Crippen was elected as the State Master. A listening session was held, and many questions/concerns were discussed. The Sixth degree was performed the first time in a while. Members of several states were in attendance including Chris Heath, State Master of New Hampshire; Chris Szkutak, Massachusetts; Gene and Maria Edelen, Iowa; and Duane Scott assisted. Gene and Maria stayed at the Doubletree where 2019 will be held.

There is a new loan for \$50,000 from New Jersey State Grange. Terms are 7 years for 3%.

Motion by Phil Prelli second by Lynette Schaeffer to approve this loan from New Jersey State Grange for \$50,000 with terms of 7 years at 3% interest. Carried.

Discussion that we should have guidelines, should Master Betsy Huber have blanket approval on loans. At the face-to-face meeting we will discuss the guidelines. The Red Lion loan is from a Subordinate Grange in PA for \$100,000. It has previously been approved by this board.

The contractor wants another chiller payment. Betsy is trying to have him wait until the job is done, or until the insurance payment is made. The insurance payment will not come until the job is complete.

Motion by Steve Coye, second by Duane to go into executive session to discuss legal matters and personnel matters at 8:43 p.m. CT. Motion carried.

The chiller should arrive tomorrow, Betsy said it was the best birthday present.

Everyone has received the email from National Grange about the next face-to-face Executive Committee meeting, March 1, 2018, in Portland, Oregon, prior to the Master's conference at the Monarch Hotel and Conference Center (Clackamas). Discussion about flights and arrival/departure times.

Adjournment motion made by Phil Prelli and second by Duane Scott at 9:20 p.m. CT. Motion carried.

Action Items to be added to next agenda: Guidelines for National Grange loans, legal matters from executive session, approval of minutes of the November, December and January meetings, approval of last session day meeting minutes.

March 1-3, 2018

Masters' Conference

Monarch Hotel and Convention Center

Portland, Oregon

Submitted by Lynette Schaeffer, National Grange Executive Committee Secretary

In attendance National Grange Master Betsy Huber, Overseer Phil Prelli, Executive Committee Chair Leroy Watson, Secretary Lynette Schaeffer, Members Duane Scott and Steve Coye. Meeting called to order by Chair Leroy Watson at 7:55 p.m. PT.

Chairman Leroy Watson asked Brother Steve Coye to lead the group in prayer.

As no comments were made by then Overseer Jimmy Gentry and then Executive Committee member Joe Fryman, the Executive meeting minutes from November 5, 2017 meeting were adopted as distributed, motion of Phil, second by Duane, and carried.

The Executive meeting minutes from November 10, 2017, meeting, were adopted as distributed, motion of Betsy, second by Duane, and carried.

The Executive meeting minutes from December 14, 2017, Zoom meeting, were adopted as distributed, motion of Duane, second by Betsy, and carried.

The Executive meeting minutes from January 29, 2018, Zoom meeting, were adopted as distributed, motion of Phil, second by Betsy, and carried.

Item added to the agenda- we get quarterly reports from Communications, Convention & Building, Juniors, IT, Sales & Benefits and Youth. We should invite the Lecturer and Community Service Director to also submit reports.

Motion by Phil Prelli, second by Duane Scott to go into Executive Session for legal, personnel and Grange concerns at 8:02 p.m. PT.

Phil Prelli motion to come out of executive session; Steve Coye second and carried at 9:22 p.m. PT.

The 150th Anniversary Gala brought in about \$121,900. \$20,000 will be credited for advertising in the Good Day Magazine. The rest is going to the general fund.

Discussion as to location of the official office of the Master. Betsy's duty station is designated as Washington, D.C. office/headquarters.

Recess called at 9:55 p.m. PT until 8:45 a.m. PT March 2.

Meeting called back to order 8:50 a.m. PT. March 2.

Phil Prelli led the group in prayer.

Minutes of the 2017 National Session in Spokane, WA, for the last day of session were adopted as printed. Now the Journal of Proceedings is nearly ready to be published, waiting on audit and legislative reports.

Jeff Skinner called at 9:10 a.m. PT.

Motion by Steve Coye second by Duane Scott to go into Executive session to discuss legal matters and financial management at 9:11a.m. PT.

Motion by Phil Prelli, second by Lynette Schaeffer, carried to go out of executive session at 10:26 a.m. PT.

Motion to authorize borrowing money from the convention assessment fund for the purpose of paying taxes with expectation of funds being paid back within six months of borrow date was made by Steve Coye, second by Duane Scott, carried.

Discussion about need for financial long-range plan. It was suggested that we have Stewart available for this discussion and that he compile information for this plan.

Motion by Phil Prelli second by Betsy Huber to go into Executive Session to discuss legal and financial matters at 10:52 a.m. PT.

Duane Scott made motion, second by Phil Prelli to come out of Executive Session. Carried at 11:07 a.m. PT.

Stewart needs to check into the tax law on the Metro Cards employee benefit as the IRS regulation has changed.

Eighth floor is renovated and ready to be leased. The broker is working to get it listed.

National Grange has loans offered from New York State Grange, Vermont State Grange, Indiana State Grange and Oregon State Grange. Illinois State Grange has offered an amount as well.

Monroe Classic partnership is working well, Mike Warner was a little unhappy about the T-shirts for the Stowe, VT, session being purchased from somewhere else. National Grange is required to get an estimate from Monroe Classic for any purchases, but other levels of Grange are not required to use Monroe Classic.

Break for lunch.

Reviewed Sales, Programs and Benefit Report from Loretta Washington, discussion about a discount program called Access. It was decided that we would allow a test drive with a few selected members to participate for six months.

Phil Prelli made motion, Leroy Watson second to look into added benefits for e-members next year if the resolution to increase e-member dues passes second reading at the fall convention. Carried.

Motion by Phil Prelli, second by Betsy Huber to confirm the zoom conference call vote to accept the site of the 2021 in Wichita, KS. Carried.

Reviewed IT Report by Stephanie Wilkins. Lynette asked about the age of the computers and if they were running Windows 10 or something different. Windows 10 not supported after Nov. 1, 2018.

Joan Smith's business partner Pegi Johnson is working to charter a Grange in Hawaii.

Discussion of legislative report by Burton Eller. Burton is looking for more emails for members interested in legislative news and alerts.

Discussion of Amanda Brozana-Rios's recent trip to South Carolina to work on membership. Membership Zoom calls have been well attended, usually State Masters and Membership Directors. Possible topics: train on how to man a fair booth, what to say – the perfect elevator speech. Maybe a "how to ZOOM."

Unfinished business - Discussion about criteria for loans that the National Master accepts from State Granges. National Grange should probably have a policy and criteria, come up with ideas for next meeting.

152nd Annual National Grange Convention Nov. 13-17, 2018 Stowe, VT discussion - Probably same schedule as last year, speakers are being discussed, possible delegate tour on their own, Quilt of Valor presentation, Distinguished Grange and Legacy Family will continue.

Digest Review Committee - Discussion on delay in action by this committee and possible changes needed in the Digest.

Clouse Insurance wants to be partner with National Grange, discussion held. The agreement was approved to promote them as a partner but limit their access to only states that do not have their own insurance companies or have agreement with GIA. Five percent commission for sales would be acceptable.

After reviewing the proposed budget for the 152nd Annual National Grange Convention, Nov. 13-17, 2018, Stoweflake Mountain Resort & Conference Center, Stowe, VT, Betsy Huber made a motion, second by Lynette Schaeffer to approve the Northeast region's budget request of \$39K for the 2018 session. Carried.

National Agricultural Hall of Fame in Bonner, Kansas asked for a donation. In 2011 National Grange made a donation because Oliver Hudson Kelley was inducted.

Phil Prelli made a motion, second by Leroy Watson and carried to not make a donation to the National Agricultural Hall of Fame.

Discussion about National Session 2017 resolution that the Executive Committee investigate holding a paperless National Session. We already have software to do this in Microsoft SharePoint. Other issues would be wi-fi capabilities in hotels, bandwidth, possibly talking with Bill Booth or Chris Heath to assist or get their professional input, changes would be stepped, possibly testing at a state session. No final decisions were made.

Discussion about a financial long-range plan to assist with cash flow present and future, when money comes in, when money is spent. No final decisions were made.

Recess at 3:52pm.

Meeting called back to order 2 p.m. ET March 3 at Sunnyside Grange Hall as part of the Master's Conference.

Leroy Watson summarized the Youth Director report for the group. Betsy mentioned that Junior and Youth members have been working with National Junior Horticultural Association and will attend their convention this year. Discussion was held about the background checks of Youth and Junior leaders for all level of Granges, including the 1+ Grangers. Reminder notice should be given to all. Thanks to Charlene.

Leroy summarized the Junior Director report. There needs to be better way to gather data from the 1+ Granges on the numbers of Juniors. The Junior Department will have a fundraiser this year since the Youth had one last year. Betsy mentioned the Junior Community Service award will be unveiled today, Materials released after this meeting. Thanks to Samantha.

Leroy summarized the Building Manager report. Building is 80% occupied as of this report. Discussion of the chiller and boiler repairs. Several states have lent money to the National Grange, and there is an offer of more.

The email vote to approve funds for the replacement of one boiler was ratified by motion of Steve Coye, second by Phil Prelli and carried.

Discussion about Gala and funds raised, \$20,000 was for ads for Good Day!™ magazine. Congratulations to Amanda and the National Grange Staff members for a job well done for a successful Gala.

To finish the Journal of Proceedings for 151st National Session the Audit needs to be completed for Foundation and National Grange and Burton needs to finish the Committee reports.

Grange Radio- Content needs to be solicited from the members. Volunteers are needed to assist with the programming. A weekly program by former USDA Secretary John Block and an hour program by Bob Charbonneau are featured. Other possibilities are Nebraska State Grange's weekly radio report, talk with Minnesota State Grange about programs.

Subscriptions and renewals are needed for Good Day!™. All the feedback has been good. Concerns raised about running a deficit for the Good Day!™ Magazine. Everyone needs to push the subscriptions and renewals of the magazine. All should be proud of the magazine. The Executive Committee would like a report quarterly as to how subscriptions and renewals are going.

Phil Prelli made motion, second by Duane Scott and carried that Master Huber continue discussion with Clouse Insurance agency mentioning that; Clouse only able to sell insurance in states with no Grange insurance company or GIA agreement, and Clouse would not be named the "official insurance vendor" for Granges or Grangers.

Betsy mentioned a discount program called Access Development as a possible benefit. Maybe some of the tech savvy users could give it a test run and report back before going further with this program.

Betsy made a motion to direct Loretta Washington to continue discussion with Access Development and enter into a test run, second by Lynette and carried.

The question was raised to the group if the Masters' Conference is worth the time. Discussion was favorable. Roger Bostwick mentioned that February 15-17, 2019 has been penciled in. Kansas and Oklahoma State Granges would serve as hosts with assistance from Wichita, KS, Convention and Visitors Bureau. The meeting will be held at the hotel. The room rate would be \$99 per night.

Motion by Phil, second by Betsy and carried to accept the invite of KS and OK State Granges for next year's Masters Conference.

The next meeting will be at the call of National Master or Executive Committee Chair.

Motion by Phil Prelli, second by Steve Coye, carried, to adjourn at 4:02 p.m. PT.

April 5, 2018

Zoom Meeting

Submitted by Lynette Schaeffer, National Grange Executive Committee Secretary

In attendance National Grange Master Betsy Huber, Overseer Phil Prelli, Executive Committee Chair Leroy Watson, Secretary Lynette Schaeffer, Members Duane Scott and Steve Coye.

Meeting called to order by Chair Leroy at 8:01 p.m. ET.

Chairman Leroy Watson asked Sister Lynette Schaeffer to lead the group in prayer.

Items on the agenda – Depositions, Chiller, Loan and Clouse insurance.

Leroy Watson discussed the depositions that he and Betsy Huber made in the California on the Trademark II case. Leroy was asked many questions concerning the financial damages that the National Grange has suffered because of the Guild actions and confusion by the membership. Betsy was not asked any financial questions, hers dealt more with the Guild actions damaged the National Grange image. Bob McFarland was in attendance.

Clouse Insurance – Betsy had spoken with Mitch Clouse about exempting states under GIA or their own insurance companies and that is part of the agreement. She needs to check with Delaware. Mitch agreed to remove 'official Grange insurance company' from the agreement.

Motion by Steve Coye, second by Lynette Schaeffer, and carried to move forward with this insurance benefit to Granges and Grangers, pending the outcome of the Delaware Grange Mutual information. One nay vote.

Motion by Phil Prelli to go into Executive Session at 8:27 p.m. ET for contract discussion. Betsy Huber second and carried.

Phil Prelli made motion, Lynette Schaeffer second and carried to come out of executive session at 9:48 p.m. ET.

Motion by Phil Prelli to allow Keepin' it Cool, LLC to complete work related to the install of chiller, including the flushing process as expeditiously as possible. Second by Lynette Schaeffer and carried.

Motion made by Phil Prelli, second by Lynette Schaeffer and carried to authorize National Master, Betsy, to confer with general counsel on any matters with Keepin' it Cool, LLC, if she feels it necessary. Motion carried.

Discussion about Connecticut State Grange who adapted, printed and distributed the National Grange Guidelines for Officers book. Due to National Grange's copyright on the book, Connecticut State Grange paid a \$1,000 donation for use of the information.

Next meeting will be May 21-22 at the National Grange headquarters.

Motion to adjourn by Betsy Huber, second by Duane Scott to adjourn at 10 pm ET.

May 21-22, 2018

National Grange Headquarters Building

Washington D.C.

Submitted by Lynette Schaeffer, National Grange Executive Committee Secretary

Attending National Grange Master Betsy Huber, Overseer Phil Prelli, Executive Committee Chair Leroy Watson, Secretary Lynette Schaeffer and members Duane Scott and Steve Coye. Before the meeting officially started Steve and Lynette were given their official name tags and Steve was presented with his Foundation 1 in 1000 Club pin.

The meeting was called to order May 21 at 5:19 p.m. ET by chair Leroy Watson.

Steve Coye led the group in prayer.

Hearing no additions or corrections motion was made by Phil Prelli, second by Duane Scott and carried to approve the printed minutes for March 1-3, 2018. Motion was made by Betsy, second by Phil and carried to approve the printed zoom minutes for April 5, 2018.

Confirmation of the email vote on the National Grange Assessment loan was added to the agenda.

Stewart Hughes, Controller, joined the meeting. Pathfinders International, tenant, is in arrears with the rent. They are no longer tenants. They also will be charged for building expenses for the part of the year they were tenants. Keepin It Cool has not completed the job and it is getting warm in the building. There was discussion about the 'flushing' of the pipes whether it needed to be done or not – Keepin' it Cool has a proposal for \$131,000, and another contractor said that manufacturer (Trane) does not recommend. Betsy will be contacting Trane, not local representative to get the answer. Discussion on how the \$93,000 California State Grange money was recorded in the financial report. The full report was reviewed, and a few clerical items were mentioned.

Meeting recessed at 6:45 p.m.

Reconvened May 22 at 8:45 a.m. ET Phil led the prayer.

Reviewed Sales, Benefits, and Programs Director, Loretta Washington's written report. Access Development Program— six people are testing – Amanda Brozana Rios said she had apps on her phone that could get various discounts similar to this, so this would not be a big benefit. Leroy Watson mentioned the new e-membership, if adopted at convention, that this could be used for. Next meeting, August, Board would like a preliminary report for these services. Loretta has been attending Veterans Health Care Council meetings.

The Convention/Operations Director Stephanie Tiller is completing plans for 2018 session, Stowe, VT. Betsy is a little concerned about the activities for the 2019 meeting in Midwest Region. Karie Blasingame, Illinois State Grange Overseer, is the chair of the committee. Lynette Schaeffer and Duane Scott mentioned one of the states is not helping too much, but they are working to correct that.

Reviewed the Youth and Young Adults report by Charlene Shupp Espenshade, Director. Discussion about the scholarships many of the state Granges offer-- Great membership tool.

Discussion of the IT Director, Stephanie Wilkins report. Discussion about paperless session, needing volunteers to try it out this year, training of the secretary and chair of the committees, the life cycle of the National Session laptop computers is nearing an end.

Jeff Skinner, General Counsel, arrived.

Steve Coye made motion, Duane Scott second and carried to go into executive session to get legal report and discuss State Grange issues at 10:09 a.m. ET.

Motion by Phil Prelli, second by Lynette Schaeffer and carried to get out of executive session at 1:05 p.m.

Motion by Phil Prelli, second by Steve Coye, and carried to authorize National Master to contract with an engineer to oversee installation and completion of the chiller and heating project.

Motion by Phil Prelli, second by Steve Coye to establish a policy to allow the Master to borrow up to \$25,000 from a single lender, between regularly scheduled board meetings, without prior Board approval, to be repaid within a year. Carried with one abstention.

Discussion about the Digest Review committee that was created two years ago with Leroy Watson as chair. They will hold a meeting prior to convention.

Discussion about Building Capital Improvement plan. The Board needs to compile a prioritized listing of major repairs that need to be completed in the building. Suggestions included windows, LED lighting, upgrade bathrooms, roof anchors, other items that Mujo would identify. Steve Coye mentioned at the New York State Grange Building was able to update lighting for much less because of power company rebates. Betsy Huber will check with the power company for such rebates.

Discussion on staff's work on their strategic plan, and possibility of developing a strategic plan for Board. Leroy Watson made a proposal that the Mission Statement be reviewed and possibly updated.

Confirmed email vote on borrowing \$35,000 to be paid back within six months from the Convention Assessment fund by motion of Duane Scott and second of Steve Coye. Carried.

Discussion about possibly making monthly payments to reimbursement the Assessment fund.

California State Grange has started action to recover funds that Guild misappropriated.

Betsy mentioned the cooling tower issues. She has gotten bids on three parts of the tower maintenance, two parts need to be repaired as soon as possible, the third can wait until winter and is estimated at \$12,000. This will need to be added to budget in the fall.

Several Grange building tenants are concerned about the cooling issues, discussion was held about compensation to the tenants. Betsy is authorized to use her discretion as to proper handling of the issue.

The rest of the director reports were reviewed and discussed.

Next meeting will be August 20, 9 a.m. ET to August 21, 3 p.m. ET, here at National Grange Headquarters.

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m. by motion of Phil Prelli, second by Duane Scott and carried.

July 10, 2018

Zoom Meeting

Submitted by Lynette Schaeffer, National Grange Executive Committee Secretary

In attendance National Grange Master Betsy Huber, Overseer Phil Prelli, Executive Committee Chair Leroy Watson, Secretary Lynette Schaeffer, Members Duane Scott and Steve Coye.

Meeting called to order by Chair Leroy at 8:11 pm CT.

Chairman Leroy led the group in prayer.

Phil Prelli made motion to go into Execution Session on financial matters at 8:12 p.m. CT. Duane Scott second the motion and carried.

Motion by Phil Prelli, second by Steve Coye to go out of executive session at 9:47 p.m. CT. Motion carried.

Motion to authorize National Grange Master to pursue with Eagle Bank the process to borrow an additional \$1 million was made by Phil Prelli, second by Steve Coye and carried.

Motion by Phil Prelli, second by Steve Coye to increase the authority of the National Grange Master to negotiate with State Granges on loans to National Grange to cover cash flow expenditures, including the chiller, to \$200,000. Carried with one abstention.

Motion by Lynette Schaeffer, second by Duane Scott to approve the appeal letter drafted by Betsy, adding the signature of Leroy Watson for the whole board. Carried.

Leroy Watson made motion, second by Phil Prelli to freeze budgeted expenditures to the budgeted amount unless National Grange Executive Committee approves. Tie vote, no majority. Motion lost.

Next meeting August 20, 2018 9 a.m. ET at National Grange headquarters through August 21 at 4 p.m. ET.

Adjournment motion made by Duane and second by Lynette at 10:13 pm CT. Motion carried.

August 20-21, 2018

National Grange Headquarters Building

Washington D.C.

*Submitted by Lynette Schaeffer, National Grange Executive Committee Secretary
and Duane Scott, Secretary Pro Tem*

National Grange Executive Committee met at the National Grange Headquarters, August 20, 2018. In attendance Leroy Watson, Chair, Lynette Schaeffer, Secretary, Betsy Huber, Master, Phil Prelli, Overseer, Duane Scott and Steve Coye, Members.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Leroy Watson at 9:12 a.m. ET.

Phil led the prayer for the deliberations.

The proposed agenda was accepted.

Stephanie Wilkins, IT Director, presented her report. The office workstations are using Office 2010. She is checking into purchasing laptops with docking stations and updating Office product. The software update would be about \$60 each user a year, \$480 each year. The laptops would be about \$1,000 each device. There was a discussion about using Microsoft SharePoint for the 2018 National Session for those interested in being in the pilot program for a paperless session. Discussion about the committee laptops which are old and outdated, unable to be updated.

Chris Hamp, Lecturer, presented her report, via phone. Discussion of the National Weather Service initiative. She believes that possibly the State Masters could hand pick people to help promote this program. Possibly a contest or competition between states, this could be a membership tool. Maybe partnering with FFA groups. The discussion of the \$100 per Evening of Excellence contestant. She is wanting an accountability of the Lecturer Fund from Foundation or National Grange General Fund. Betsy will talk to Stewart about this. Chris is concerned about the money collection at the National Session; raffle money, Mercantile, etc. Betsy will check to see if there is a branch of the bank National Grange uses local to Stowe. Discussion about credit card reader for use at the session.

Samantha Wilkins, Junior Grange Director, presented her report via phone. One thing she is considering for next year is a program on Dairy Awareness. There is an increase in interest in the Ambassador program this year. She is considering changes to encourage participation by all states. Discussion about 1+ program promotion.

Loretta Washington, Sales, Benefits, and Programs Director, presented her report. She has been working a possible new benefit of freight or shipping. There was discussion as to if trademark licensees could you use this as well. She is also working on computer purchases at a discount. She obtained from American Senior Benefits a sponsorship for a meal at National Session. Discussion about the possible benefits for e-members. Discussion about Distinguished Grange. Loretta is working on possible "Grange in Action" – a one-page competition form, it would be open to all Granges that do not compete in Distinguished Grange competition. Loretta was asked to have a listing of benefits that could be offered to e-members for the National Session.

Amanda Brozana-Rios, Communication Director, presented her report. Discussion of the Good Day!™ magazine. She asked if the Good Day! magazine is ended what should her department priorities be.

Burton Eller, Legislative Director, presented his report. Discussion about Grange Advocacy. Discussion on Health Care, Farm Bill, Broadband, WOTUS and the Opioid crisis.

Recess was called for lunch.

Stephanie Tiller, Convention/Operations Director, presented her report for conventions. The delegate packets are done, and registrations are going well for the 2018 convention in Stowe, VT. The committee rooms will be converted sleeping rooms. The Friendship Dinner is now being sponsored in part by American Senior Benefits. The issue she is dealing with now is getting the delegates to the resort from the airport. 2019 Session Midwest Region hosting in Minnesota- States making progress and seems to be going smooth. 2020 Session Eastern Region, Pennsylvania. 2021 Great Plains Region, Kansas. 2022 Western Region – had sheets of information for discussion. She was asked to check into Arizona as well. 2019 Master's Conference will be in Kansas.

Stephanie presented her Building report. Discussion about the tenants and the chiller issues, tenants arrears for rent, and the 8th floor still open.

Betsy reviewed the written report from Youth and Young Adult Director, Charlene M. Shupp Espenshade. Charlene is considering possible programs to stress the opioid epidemic. Considering some youth exchange programs and managing travel for youth attending events.

Stewart Hughes, Controller, presented his report. He discussed the States behind in dues, and who owe the National Session assessment. He expressed an interest in creating a capital improvement building fund. Discussion about Good Day! magazine and subscribership. Discussion about building/tenant issues and possible rent adjustments for the lack of air conditioning this summer. Recommendation to authorize Betsy and Stewart to manage the building rental and allowances. Discussion about back dues payments to National for the CA Granges that are returning to the State Grange. Might need discussion with Ed Kowski, Master of the California State Grange and Betsy, maybe add executive committees.

Motion by Phil Prelli, second by Duane Scott, to approve the minutes of the in person May meeting as distributed via email. Carried. Motion by Betsy, second by Steve, to approve the minutes of the Zoom meeting as distributed by email. Carried.

Motion by Phil Prelli, second by Duane Scott, to go into executive session to discuss legal, personnel and building matters. Carried at 4:30 p.m.

Motion by Duane Scott, second by Steve Coye to come out of Executive Session at 7:18 p.m.

Leroy called recess until 9 a.m. ET August 21.

Chair Leroy called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. ET August 21.

All members were in attendance.

Steve gave the prayer for the deliberations that day.

Betsy was asked to have attorneys create a Trademark report ready before convention. There are some new groups trying to use the Grange name. Trademark intern Nelson Drake will be finishing his term soon and Mr. Bikoff is interviewing replacements.

Phil Prelli made motion to go into executive session for Grange issues, potential legal issues, and financial and loan discussion, Steve Coye second and carried at 9:12 a.m. ET.

Phil Prelli made a motion to come out of executive session, second by Betsy Huber and carried at 11:10 a.m. ET.

Phil Prelli made a motion to secure a loan from Eagle Bank for additional \$1 million added to the current loan amount, amortized for 15 years under current terms presented. Steve Coye second.

Amendment to the motion by Leroy Watson, second by Duane Scott to add "net proceeds of the additional \$1 million loan from Eagle Bank will only be used for debt consolidation or past due legal expenses and maintenance and repair of operations of Grange building."

Chair Leroy Watson asked for roll call vote for the amendment. Duane Scott- aye, Phil Prelli- nay, Betsy Huber – aye, Steve Coye– aye, Lynette Schaeffer– aye and Leroy Watson– aye. Amendment passed.

Chair Leroy Watson asked for roll call vote on the entire motion, Duane Scott - aye, Phil Prelli – aye, Betsy Huber – aye, Steve Coye – aye, Lynette Schaeffer – aye, Leroy Watson – aye. Motion adopted as amended.

Motion made by Phil Prelli to have National Master to check into getting a full engineering assessment of the National Grange Building, second by Duane Scott.

Amendment by Leroy Watson, second by Steve Coye to ask for the report to be to the Executive Committee on October 30 and carried. The motion was adopted as amended.

Master Huber mentioned a service that Samantha Wilkins found to do background checks, Safe Gatherings. Discussion on cost, training and different services. Steve mentioned the service that New York uses.

Motion by Phil Prelli to table the decision until all possible groups and possibilities could be researched, second by Lynette Schaeffer and adopted.

Discussion about the next budget, including wanting information prior to next meeting. Each department is requested to let Executive Committee know of any new programs so they can be considered in the budget.

Phil Prelli made a motion to authorize the National Master to consult with attorneys regarding September 12. Second by Steve Coye and carried.

Next in person meeting will be November 11-12, 2018 in Stowe, VT, by motion of Phil Prelli and second of Betsy Huber. Carried.

Recess at noon for lunch and Grange Advocacy meeting.

Lynette Schaeffer exited the meeting to catch her flight. She turned secretary duties over to Duane Scott who served as Secretary Pro Tem for the remainder of this meeting's minutes.

Reconvened at 2:25 p.m. ET

Discussion on Lecturer Chris Hamp's question on what to do with the cash and checks received at convention for the Lecturer's fund raisers and mercantile sales. Betsy Huber will advise Chris Hamp of a procedure.

Phil Prelli moved to adjourn, 2nd by Steve Coye.

Adjourned at 2:40pm.

October 8, 2018

Zoom Meeting

Submitted by Lynette Schaeffer, National Grange Executive Committee Secretary

Meeting was called to order by Chair Leroy Watson at 7 p.m. CT.

On call --Betsy Huber, Leroy Watson, Phil Prelli, Steve Coye, Duane Scott, Lynette Schaeffer and attorneys Jim Bikoff and Jeff Skinner.

Chair Leroy asked Phil to lead the prayer.

Steve made a motion to go into executive session to discuss legal issues, Phil seconded the motion. Carried at 7:04 p.m. CT.

Motion by Phil, second by Betsy to go out of Executive Session. Carried at 8:34 pm.

Motion by Betsy, second by Steve to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters, carried at 8:35 p.m.

Motion made by Phil, second by Duane to come out of executive session. Carried at 9 p.m.

Stewart Hughes has been out of the office for two weeks because of a death in the family, so hopefully all the financial information will be ready for session.

Lynette Schaeffer made a motion that National Grange offer Joe Stefenoni a contract membership position, with the monies being taken from budget line item Master's expense, starting October 15 and continuing to the end of the calendar year, and that previous money spent on membership efforts in South Carolina and Florida also come from the Master's expense budget line item, second by Phil Prelli and carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m. CT by motion of Steve Coye and second by Betsy Huber. Carried.

NATIONAL GRANGE HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

Prepared by Stephanie Tiller, Convention/Operations Director

Below is a summary of the status of all leases in the National Grange Building. New information is bolded. The building is currently at 90% occupancy as of Nov. 1, 2018. Chiller and Boiler project details will be made available from Betsy Huber. The National Grange has collected \$21,213 in donations from across the country from individuals and Granges for the Building Fund.

Location	Company	
Basement	Capital Coin & Stamp Co.	Tenant's current rent is \$2,700.00 . Term will end on March 31, 2018. Tenant has two more years on this lease at a 3% annual increase.
Suite 105	Space is listed for \$2,500 monthly; \$30,000 annual	Space is currently vacant. I have shown to several people but no lease yet.
Suite 106	Dr. Beth Dzaman Dr. Dori Dr. Arlene Levinson Dr. Kasaan Holmes	Tenant's current rent is \$1,728.92 and lease will expire on January 31, 2019.
Suite 200	Joel Weingarten, Esquire	Tenant's current rent is \$1,711.27 and lease will expire on July 31, 2019.
Suite 201	Net Limousine (Tamer)	Tenant's current rent is \$1,129.34 . 3% annual increase and will expire on November 30, 2020.
Suite 202	Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau (Vicky)	Tenant will not renew lease when it expires at end of December 2018. Suite must be painted and carpet shampooed. Awaiting proposal from contractor. Rent for new tenant will be \$3,500.
Suite 204	Van Smith Company – formerly - The Right Stuff/Solutions Team	Tenant's current rent is \$1,595.86 . 4% annual increase and expires April 2019. This tenant has changed their name to Van Smith Company. I have updated the directory in lobby and informed accounting that their future rent checks will reflect new company name.
2 nd Floor	White House Historical Assn.	Tenant's current rent is \$1,800.00 . 2% annual increase and will expire on September 30, 2022.
3 rd Floor	Capital Photography	Tenant's current rent is \$825.00 . Lease expires October 31, 2018.
Suite 300	Programmatics, Inc. (Joan and Jessie)	Joan Smith will move out of building when lease expires end of February. New tenant 5 Stones Intelligence, Inc. will take this space and expand their offices next door. Monthly rent will be \$1,000.00 .
Suite 301	Burton Rands Associates, LLC	Tenant's current rent is \$197.17 . 3% annual increase and will expire on May 31, 2019.
Suite 302	5 Stones Intelligence, Inc.	New Tenant - Current rent is \$3,300.00. 5% annual increase and will expire on August 31, 2019.
Suite 303	Maharashi Foundation	Tenant's current rent is \$4,206.05. Lease started May 1, 2018 and will end on April 30, 2021. 3% annual increase.
Suite 400	White House Historical Assn.	Tenant's current rent is \$11,000.00 . 2% annual increase and will expire on September 30, 2022.
5 th Floor	M Powered Strategies	Tenant's current rent is \$11,331.73 with an annual increase of 2%. Tenant signed a new 5-year lease, which will expire on April 30, 2023
6 th Floor	Redbrick Partners	Tenant will vacate space by end of January 2019. Space will need some touch up work. Broker is already showing space to secure a new tenant. Proposed rent for new tenant will be \$12,500 monthly.
7 th Floor	American Horse Council	Tenant's current rent is \$10,697.20 . 2% annual increase and lease expires July 31, 2022.

Suite 800	Consultants International	Tenant vacated space at the end of October. New tenant (LFA Holdings, Inc. will move in December 1, 2018 and is in process of signing 2-year lease. Rent will be \$2,700.00 monthly with a 4% annual increase. Suite must be renovated with new paint and new carpet. Awaiting proposal from contractor.
Suite 820	Generation	New Tenant's current rent is \$8,055. 5% annual increase and lease expires September 30, 2019.
Suite 900/901	EarthSpark International	Tenant's current rent is \$6,532.75 . 3% annual increase and lease expires April 30, 2020.
Suite 902	RetireSafe	Tenant's current rent is \$1,585.45. 5% annual increase and lease expires July 31, 2019.
Suite 903	Spark Meter	Tenant's current rent is \$2,695.65 . Lease will end on April 30, 2019.
Suite 1020	EMX	Current rent is \$1,858.12 Lease will end on May 31, 2019.
10 th Floor	Redbrick	Tenant is in process of vacating space. Broker is showing to potential new tenants. Proposed rent for new tenant will be \$4,500 monthly.
Suite 1010 & 1030	M Powered Strategies	Tenant's current rent is \$4,584.55 with an annual increase of 2%. Tenant signed a new 5-year lease, which will expire on April 30, 2023
11 th Floor	National Grange	

COMMUNICATIONS & DEVELOPMENT

Prepared by Amanda Leigh Brozana Rios, Communications & Development Director

Brothers and Sisters,

Another year is nearly behind us and from this department this is a report filled with competing feelings of stagnation and anticipation; worry and hope. So many things impact the way in which "business is done" by communications professionals, not the least of which is that reputation, brand management and news are all 24/7 jobs that are constantly evolving.

This past year, it was nearly impossible to take on tasks beyond the day-to-day urgent duties. The successful gala, release of three quality issues of Good Day!™ with one more to come by the close of the year, our monthly Patron's Chain e-newsletters with a variety of information from across Grange departments and the overwhelming amount of necessary day-to-day tasks are all things to be proud to have accomplished. Yet, so much more needs to be done to ensure we are not just surviving but thriving so that we attract new members and ignite flames that will push us far into our future.

In previous years we have successfully recruited a few amazing paid or unpaid interns who have allowed for breathing room. While they focused on specific tasks, time was freed for the director to advance the work of the department and catch up with important projects or new initiatives. This year the lack of such useful bodies and minds truly did hurt the progress. While some may see the year as being a success – the base work was complete, the job was "done," I can only see the places where we must do more.

One bright spot is in the introduction of the new Grange PSA program, "Grange Values." The ads, designed in-house, focus on issues of importance to Grange, allowing our members to help educate their communities with a product of our own, not from some other source. This ownership should be a source of pride for the organization but should also allow those outside our membership to learn about our values – what is important and what we take action on. At this point we have released one full page ad and one-half page ad for print or electronic distribution. I hope to record a few radio PSAs in 2019 and if we are able to secure an intern with good video editing skills, at least one 30 second video PSA for use on the web or in digital form (at fairs, booth events, etc.) on a topic of interest to the Grange in conjunction with the several other departments and the National Lecturer.

This is where hope comes in and anticipation. The reintroduction of Joe Stefenoni to the team in the membership director role and great collaborative efforts among the Junior and Youth department as well as partnerships established by the Legislative Department that include some outside assistance with our social outreach and press and statement writing are all positive moves.

Membership Assistance & Expanding our Knowledge Base

For much of the year, prior to the return of Stefenoni in October, I was also very proud to help the Grange in our membership efforts, visiting South Carolina and Florida, Maryland, New York and Connecticut, and working with the National Master to co-host monthly Membership Matters Zoom meetings. This work was highly enjoyable because I got to speak to prospective members and thought leaders in communities about the Grange and share with them why the Grange is so relevant today when our nation is so divided and our politics so partisan.

Additionally, I was able to add to our knowledge base and our toolkit concepts coming from researchers like Sarah Sladek, who writes much about generational differences and membership expectations of the Xs, Ys, and Zs, or post-millennials, and

Everett Rogers. Rogers is the foremost expert and pioneer in research related to the communications theory known as diffusion of innovation, which he developed after watching how ideas of social change spread through rural social systems way back in the 1950s when Grange was one of those network hubs of innovation and disseminators of ideas and motion. In addition, I looked at the intersection of communications, membership and programs through a new lens, and began reading work on systems change, influence, charisma, small group management and disfunctions, business theories, gamification, volunteer management and visual messaging. As I approached the work, I was also able to fall back on ideas from one of the pioneers in research on the decline of civil society and organizations like ours, Robert Putnam, whose adapted dissertation, *Bowling Alone*, many of us read in 2016, which inspired the Do-ers campaign.

150th National Grange Birthday Gala

December 4, 2017 was the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the Grange and our birthday gala event in Washington, D.C., celebrating the milestone was a great success. With more than 150 people in attendance over the course of the evening, the presentation of our inaugural class of Champions of Rural America and wonderful live and silent auctions as part of the reception and dinner, it was truly an evening to remember.

We raised pride among our membership related to the anniversary and many local Granges or States held their own birthday celebrations to mark the occasion. But more importantly, we used the evening to raise money for the National Grange primarily and a bit for our nonprofit affiliate, Grange Foundation. We also raised awareness of our long, unblemished history with executives, regulators, legislators and other thought leaders, as well as the press.

The event netted more than \$50,000 for National Grange and another more than \$8,000 for Grange Foundation. Overall it was a success that served as a climactic point for the multi-year celebration.

Good Day!™ magazine

This year we released a double issue in late January (it served as the last issue for 2017 and first issue for 2018) as well as a summer and fall issue in May and late-August respectively. Directly after convention the bulk of the last issue for 2018 will be written, placed and edited with final content coming at the close of the Grange Advocacy reception on December 4.

In 2019, our first issue will begin to be received by subscribers by March 1 and will focus on things important for Grange Month. The next issue will cover the spring Fly-In and look forward into summer. We anticipate an issue before most State conventions occur in September and again at the close of 2019, subscribers will receive a national convention-related issue.

Our subscriber numbers still do not reflect the original estimate of at least one subscriber per community Grange plus additional subscriptions by State Leaders (total 2,000 anticipated subscribers by end of 2017; same estimate for end of 2018), as we currently have 1,250 member subscriptions (paid); 77 unpaid, and seven paid non-member subscriptions. Most subscribers renewed for a second year or further, but some have not until they realized they had missed an issue. I am looking into ways that can be both easy and cost effective to remind people that it is their time to renew.

Many thanks to the State Granges that have provided funds to cover subscriptions for each of their Subordinate Granges to receive Good Day!™ (Virginia and California) and for the State Grange who purchased subscriptions for all FFA chapters in their state (New Hampshire). We hope other State Granges will consider such an effort to both promote the Grange and the magazine.

We still have an issue that the leaders of our State Granges and a few at the National level are not buying in. I believe it is important that State Masters stress to every appointed and elected leader of their State Grange the usefulness of this publication. The following information is based on data from August, but it remains nearly unchanged to date.

NON-SUBSCRIBER BREAKDOWN: # not subscribed/total (% Subscribed)

National Officers (including Assembly) - 3/20 (85%)

State Masters (or deputy, ex. AK, NV) - 9/38 (76.3%)

All other State Grange Leaders (per categories included in the annual National Roster; not counting duplicate office holders/couples, deceased individuals we are aware of or vacant offices) - 187/337 (44.5%)

Past National Presidents - 0/3 (0%)

We continue to have a real issue with subscribers not receiving their magazine, a problem we have tracked since the beginning in multiple ways and have determined it is most likely an issue with the mail system. The current classification designated for our magazine is the cheapest possible, but as such, magazines can sit in USPS branches for weeks and after a certain time be discarded rather than delivered. It is part of my budget proposal that we take on additional cost to send our magazines at a higher class, greatly increasing the likelihood that subscribers receive the product they've paid for and we are not frequently sending a second copy to replace their issue that was not delivered. Overall, the cost should balance and we should have a much happier subscriber base.

If you know of anyone who has subscribed and complains that they have not received a copy or several copies, please tell them to immediately contact National Grange IT Director and Magazine Subscription Manager Stephanie Wilkins who can determine if their address is correct, if they are subscribed and paid before the cut-off date for that issue, and if so, compile their information into a full report that can be given to our mail house for further review. Unhappy customers don't return and we cannot build a solid subscriber base for a publication with unhappy customers.

Just like getting new members, getting new subscribers relies heavily on local Granges doing their part to promote the Grange and this tool that connects us as a family. There are many people who I've encountered over this past year who had never heard of the publication, which means many leaders are not passing on information to their members.

Please help promote Good Day!™ before it's too late. Members, especially some of our older, most committed individuals who we want to honor for their lifetime of service and membership and those who live outside the world of broadband internet, will lose a great opportunity to connect to their Grange without this resource available.

2018 Communication Fellows

The Fellows program continues to attract interest and support (\$1,500 from the California State Grange, \$2,000 from TracFone and \$5,000 from Connect Americans Now this year.) We have a total of 5 new fellows, a Senior Fellow, and a returning Fellows Program Assistant as well as a Guest Fellow this year. While it is still primarily a training program focused on bringing knowledge and skills to members that will help them promote the Grange in their communities and states, there is a great leadership component. Coupled with assistance from the various departments, the fellows learn a lot about programming, membership, youth and Junior engagement and much more. There are still a few states who have not had fellows over the six years of the program and I welcome those states to encourage members interested to apply in 2019.

Strategic Plan 2018-19

In December 2017, the staff met and created a Strategic Plan document that looked specifically at how our National Grange functions to serve the Order, our goals for the two-year period and the ways in which we are accountable in relation to those goals. In May, we met again along with Kendall Lott, President of MPowered Strategies, a company that is headquartered at the National Grange building and works on planning and success for organizations and groups. Lott led our team through discussion and assessment of our work thus far, and helped us focus and pare down to what is feasible given our limited staffing, resources and buy in from key decision makers.

Since we put the strategic plan in place, I have been using it to report to the board the progress of my department relative to the goals set, something I have found useful when prioritizing my work and assessing our capabilities before committing to further projects. The Strategic Plan is attached as Appendix A, and I will reference it throughout the next section of my report where I discuss progress toward goals. Communications is tasked with part of all of the following goals and objectives. There are others on the full Strategic Plan that do not include communications and as such have not been included in this report.

GOAL 1: Execute Core Functions of National Office/Staff Effectively

Objective 1: (Be positive, informative liaisons to members, improving their view of the National Office/organization)

- In June, with much thanks to the Grange and National Master Betsy Huber for permitting this arrangement, I was able to move from the D.C. area to Shippensburg, PA, and work from home all but a few days of the month. Because of that move, the calls that come to my office extension, therefore, are transferred to my personal cell phone, and I have worked hard to make sure all calls are answered or a response is made quickly.
- I have attended several local/regional Grange events and assisted with projects, programs and presentations as requested. Huber and I attended Farm Aid in September in Connecticut as well as two events in Maryland and I have been included on calls with several partner groups. Junior Director Samantha Wilkins and I also represented the Grange to National Ag in the Classroom's leadership team in October and discussed a partnership for Junior Grange related to the new Passport program.
- Throughout the year, I have assisted local members and State Granges by creating designs and ordering Grange promotional items from VistaPrint, offering press release assistance and media contact lists/information, and more.
- I have also reached out to many state department heads to open a dialog about what they need from communications to be successful and what products or services I may be able to put into a long-range plan for the department to offer better service.

Objective 2: (Education - Provide members with information about organization and policy initiatives)

- I drafted an op-ed related to the opioid epidemic and farmed it out to several individuals across different States to personalize and pitch to key media outlets. One was picked up in Michigan and a few other are still in the works. I also hope to adapt this and create another by the end of 2018 that can be placed in additional outlets.
- I created the poster boards for the 2018 Fly-In.
- I offered a presentation at the 2018 Masters Conference on Grange Health and also worked with members in attendance to discuss some publicity initiatives throughout 2018.
- I helped with planning and created several presentations for the March 16-18 Mid-Atlantic Regional Leaders Conference.
- Members are provided information from a variety of sources, departments and officers, as part of the monthly e-newsletter and Good Day!™ magazine. I attended a free social media training in March to increase our digital footprint and effectiveness of social outreach and have begun implementing some of what I learned at that training. While much of this training focused on getting those "inside the Beltway" to hear our message and understand our policy initiatives, I was able to adapt some of that knowledge for our more member-centric social media.

- I have created several social media posts to promote op-eds written by our staff/officers/state leaders about Grange initiatives or concerns to help our members understand our advocacy and stance on issues. I have continued to include features in our newsletter and magazine about issues in a way that explains our position to members and allows them to understand their potential role in our advocacy.
- I have solicited information from all departments and select officers (Master, Lecturer, High Priest) to include in all monthly e-newsletters and in Good Day!™ magazine. I have provided documents and photos to the IT Department for use on the website regularly as well as major policy documents such as the 2018 Digest of Laws.

Objective 3: (Produce highly satisfactory national events)

- I have worked with the rest of the staff to prepare for the 152nd Annual National Grange Convention and prepared our fellows to assist in a variety of ways that will be useful to delegates and other attendees. I have also attended several conference calls of this and the 2019 region to ensure that we are all “on the same page” for the event.
- Victor and I were pleased to host the Youth Team and Youth Director during the Ag Day celebration (a cost savings to the Grange as they were able to stay at our house outside DC at the time). That previous week/weekend we also hosted the National Lecturer and National Junior Director. During this time, we were able to brainstorm and I was able to provide mentorship to the team. I also learned of their intended activities and outreach and was able to coordinate so we covered internally and externally their work on the Hill and interaction with other ag-oriented folks.
- Grange Month, as noted above, was used by the department to educate our members and others about the Grange. It was also a time to discuss with some state leaders their “view” on Grange Month – is it important to continue; are themes important and/or relevant; how can we use it better to our advantage, locally, on a state level and nationally; etc. I have prepared a short document (internal and working) of notes and hope to work with the National Master to set a time for a Grange Month discussion with the Staff so we can pre-plan for coming years. Part of this document includes ideas like: sending a reminder email to partners that Grange Month is coming with some suggested social tweets/posts congratulating the Grange or thanking the Grange for our shared work on issues; transitioning from a Grange Month theme to an annual theme; and more.
- The National Fly-In was very successful and helped us not only with our own advocacy but also solidify a relationship we have been cultivating with Farm Aid since last summer. At the event, we live-streamed many speakers, and posted often about the activities related to the event. I discussed the need for members to post about their activities to their own social media and to reach out to their local press about their advocacy efforts and I worked in small part with Burton to get our Junior members coverage on RFD TV (use of footage still unknown). I was able to create and follow up with a contact at RFD TV and hope to use that connection for future opportunities.

Objective 4: (Staff will become aware of the financial impacts of everything they do and will be prepared to provide income and expense information as necessary.)

- See details about the Gala, which raised about \$50,000 for National Grange and about \$8,000 for Grange Foundation above.
- I have reviewed the costs for Good Day!™ magazine and have worked hard to reduce cost for printing while maintaining the same quality of the publication that subscribers have come to expect. I have looked into ways to increase revenue through ad sales but with a severe lack of time/staffing and very low subscriber numbers, attracting advertisers has been very hard. As far as increased subscriptions, we must have “cheerleaders” for the product in the field – National Officers, State Masters, State Directors, etc. – so that we can meet a break-even point soon.
- For the second and third issue of 2018, I reduced the number of pages to 80-content pages plus cover. The most recent issue of Good Day!™ was made on a 96-page signature plus cover, more cost effective than an 88-page or 92-page design.
- In relation to Good Day!™, we have also discussed the cost-benefit of hiring a designer to complete part of the magazine, a move that would likely cost about \$1,200 per issue but would allow me to focus time on other projects. This is something to consider moving forward but in our current financial climate and low subscription numbers, it was decided this may not be a good use of our resources.
- I have reduced the number of ticketed meal functions Fellows will attend and pulled back on a few training materials. I have also found other ways to reduce cost for the program including stocking the townhouse with food to reduce the number of meals they have to be served.
- I have discussed with Jen Wolff our annual convention program and how we can make it most cost effective including other printer options. We have identified an online print on demand service that will bring our cost to roughly 60% lower than previous cost and up to 50% less next year because we will be able to avoid a shipping fee as well.
- The 2017 JOP job was given to the printer in Pennsylvania who handles our magazine. Their cost for the publication – that was also reformatted into an 8.5” x 11” document – was significantly less than that of other printers we have used or gotten quotes from, coming in at about 40% less than the price of previous years’ JOPs.
- Like many of my colleagues, I will be driving to Stowe for convention and am able to transport Membership Director Joe Stefenoni as well. The cost by mile versus the cost to fly two staff members is much less and allows me to bring materials that otherwise may be shipped.

GOAL 3: Increase Brand Awareness (PR)

Objective 1: (Ensure members are on “same page” understanding mission and policy)

- During Grange Month, I created “identity posts” for each day of April. These posts, uploaded to our Facebook, were well-received and shared widely. They helped our members be mindful of what the Grange is and stands for through quotes from our manual, our founding documents, and by some life-long members who have held positions of great esteem. By sharing these, our members also helped to educate their social media followers about the core principles and beautiful language we sometimes take for granted in our Grange texts. A dozen of these best received photo/quote posts have been used on a 2019 calendar which is being sold to raise funds for the Communications intern program.
- I worked with the Youth department to brainstorm and prepare for their social media campaign and the Junior department on some social outreach as well.
- I created a 130th Anniversary logo for Junior Grange along with some brand identity pieces celebrating this milestone.

Objective 2: (Continue frequent releases and posts on issues)

- Working with the assistance of partner groups, we have greatly increased our visibility especially in relation to our rural broadband expansion platform and interest in telehealth.
- We have had more than 50 press releases or statements put out throughout 2018 on a variety of issues but mostly about pharmaceuticals and broadband. We have also posted about policy issues on Twitter and Facebook and used related visual images on these posts to help drive engagement.
- In partnership with Connect Americans Now, we also have boosted our social posts and worked to collect signatures of individuals interested in eliminating the digital divide. Contact for these nearly 1,000 people was shared with our Membership Director and we have sent a targeted email welcoming them to check out the Grange. We are working on plans to engage them in the coming months to see if there are potential membership opportunities with any of these folks who share one of our common legislative interests.

Objective 3: (Attend/hold events of related organizations to remind them of the Grange and our membership/outreach)

- National Grange was again part of Farm Aid, this year in Hartford, Connecticut, where we had a booth. Several members of the CT State Grange as well as Junior members from CT, myself and National Master Huber were all in attendance, working at the youth market and hosting a booth at which we introduced Grange and discussed our efforts to help eliminate the digital divide as well as what broadband technology can bring to farmers. This was a successful event that helped us capture some names of people interested in membership and raise brand awareness. It also gave our younger members an opportunity to interact with individuals interested in agriculture who may not know much about the Grange and gain confidence in their speaking, service and selling skills.

GOAL 4: Improved Membership Engagement at all Levels

Objective 1: (Increase electronic access capability)

- By request, National Lecturer Christine Hamp collected emails of members and encouraged receipt of the monthly Patron’s Chain during the Washington State Grange convention. She provided those to Stephanie Wilkins to add to our database. Several other National Officers and State Masters/State Communications Directors were asked to assist with collection of email addresses.

Objective 2: (Increase distribution of Good Day!TM magazine)

- See above.

Objective 3: (Increase listenership to Grange Radio)

- Robert Charbonneau, the only contributor to Grange Radio who produces content exclusively for our station, has been promoting the station frequently in recent weeks at events like a town fair in New Hampshire and community Grange events in Connecticut.
- We have worked on adding content – this year we’ve added John Block’s 3-4-minute weekly “podcast” to the rotation and we have reached out to a few other content producers about running their materials on our station but have not yet had any additional luck, mainly due to the lack of listeners. See 2019 proposal notes on what I hope to add in the coming year to help with this objective.

Objective 4: (Increase “likes” to National Grange Facebook and “followers” to National Grange Twitter)

- We have seen a great increase in the number of likes (people who follow the news of) National Grange on our Facebook page. This is in great part to the two campaigns we have run with the Connect Americans Now coalition related to rural broadband and bridging the digital divide that encourages people to sign a petition showing their support of broadband expansion and in turn to like our page. Additionally, a video of a farmer discussing the need for broadband technology on farms has helped solidify the message and our engagement with this issue for those who otherwise do not see the connection.
 - To date (October 26, 2018) we have 2,727 people who like our National Grange Facebook page, up from 1,930 on May 7. This increase has not translated to our other pages, however. National Grange Youth has 743 likes (717 in May); 671 like Grange Radio; 637 like National Junior Grange; 490 like National Grange Lecturer; 407 like National Grange Chaplain; National Grange Community Service group has 592 members and various other pages have followers and likes; nearly all of those people who have already liked the National Grange Facebook page.

- To date (October 26, 2018) we have 963 Twitter followers (up from 826 in May) and we are following 979 (up from 935 in May). This may in part be because of the CAN initiative but also because our new contact at DCI has helped increase our tweet outreach (by use of tagging and retweeting others' tweets). Several "movers and shakers" have liked or retweeted our messages including FCC Commissioner Brendan Carr and others. We have also been successful in cross promotion of the Grange, Good Day!™ and our convention with partners through this medium.
- A plan is in place to use the Fellows to establish a social media management calendar for our Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest – social channels heavily used by the under 30 age group. We will assign a 2018 fellow to "coordinate" each of these platforms over the next year and work to pass that onto a new Fellow in 2019. The coordinator can recruit a team of volunteers or can choose to post regularly themselves. They will adhere to a code of conduct and guidance related to best practices and acceptable standards for content and distribution.

Objective 5: (Increase response rate to requests for information)

- We have encouraged in many ways – through notices to State Granges and reminders to newsletter editors to include information in their publications and other methods – Granges to interact with us and respond to surveys, requests for stories/anecdotes, etc. In fact, I believe that while it is important we do our best to make members and Granges feel part of the process and invite them to be responsive, it is necessary for our state leadership to serve in a liaison and connector role, encouraging Granges to see themselves as part of a much larger national organization and family. [see Proposals for 2019.]

Goal 5: Stabilize Membership

Objective 1: (Bring South Carolina State Grange Back to Active Status)

- See mention above

Objective 2: (Maintain an active Florida State Grange)

- See mention above

Objective 5: (Maintain contact with Alaska Granges. Seek opportunities to assist without travel)

- The mailing discussed above was sent to the Granges in Alaska, along with all other Granges in the country. I have also reached out to Brad Sworts related to his op-ed and we pushed that out in social media with some hope that those in Alaska who may see it would be interested in learning more about the Grange. I did not hear back directly from Brad throughout the year.

Objective 6: (Hold Monthly Zoom meetings with States)

- National Master Huber and I have conducted these each month with limited participation from states. We have set and publicized the next few topics and speakers. These have now been turned over to Membership Director Joe Stefenoni.

Objective 9: (Follow Connections made through Farm Aid to tap new communities)

- We have been in regular contact with Farm Aid organizers and staff of the organization to discuss other ways in which we can partner and have been part of the event in 2017 and 2018 and part of a panel discussion about Youth Markets and ag organizations led by Farm Aid in late October 2018.
- We have also spoken to an organic farmer in upstate New York on several occasions that hopefully will lead to a Grange or e-member program launched related to the NYC Greenmarket and its producers.

Objective 11: (Provide at least one new membership document "How To"/Plan per year)

- In discussions with State Masters, Membership Directors and Communication Directors, I came up with a list of potential documents or best practice packets that could be shared or may be useful. Working with the Membership Director I anticipate completing two "How to" kits that Granges can use to 1) welcome new members through social media and 2) recognize members for their milestone years of service through social media and pitches to news outlets.

GOAL 6: Create a Culture Supportive of Change/Revitalization

Objective 1: (Empower staff brainstorming)

- Throughout the year there were several opportunities for staff to brainstorm about projects or upcoming events. From these discussions came action plans to address issues such as Good Day!™ missing issues, increased subscriptions and renewals; the December 2018 Grange Advocacy Gala Reception that National Grange staff have been tasked with planning and executing; the 2019 Grange Month/Grange Year Theme; Distinguished Grange and other programming; and more.
- Staff have been encouraged to bring their ideas for new initiatives forward and the National Master has been welcoming of comments and questions.
- The board and staff met once for lunch during the August Board of Directors meeting and most directors met with the board one-on-one during that meeting to discuss initiatives, programs and projects, as well as ideas that would be included in the 2019 budget proposals from departments; however the Strategic Plan has not yet been discussed and no feedback given on our efforts outlined in the plan.

GOAL 7: Integrate All Levels of Membership

Objective 2: (Examine Logo and Messaging regarding Junior Grange)

- In 2018, an article placed in Good Day!™ examined the history of Junior Grange and it can be used to tell a more accurate and cohesive story about the organization and its relationship to other ag-youth oriented organizations like 4-H and FFA.
- Assisted with creation of several passports for Junior Grange that help to connect Juniors with the Grange as a whole through a lesson on the Grange's work related to Rural Free Delivery.
- The Red Sneakers logo is still confusing but held in high regard mainly out of tradition, not because it is cohesive in our brand or messaging. This is still something that should be addressed but ideas for what possible options have not been created.

Objective 4: (Study Pomona Grange purpose/effectiveness)

- *I hope to provide data for delegates to use for any future decisions through survey responses in 2019. See 2019 proposals section for more details re: Subordinate Phone Survey.*

Objective 5: (Educate members on value of involvement in State and National Grange activities)

- I have included more details in our magazine and newsletter about how involvement in things like National surveys and programs can build our brand and assist us in securing funding through partnerships that will help the organization as a whole.
- During convention, we are planning to get some testimonials about attending National Session and participating in competitions and other state, regional or national events to help with fulfilling this objective.

GOAL 8: Increase feedback and accountability from Officers and State Leadership

Objective 2: (Have at least monthly contact with each State Director/major officer with national counterpart)

- In early 2018, I advertised an interest in speaking to all State Communication and Membership Directors and any other members in those roles at their Subordinate level, to get a handle on what our staff can do to assist these members and provide them details about products/services we may already have available. Over the year, I spoke by phone to membership or communications directors or State Masters in more than half of the states as well as several Subordinate level members who are charged with membership or communications. From these conversations I noted a lot of apathy and a lack of information flowing down from State Masters and National Officers expected to assist in informing members within the Grange. Additionally, there were many concerns raised during the conversations that led me to request completing a leadership census at this year's national session and another proposed initiative of phone survey conducted with each and every Grange in 2019 that will be done in conjunction with the Membership Department. (See 2019 proposal section.)

Proposals for 2019

I would like to work with the National Master and IT Director to remove from our website the current members-only section that often creates headaches and provide to our members easier access to benefits information. All other Grange information should be accessible without a password, though we may have it under an open, unprotected, but designated members section.

As mentioned above, the National Grange staff (as well as elected leadership from across the nation) often work on assumptions about what Grange is like across the country. However, we know things differ from one region to another, and even within states. We cannot make accurate projections or decisions for the organization or provide best resources without a more complete picture of current conditions; therefore, a complete examination of the Grange today is necessary. For the past three years we have provided Granges with various survey tools, with low response and little success. After discussing this dilemma with National Master Huber and other Directors, I have proposed using Grange volunteers in 2019 to call every Subordinate Grange in the nation and conduct a phone survey that will reveal more about their membership, their attitudes, their structure and their connection with the organization as a whole. The answers to these surveys will be anonymous and Granges will be ensured "no one will be using this information against you" even if they are outside compliance. This is a necessary review of where we are today so we can use this information and knowledge to ensure that the Grange survives long into the future and any changes we make in our services and approach are appropriate and effective.

Again, I hope to put on the calendar for 2019 the complete overhaul of the Communications Handbook and to create a Reporter's Guide to the Grange. I am also committed to developing a few training tools for local members, as well as templates that local members can use for their Granges to communicate their importance and relevance in the community and the direct impact of their service. This should help bring a more skeptical, more literal generation into the fold by showing them just how much Community Granges do to be part of the social safety net for people in their hometowns.

I will be working with Grange Foundation to reach out to potential donors and members interested in supporting specific Grange programs, digitization of Grange history (such as charters, record books, founders' journals and drafts of original degree work, etc.) as well as a potential Grange Museum.

Additional 2019 Projects based on Strategic Plan

- I have talked to Membership Director Joe Stefenoni about creating for the Builder Kit or his proposed Grange Starter Kit some one-page documents about the officers; the ritual; the major points of history; the areas of influence and more that could be useful to new Granges and new members.
- I also plan to have several other "How to" publicity kits complete in 2019 prior to Grange Month, including a sample news release/pitch for a community dinner or other free or reduced price meal event held by a Grange as well as supplemental publicity tools to talk about Granges as community agents helping to ensure food security in their communities, and other sample releases for common types of programming/events Granges hold with context as to why this makes Granges part of the social safety net and important vessels within their community. These will tie in with the Grange Month/Year theme.
I would like to hold a "brand summit" when we close the chapter on the California and chiller situations to begin discussion on all things related to our visual image as well as our identity/brand. However, this is something that I believe is a long-term issue. Our short-term goal is to discuss how our grassroots structure allows differing of opinion on issues, and therefore how to message when differences occur. Also, I believe the average Granger doesn't know much about our policy or some of the logic behind why it was made. I want to work with National Master Betsy Huber and Legislative Director Burton Eller to discuss one-page talking sheets on each policy that can be downloaded and easily digested by our members. This is a great intern project I'd like to begin working on in early 2019.
- In order to increase our outreach, especially by speaking more about diverse issues the Grange has on its 10-point priority list, I would like to have a communications intern each semester that could help develop suggested posts/outreach to be approved by the legislative and communications directors, then make pretty/relevant with photos, graphics, links and hashtags, and schedule to post. This relates to the proposed communications budget for 2019, in which money has been allocated for an intern.
- We must look for new sources for songs and content to help increase listenership on Grange Radio and begin to create our own in-house content that helps to explain the Grange and give listeners an insight into our organizations. At this point, there are very few listeners and very little reason to listen to the station. We are not offering frequent programming that helps contextualize Grange and our song selection is small and dated. I have proposed to add a bit of money in the communications budget to offer a stipend to Bob Charbonneau of Connecticut to make radio-ready interviews and spots for the station on a frequent basis.

Conclusion

One thing I believe we all learned or came to realize while in discussion about our staff strategic plan was that without significant support and dedication from leaders at all levels of the Grange, there is little we can do as a staff to turn a corner. We are the assistants while our elected leaders at all levels are the driving force, masterminds, supervisors and skilled laborers. But if laborers fail to show up, supervisors fail to buy in and masterminds fail to plan, we are caught repeating a cycle, questioning the sanity and sustainability of the Order. This is not where we want to be.

In fact, we want to be celebrating with you the wins. We want to be lauding your efforts to change for the better the communities in which the Grange resides and bring more and more hometowns and individuals into our Grange family. We want to ensure the next generation has a Grange and the next and the next, because it's an integral part of our American fabric, and an essential piece of the safety net in place for our neighbors.

As will be mentioned over and over throughout this next year, Grangers are indeed heroes in our hometowns. From low-cost meals to free dictionaries, caps for premature babies to safe-havens for trick-or-treaters, nonpartisan forums for issues-based discussion to hubs for information on local and regional services, Granges and Grangers are and have always been heroic in their efforts to ensure a greater quality of life for their neighbors and help pave the path each of us walk in pursuit of the American dream. Remember that as the year moves forward and engage others with pride as you do the good work of the Grange.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Prepared by Pete Pompper, Community Service Director

Worthy National Master, Officers, Delegates and Patrons,

It is my pleasure to render my report for the year 2018. Granges throughout the country have been extremely busy this year reporting over 850,000 hours of community service work in their communities. This number only reflects the 427 Granges who reported those numbers to their respective State Granges. Not every State Grange sends in a community service report so these numbers are not a true reflection of the hard work and dedication of our members.

Over this past year I have started to use the term "community involvement" when I discuss what Granges are doing to improve their communities. This term also reflects the many ways our Granges are involved in their communities that might not be a true community service in the books on display this year.

Speaking of the community service books my hope is that each of you will take time and look through them. We need to be proud of what our Granges are doing and the diversity of programs/projects they have done this past year. I am encouraged by the number of new ideas Granges are doing in their communities. While they continue to do the projects they have in the past, Granges are also not afraid to try something new. This is important as we try to build our membership and I feel that our community service/involvement is becoming a more important aspect of membership growth—especially in the newer generations we are hoping to attract to our organization.

As we are aware we lost a generation of members for various reasons most of which we couldn't control. Now, from what I have been reading and actually talking to the new Generation Y or Z I forget which, they are wanting to get involved in their communities. They are the children or grandchildren of the lost generation. I have personally seen this in action in my community. When Hurricane Florence came through and flooded some communities along the Inter-coastal Waterway in Socastee the local high school students gathered at the school and filled sandbags for several days. There were also students going around the community helping individuals move furniture before the flooding overtook their homes. No one told them they had to but they saw a need and helped; they got involved. I cannot encourage Granges enough to look at what you are doing and talk to this generation, ask them "What are you looking for in an Organization?" As State Masters I hope you will take time this week and take a Youth member to lunch to pick their brain ask them what we can do to attract their peers. We will have so many wonderful youth with us throughout the week between the John Trimble Legislative, State Ambassadors and in conjunction with the NG Youth Department the two Youth Community Service awardees.

Those of you who follow the NG Community Service Facebook page see what our Granges are doing and hopefully you are taking some ideas and using them in your Granges. There are too many to list here but here is a sampling:

- Winthrop Grange (ME) recently hosted a free sewing class.
- Beach Grange (VA) Words for Thirds, hosted a Life Line Screening
- Orangevale Grange (CA) awarded a grant to start a community garden
- Bards Grange (NJ) goes to several nursing homes and plays bluegrass music to the residents
- Volunteer Grange and JG (TN) Wreaths across America
- IL State Grange donated 215 blankets to the Linus Project
- Five Mile Prairie Grange (WA) hosted a blood drive
- Virginville Grange (PA) hosted a Wife Appreciation Night (wonder what those husbands did)
- Wolcott Grange (CT) place a Little Free Library at their hall
- Crescent Grange (CO) had a Yoga in the Garden event
- Williamsport Grange (OH) presented Care Bags to the local Sheriff's Department

This Department along with the National Grange Junior Grange Department will be presenting some Junior Grange Community Service project awards this year for the first time. This is new for this year and is to recognize JG projects. We felt this was better than having a JG do a community service book. This is the first year so as we work out any issues I hope you will encourage your JGs to report next year.

I am happy to announce this year we will award monetary prizes for the National Community Service book winners. They will be 1st \$200, 2nd \$150, 3rd \$100, HM \$50. We (my brain trust and I) felt it was time to do this. This will not affect the budget for this Department as we try and be frugal with the funds provided.

I cannot thank Loretta Washington enough for her help throughout the year. We have several conversations about many topics as we bounce ideas off each other as we both can be brutally honest at times. Then I send her cookies from a company in DC and all is good.

CONVENTIONS & OPERATIONS

Prepared by Stephanie Tiller, Convention/Operations Director

Convention 2018- Stowe, Vermont (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, NY)

Dates: Nov. 13-17, 2018 Host Hotel: StoweFlake Resort & Spa in Stowe, VT

Convention 2019 – Midwest Region (OH, MI, IN, IL, IA, WI, MN)

Dates: November 8-17, 2019 Host Hotel: DoubleTree Bloomington/Minneapolis South
Contract has been signed and deposit sent.

Convention 2020 – Eastern Region (PA, NJ, WV, MD, DC, VA, DE, NC, TN, SC, FL)

Dates: November 6-15, 2020 Host Hotel: Valley Forge Resort & Casino, King of Prussia, PA (Philadelphia area)
Contract has been signed and deposit sent.

Convention 2021 – Great Plains Region (CO, KS, NE, OK, TX)

Dates: November 12-21, 2021 Host Hotel: Hyatt Regency, Wichita, KS
Contract for hotel and theater have been signed and theater deposit sent. Hotel required no deposit.

Convention 2022 – Western Region – (MT, WY, ID, WA, OR, CA, AK, NV)

Dates: 1st option: November 12-20, 2022; 2nd option: November 5-13, 2022

Convention 2023 – Northeast Region

Dates: 1st option: November 10-19, 2023; 2nd option: November 3-12, 2023

Highlighted states are my recommendation for me to pursue further. Connecticut hosted in 2008, New Hampshire in 2013 and Vermont in 2018. I will be heavily researching options for RI to host convention, however, I don't think there is one hotel that is large enough to house entire convention. RFP has been sent out and Rochester, Buffalo and Albany, NY have all submitted proposals. I have not received proposals from any other state as yet.

Convention 2024 – Midwest Region

Dates: 1st option: November 8-17, 2024; 2nd option: November 15-24, 2024

RFP will be circulated in next few months.

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

2019 Masters Conference – Will be held in Wichita, KS at the Holiday Inn. Hosted by KS and OK.

2020 Masters Conference – We have been invited by Maryland with assistance by Delaware and Pennsylvania

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Prepared by Stephanie Wilkins, IT Director

National Grange Online Membership Database

Membership Data/Collection – When phone calls are answered by the National Grange, member contact information is updated or confirmed in the database to ensure that we have the most up-to-date information. The same practice is done with emails, US mail, subscriptions, etc. In addition, the National Grange regularly assists states and local Granges with logging into the Online Membership Database to keep their information accurate.

The online database also maintains the GoodDay!™ magazine subscriptions, produces the mailing list for the mailhouse as well as alerts of upcoming renewals.

Ann Witherspoon unfortunately is no longer with Blue Tahiti. However, Blue Tahiti has assigned a two-person team to better meet the needs of the National Grange and make sure that the system is fully functional and user friendly. Multiple meetings have been held to discuss various ways in which to improve our current system as well as concerns submitted by the state and local Granges.

A spreadsheet was compiled and submitted to various state Granges for assistance in obtaining a deliverable mailing address for local Granges. This comes as a result of significant amount of mail that was returned for various reasons such as no mail receptacle, not deliverable as addressed, etc. We are awaiting responses from a few remaining states.

Quarterly Reporting – An email was sent to the President, Secretary and Treasurer of each state Grange with the necessary information for 2018 Quarterly Reporting. The email contained (1) Quarterly Report Instructions; (2) Quarterly Report Forms H & J; (3) Instructions for submitting quarterly report information online; and (4) an Excel spreadsheet for quarterly reporting by individual Granges. The Excel spreadsheet for each state was updated to reflect the removal of all closed/dormant Granges leaving a clean list of active Granges for reporting.

States are submitting quarterly reporting via online, email or U.S. mail. As of October 26, 2018, the following states have submitted quarterly reports for Quarters 1 thru 4. Quarterly reports provide a contrast (if any) between the membership report totals submitted to the National Grange and the actual total of members listed in the database. This helps to easily determine the accuracy of the total local Grange members or if updates are needed.

State	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	State	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	State	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
AK					MA	x	x			OK	x	x		
CA	x	x	x	x	MD	x	x			OR	x	x		
CO	x	x			ME	x	x			PA	x	x		
CT	x	x			MI	x	x			RI	x	x		
DC	x				MN	x	x			SC				
DE	x	x			MT	x	x	x	x	TN	x	x		
FL	x	x			NC	x	x			TX	x	x		
IA	x	x			NE	x	x	x		VA	x	x		
ID	x	x			NH	x	x			VT	x	x		
IL					NJ	x	x			WA	x	x		
IN	x	x			NY	x				WI	x		x	
KS	x	x			OH	x	x			WV	x	x	x	x

Good Day!™ Magazine Subscription

Subscriptions – Members and non-members can easily subscribe to the Good Day!™ magazine by visiting the National Grange website and navigating to the subscription interface found under the “NEWS” section or from the main slider. Subscriptions received through this interface have the option of paying online via PayPal or sending in a check via mail. Subscriptions are automatically added to the online membership database to be linked to the member associated with the subscription. This step of linking a subscription to a member in the database is a crucial step in the renewal process so as not to generate a duplicate order.

The primary method of subscribing to the GoodDay!™ magazine was intended to be done through the website interface. This method would create the subscription, process the payments, automatically renew the subscription (if the option was chosen) and add the information to the database where the mailing list would be generated. The secondary method of subscribing could be done by contacting the National Grange office wherein the order would be processed manually. We expected there would be instances where this would need to be done to accommodate our members without internet

- There are currently 1,250 member subscriptions that have paid.
- There are currently 7 non-member subscriptions that have paid
- There are currently 77 member subscriptions that have not yet paid.

All subscribers have been successfully matched up to their respective member profile within the database.

With the assistance of Blue Tahiti, Quickbooks will be integrated for sole purpose of reporting Good Day magazine subscriptions and renewals. It is expected that this will streamline the current process of recording subscriptions and financial reporting making it one step and not two.

Payments – The National Grange upgraded to PayPal Pro for the purpose of seamlessly processing online subscriptions of the Good Day!™ magazine and allowing recurring payments for automatic renewals. A \$2 processing fee was successfully implemented into the system effective June 1st to help recover cost associated with merchant fees and shipping cost.

Renewals – The National Grange has sent out renewal notices for the Good Day!™ magazine via email. All subscribers with an email address received a notice via email with an embedded link to their respective subscription. This link takes them to the Grange website with their personal information (name, address, Grange, etc.) already populated in the data fields. We encourage subscribers to renew online or to sign up for automatic renewals.

Renewal notices must be mailed out to subscribers without an email address.

Website Updates/Changes

1. National Grange – The navigation of the National Grange website was revised to make valuable information easier to find. The objective was to create sections that make the most sense with the information we currently have today, while maintaining organization as new information is added. Incorporating customized menu sidebars for each section will allow visitors to see information as it correlates to that section.

The main slider of the homepage features highlighted items such as Grange Month 2018, the Legislative Fly-In, the recap of the 150th Gala, Regional Conferences, Grange Revival, the quarterly magazine of the National Grange “Good Day!” , a countdown to the 152nd Annual National Grange Convention and more.

The “News” section features information valuable to our members to include recent statements made by President Betsy Huber and the National Grange responses to various actions by the current administration and various departments.

Information on the National Grange website is updated regularly to include National Grange News, call to action items, press releases, news of interests, member benefits, program information, the new Grange newsletter “Patrons Chain” and a number of Grange events.

The National Grange exported user profiles previously created within grange.org (the old Member-Only site) and successfully imported those users into the main nationalgrange.org website. This task was done to save members from having to recreate their profiles again. Each user (previously created) received an email informing them of how to log into their profile on the National Grange main website. These users also were required by WordPress Security to update their password prior to logging in.

In order to create a Grange member profile, the member must first confirm their membership by entering the current National Grange annual word. When a non-member signs up to be an E-member, creates a profile and pays for their membership, they are then categorized as an E-member. Both users, when assigned a type of membership, whether it’s a Grange member or E-member, they are then able to log in and view member-only information. The option of creating additional membership types (ie. Delegate Only, etc.) can also be created and allow restricted permission.

The National Grange currently has 857 user profiles registered on the website classified under 2 types of memberships (1) Grange Member and (2) E-member. These users are able to log into the National Grange website and access member-only information. Users have the ability to reset their login password, if forgotten, by using the email address they used to register and create their profile.

Recaptcha will be added to the National Grange website to alleviate computer robots from fake registration attempts and submitting comments non-related to the National Grange.

All domains associated with the National Grange are current and will renew automatically with GoDaddy. All websites have been verified by Google for searching. All WordPress websites have been upgraded to the latest version of 4.9.8. All other installed plugins and themes are up-to-date.

2. Junior Grange – The Junior Grange website includes all the latest updates from the Junior Grange Director, Samantha Wilkins. Updates reflect the new and revised 2018 programs. The home page slider focuses on three key points of Junior Grange (1) how you can become a Junior Grange member (2) a glimpse of the fun programs offered by Junior Grange and (2) how you can support the Junior Grange by donating to the latest Junior Grange fundraiser with the ability to receive online donations. Currently, the Junior Grange has collected \$471 for the 130th Anniversary Fundraiser.

All WordPress plugins associated with this domain are up-to-date.

3. Youth – Updates to the Youth and Young Adults website are submitted by the Youth Director Charlene Espenshade. Various Youth News and stories have also been submitted to be added to the website and the main slider updated to reflect upcoming Youth events, and new programs.

The 2018 Regional Conferences information was updated which provided meeting information, schedule, registration forms, etc. for each region.

All of the online questions included in the 2018 Trivia Challenge have been updated so that members can submit their forms electronically. There have been 23 online submissions in 2018 which have been emailed to the Youth Director and saved on the website dashboard.

All WordPress plugins associated with this domain are up-to-date.

4. Grange Foundation – The Grange Foundation website features valuable information on the Junior Grange Fund, Kelley Farm Fund, Deaf Awareness Fund, Youth Leadership Fund, Community & Leadership Fund, and the American Arts & Culture Fund. Donation links will be updated to redirect to the newly created Grange Foundation PayPal account.

Information for the 1 in 1,000 Club will be added to this.

All WordPress plugins associated with this domain are up-to-date.

5. Grange Store – The Grange Supply Store website using WordPress as a platform with AbanteCart as the free to use shopping cart has been operating and processing online orders flawlessly. The AbanteCart software was recently upgraded to version 1.2.13.

This e-commerce website gives a complete look and feel of an online store. It includes new and clearance items which are added to the store as they become available. Each issue of the Good Day! magazine is loaded to the store to be sold individually for \$5 plus shipping and handling. Out of stock items are adjusted as needed. Adding Recaptcha to the Grange Store has alleviated inquiries submitted online that were detected to be generated by computer robots. Recaptcha is a free security service designed to protect websites from spam and determine if a computer user is human and not a computer robot.

6. Grange Radio – The domain assigned for the Grange Radio website is live and streaming music. It was determined at the Annual Strategic Planning meeting that Grange Radio was not a priority project this year. The domain name was renewed for 1-year until the decision to terminate the domain is made. All WordPress plugins associated with this domain are up-to-date.

Computer Hardware and Software

Symantec – Symantec Endpoint Protection (version 14.0.3897.1101) runs live updates to provide Virus Spyware Protection, Proactive Threat Protection and Network Threat Protection for all workstations. Virus definitions are updated daily. Symantec Endpoint Protection provides live updates to Virus Spyware Protection, Proactive Threat Protection and Network Threat Protection for all workstations. This license for 12 users was renewed to continue virus protection for all workstations and server.

SharePoint – Steps to move to an electronic session has already begun using SharePoint. All committee folders have been created and test documents have been added and tested. In the coming months, resolutions from each state will be formatted and uploaded to the SharePoint committee folder. Files must be accessed via web browser which would require an Internet connection (provided by the hotel). After some discussion, it was decided that it may be better to obtain a few beta testers for the 152nd Annual National Grange convention and get feedback for how this digital system will work for future annual sessions.

Comcast – Comcast has provided our Internet and phone service since 2015. The initial contract discounts that were provided at the time of signing our contract had expired and were recently reinstated providing a \$174.90 a month savings. As the line items were inspected, it was discovered that we were paying for two (2) toll-free numbers at \$10 each when we should have only been paying for one (1) toll-free number which is 1-888-4-GRANGE (447-2643). The second toll-free number is being removed and Comcast will be reviewing and be back dating the additional \$10 charge which goes as far back as June 2015. (Case # ER046262692)

Computers – The National Grange purchased one Microsoft Office license which has been assigned to the Controller workstation. This was done because the workstation required a reinstallation of Microsoft Office software but the installation CD was not available since the computer came with it preinstalled. The initial version of Office 2010 is no longer available for download by Microsoft. The license offers the current version of Office 2016 and upgrades to the latest version when released (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, SharePoint, OneNote) for \$60 per year. This license is currently not necessary for all other workstations, but may be a future option as the Office 2010 version becomes outdated.

The Netgear ReadyNAS used to control nightly server back-ups is in need of replacing. This unit purchased in 2011 is no longer functional and is outside of the manufacturer's warranty. Nightly back-ups are currently being administered remotely until the replacement hardware is in place.

The National Grange computer workstations, currently running Windows 10, were purchased in November 2012. The estimated price of replacing 6 existing workstations would range between \$9,399 for Dell Latitude 3590 and \$11,199 for Dell Latitude 5590. The Latitude 3590 is a better alternative for pricing while the Latitude 5590 is more efficient but with normal office work (graphics being done on MAC workstation), there should not be a noticeable difference in efficiency. These workstations would consist of laptops with docking

stations used to connect the laptop to multiple peripherals such as monitors, printers, keyboard, network and mouse. This allows the laptop to function as a desktop computer with the ability to be used remotely at outside meetings, events and home offices.

An email address was created and a license assigned to the building engineer, Mujo Mrkonjic. The use of one convention laptop was assigned to the new Building Engineer allowing a workstation to be created in the basement shipping area instead of the sub-basement where it was initially. Access to internet, email, voicemail, printers, etc. have been made available for easy communication with the building engineer.

A profile and email account will be created and assigned to the new Trademark Protection Manager.

Mailing, Shipping and Printing

Mail/Shipping – Mail processing/shipping is being conducted on a daily basis for all departments of The National Grange. This includes Grange Supply Store orders, membership recognition items, GoodDay! magazine issues, bills/payments, etc.

Mail is processed using the most cost-effective means by price comparing USPS, UPS and FedEx. With most of our items being songbooks, record books, etc., we have been able to adequately offset the current shipping and handling rates we charge our members, by using Media Mail as the selected carrier. Media Mail is a cost-effective way with the U.S. Postal Service to send media materials such as books, videotapes, DVDs, CDs, printed music and other sound recordings weighing less than 70 pounds.

Trademark infringement letters that must be delivered via certified mail with a return receipt are prepared weekly and carried to the Post Office for processing.

FedEx offered the National Grange an even higher discount rate of 28% than the 20% discount rate that was offered in 2017. Packages will continue to be priced compared between USPS, UPS and FedEx for the most cost-effective shipping option.

The Pitney Bowes mailing machine has received the latest updates necessary to process mail and parcel packages. These updates reflect any discounts and rate changes associated with UPS, USPS, and FedEx to include the postal rate increase that went into effect January 21, 2018. Intellilink Desktop which runs on the mail workstation, notifies of upcoming updates and when they are available for download and installation.

The United States Postal Service (USPS) announced the requirement to move away from using File Transfer Protocol (FTP) for uploading daily mail reporting. The necessary change for daily uploading via Parcel Data Exchange (PDX) protocol has taken effect and the National Grange is in compliance with the Mailer ID and CRID numbers assigned to our organization.

The display monitor for the Connect+ mail machine is powering off unexpectedly. The replacement of this monitor is covered by the Pitney Bowes contract. The replacement monitor was ordered and a Pitney Bowes representative replaced the monitor. The summer interns received training on processing mail via the Pitney Bowes mail machine.

Printing – The National Grange supplies various printed items for sale through the Grange Supply Store and for other departments. Certificates such as Community Citizen Awards, Pomona Award for Public Service, Silver Star Certificates, etc. are printed. Booklets such as the Pomona Manuals, Youth Handbooks, Grange Initiate, etc. are also created.

The 2018 National Grange Roster was completed, printed and distributed to each State Grange. Two printable versions were constructed, one handheld booklet size, and one larger booklet size. Each state was shipped 2 small and 2 large versions as well as a CD containing the printable roster in digital format (Word and Acrobat) with an Excel file with multiple spreadsheets for each state officer, national officers, staff, etc. It was our hope that creating a digital format would be helpful when doing mail merges, group emails, etc.

Materials such as programs, books, binder tabs, badges, tickets, etc. have been generated in house for the 2018 Annual National Grange Convention.

In an effort to reduce printing cost, the National Grange met with Capitol Documents to review the possibility of switching our services from our existing lease with UBT. It was determined that UBT's rate per copy/print for color and black was significantly higher than Capitol Documents due to gradual rate increases since we started our agreement. This information was presented to UBT to match the competitors lower rate for color and black print/copies or risk losing our business. UBT agreed to lower the rate per copy and black to match Capitol Documents. Future bills from UBT will be reviewed by the IT department (to ensure rates do not creep back up) before approving payment.

Building Security

Passcards - An ongoing inventory of all front door passcards to the National Grange headquarters are being maintained. As of 10/26/18, there is a total of 285 passcards assigned and issued to a combination of National Grange employees, building tenants, subtenants, vendors, etc.

Passcards are immediately deactivated for tenants and vendors that no longer require access to the National Grange premises.

Damaged passcards are replaced by the National Grange at no charge while lost passcards are replaced for a fee of \$25. Invoices for replacement cards are given to the tenant as well as the National Grange Controller for payment.

An order of 100 Honeywell passcards was obtained from Protection1 to replenish the depleted supply.

JUNIOR GRANGE

Prepared by Samantha Wilkins, Junior Grange Director

It has been an exciting year for the National Junior Grange Department. Steps of progress and dedication have been made throughout Grange states within their Junior Departments. The lines of communication are beginning to open and I feel as though our National information is finally drifting down to each level (regional, state, local).

Communication

- Through social media/emails/ and phone calls we have been able to keep up with many Junior Granges/leaders/directors.
- I have worked to maintain a quick response rate to email, phone calls, and social media responses.
- I have been working with the Communications department to have frequent posts on social media promoting the Junior Grange as well as monthly entries in Patrons Chain and Quarterly publications through Good Day! Magazine.
- I have worked with Monroe Classics and our Sales Department for the "Rockin' the Grange" Junior T-shirt fundraiser which was used to become a conversation starter with Grange members across the country.
- Began conversation on building partnership with Ag in the Classroom for the JG Passport.

Junior 1+ Program/Data

Through one on one communications at Regional and State conferences I have been able to provide Junior Leaders and Directors with a clearer understanding of the 1+ program and have seen an increase in their states now through the use of the 1+ program.

Many states do not submit their annual reports which are due October 1 of each year. I have spent the last quarter reaching out directly to State directors and really pushing for numbers, although as of right now I still do not have an accurate number of Junior or Junior 1+ members. I do have a better idea of what our state numbers look like: The numbers below are numbers given directly to me by state directors or individual Junior Leaders and do not represent the numbers sent in Quarterly membership reports. Also, not every state responded.

STATE	Chartered Junior Granges	Granges hosting Junior 1+ Members	Junior 1+ Members	Total
California	4	26	280	320
Colorado	1	0	0	13
Connecticut	1	0	0	20
Illinois				40
Iowa	0	1	3	43
Maine	1	0	0	13
Maryland	0	1	2	2
Minnesota	0	0	10	10
Montana	0	4	24	24
New Hampshire		10		28
New York	32	3		120
North Carolina	3			74
Oregon	1	33	83	83
Pennsylvania	2			32
Rhode Island	2	1	4	55
Tennessee	4			
Texas	1	1	13	26
Virginia	2	0	0	42
Washington	25	14	43	745
Wisconsin	0	3	4	74
TOTALS	79	97	466	1,694

ZERO JUNIOR GRANGES AND ZERO JUNIOR 1+ MEMBERS REPORTED: Alaska, Washington D.C./Potomac, Idaho, Oklahoma
NO REPORTS FROM THE FOLLOWING STATES: Delaware, Florida, Indiana, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, Ohio, South Carolina, Vermont and West Virginia

Leadership Training

Leadership Training is and will continue to be an important aspect in growing the Junior Grange Program. Providing good leadership training to all State directors and their leaders proves to be of utmost importance in developing a successful program. I have sent email correspondence as well Facebook messages to directors to see how I can help. I have successfully been able to reach out to states that have been able to work to revitalize the instate programs. And they have reported that they are continuing to have success in building their programs.

I have offered to visit a state when needed and was able to attend three of the Regional Conferences this year and was a National Representative for the Oregon and Texas State Granges' Annual Meetings.

Travel

This year I have attended three of the six regional conferences, Mid Atlantic (MD), Midwestern (MI), Western (WA). I have also attended two state sessions, Oregon and Texas. I was unable to attend two of the regionals (Southeastern/Great Plains) due to the State Sessions I was already obligated to attend. I also did not attend Northeastern Regionals (ME) due to some unforeseen health issues. I also felt that the expense to attend North Eastern would not have proven to be worth the travel seeing as no Juniors or Junior Leaders would be in attendance according to their regional planning director.

I also attended the National Grange Legislative Fly-In as part of the New Junior Programming to get Juniors involved in the Grange legislative process. Also, in October 2018 I made a special trip to DC to meet with the board of National Agriculture in the Classroom in hopes of building partnerships in upcoming programming.

The 2018 Junior Ambassador has attended two regionals (Western/Mid-Atlantic) as well as three state sessions (WA, OR, CA). He also attended the Legislative Fly-In, along with many in-state functions representing the National Junior Grange.

National Junior Grange Ambassador

The 2018 Junior Grange Ambassador, Riley Reynolds of Oregon, has been representing the National Junior Grange in 2018. Riley has been instrumental at promoting the 1+ program to whoever he has spoken with. Riley has attended three State sessions, two regional conferences, and the Legislative Fly-In, along with many in-state functions representing the National Junior Grange.

Each time I speak with an Ambassador or their parent I get more excited about the opportunities that this program provides. The skills and knowledge learned are remarkable.

The deadline for the 2019 Ambassadors was August 15, 2018. I received four applications as follows: Billy Greer (CO), Sydney Bach (VT), Lillian Sharpe (CT), and Gregory Lehmann (MA), along with six applications for the Super JG award.

Each ambassador candidate will attend the National Session in Stowe, Vermont at their own expense for a chance to be chosen as the 2019 National Junior Grange Ambassador. Unfortunately, one of our ambassador candidates, Lillian Sharpe, will be unable to attend National Session due to some unforeseen health issues. In early October, Lillian was diagnosed with Leukemia. I have offered Lillian the opportunity to come next year to try again if her health permits.

For 2019's programming there have been some changes to the Ambassador programming which will hopefully open the door to more participants applying for ambassador making it a bit easier for States that do not have as strong Junior programs to send an outstanding or distinguished Junior in their state or those that host prince and princess programs with already high requirements the chance to participate as well. With the increased number of participants this year I am hopeful that we see continued growth in programming participation. My hope is that the Junior Ambassador Program will be able to host two outstanding Juniors to represent the National Program in coming years, one male and one female.

Fundraising

2018 is the 130th year of the Junior Grange and although I wanted to focus on fundraising efforts, I felt personally that the needs of the National Headquarters needed to come before my efforts. I held one very successful fundraiser and have one ongoing through the end of National Session. I have also received multiple donations throughout the year. Also, to bring a little fun in I have introduced the "Junior Granger at Heart" contest for non-junior aged members.

- The first fundraiser which concluded is the T-shirt fundraiser- 'Rockin' the Grange' t-shirt was being sold through Monroe Classics. Although, it wasn't planned to be a big money maker it is at least bringing awareness to the Grange with a bright tie-dye shirt that is truly eye catching. We raised \$2,110.54 for the t-shirts which was deposited into the Junior Foundation account.
- Second fundraiser is the \$1 to \$130, Which is currently underway. The idea of this fundraiser is for members to select an amount between \$1 and \$130 to donate. If one person selects each number a total of \$8,465 will be raised with this fundraiser. And we only need 130 members to donate. This is open for anyone to be able to donate. We know that this may be a lofty goal, but we also understand that every little bit helps. The Junior Department is thriving and with the support of our members the future of our organization is secure. Stephanie Wilkins was able to set up an online format for this fundraiser and it is currently hosted on the National Junior Grange website. This is an ongoing fundraiser which does not have a set end date. IF not all numbers have been sold by National Session I will be setting up a display in Vermont to hopefully close the final numbers.
- Plans were to originally have a third fundraiser but I decided not to push anything new at this time due to the ongoing needs of other departments/building funds. However, I did implement a small fun contest, "Junior at Heart." This contest has a \$5 entry fee to be paid to the National Grange Foundation. Although this is not a money maker fundraiser, this is to be utilized to bring awareness to this sector of the Grange and hopefully get members looking at the Junior programming.

Background Checks

It is my goal and mission to make sure that the name of the Grange and Junior Grange is always protected, as well as our members young and old. Unfortunately, we live in a day and age where the number of children being sexually abused is growing at a rapid rate. Understanding that the most common occurrences happen with people that children are most comfortable with.

It is my understanding that the National Grange does not have a program for background checks and has left the decision up to each state as they have seen necessary. However, many of our states, no matter the size, have been neglecting to require these background checks and have been putting our youngest members and the good name of our organization at risk. Beginning in 2019 I will be working on implementing a mandatory National Criminal background check and National Sex Offender Registry check policy for all Grange members, directors, leaders, and volunteers that work with minor children (those under the age of 18) in our organization.

Through Safegatherings.com we are offered a local, state, national, and sex offender check along with a training on working with children and vulnerable adults for a minimal cost.

Understanding that some states may already be doing background checks, I plan to give a grace period. If the member working with minors has a National Criminal background check (not just a local or state) they will have until the expiration of that check (usually they are two years) to complete the background check process set up by the National Grange.

I have been able to work with Safe Gatherings on setting up an account, at no expense to the National Grange. Members will be able to follow very simple steps to complete the background check. We are currently locked in at a \$35 cost per background check, which will be paid out by the individual. It is then up to the State and local Granges if they want to reimburse that expense paid by the member.

Why Safe Gatherings: Safe Gatherings not only offers the wide variety of background checks, they also offer the ability to house and maintain the personal information that our members would need to submit. With the possibility of the National Grange Staff changing every two years or more, I feel that is a lot of hands that would have the ability to have my personal information. Safe Gatherings does not keep or pass on any personal information except the name and a yes or no on clearance to work with minors. The program is easy to use for all members. For more information about Safe Gatherings visit: www.safegatherings.com.

Programs

The Program Guide for 2019 has been completed and is ready for distribution at National session and on our website. In the 2019 program I did my best to include information from many of our departments. There is information about participating in Good Day!™ magazine, Grange Radio, National Quilt Block contest, Community Service book contest, Youth Junior Mentor Award, and the Legislative Fly-In.

Here is a view of the 2019 program

- **Ambassador Program**
 - New guidelines have been put into place.
 - Each State can send a male and female Ambassador.
 - After a series of interviews, a National Junior Ambassador will be chosen at the National Convention.
- **New Junior Historian Award**
 - This spotlights a Junior's Grange Knowledge and encourages them to learn the organization's history.
- **Awareness Award**
 - Each year there will be a topic selected for the Juniors to work to bring awareness to. For 2018 we are focusing on Dairy Awareness.
- **New 'Capes of Honor' Award:**
 - Juniors can fly into the 2019 Grange theme by participating in this awesome community service-based contest. Juniors are encouraged to track their community service hours to earn their Cape of Honor awards.
- **New Digital Talent Show**
 - We have some very talented Junior Grangers, and this will give them the opportunity to show off their talents even from across the country.
- **New Junior at Heart**
 - This will be a fun way for those members who are a "Junior at Heart" to participate in some of the Junior Grange contests.
- **Junior Passport**
 - The change is official, soon to be added to our website and being introduced fully at national session. We currently have three passports that have been introduced through Good Day!™ magazine and will have new ones to introduce on each day of National Session through Patrons Chain. I have asked other members and states to jump on board and participate in the creation of the passports. Many states from Washington to Rhode Island have been sending in their ideas.
 - States are being encouraged to jump on board with the transition to the Junior Grange Passport.
 - We will begin a slow release month by month of the new passports and transition them all onto an online database that can be easily accessible to members as well as cost efficient. Available in a downloadable format for free or for a small fee, mailed to Junior Leaders.
- **National Agriculture in the Classroom**
 - In September I met with a member of the Ag in the Classroom board, to speak about the possibility of a partnership. I was invited, along with National Communications Director Amanda Brozana-Rios, to meet with their entire board in Washington D.C. in October.
 - In October, I met with the National Ag in the Classroom leaders and introduced them to the new Passport program.

- Through discussions and many questions, the Ag in the Classroom agreed to build a partnership through the Junior Grange for our Passport Program as well as our Ag Awareness Award.
- Ag in the Classroom agreed to let us utilize their online matrix which is full of educational agriculture related curriculum.
- They also encouraged us to apply for a grant they offer to help build the passport program. Amanda Brozana-Rios agreed to write the grant and work with the Ag in the Classroom members to ensure everything is submitted correctly.

Year End Review

Overall, I feel this was a successful year for the Junior Grange. I think there were a lot of strides made to bridge the communication gap between departments and the building of common goals across all the departments. Communication between the states has grown stronger and I feel more directors and leaders are comfortable reaching out when they have questions or need guidance. Directors/State Masters are gaining a better understanding of what the 1+ program is, and they are beginning to utilize it within their states.

I am happy with where the 2019 program is going. As I tell my directors, this isn't my program, this is yours. Through listening and discussions with leaders and directors I have been able to compile a program that is based off their needs/wants/goals. I am looking forward to another successful year with even more participation on all levels.

Thank you for your time and continued support.

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Prepared by Burton Eller, Legislative Affairs Director

Overview

Your National staff faced a changing and sometimes rancorous legislative, regulatory and government affairs landscape in Washington this past year. As you know, 2018 is an election year. The political and philosophical chasm between Democrats and Republicans in Congress widened. Respect and civility are hard for Congress to spell much less define these days. Congress has not been willing to tackle most of the urgent issues on their legislative plate because practically every move is now defined by partisan politics.

Congress faces a daunting workload when they return to Washington, D.C., on Nov. 13 for the lame duck session of the 115th Congress. We'll have to see how far down the agenda they dare to go. Items on the table include some federal funding bills, the farm bill, the border wall, and several more. Much of the lame duck agenda will depend upon which party has control of the House of Representatives next year.

Trade

The President has been tenacious on the trade front. United States tariffs on Chinese imports and China's retaliation caused concern throughout agriculture and many more industries. The soybean market took a substantial hit. Bin-bursting soybean and corn crops exacerbated the problem and harvest-time prices fell with the lack of local grain storage and scarce barge availability. The President offered a \$12 billion "trade aid" relief package to insulate affected producers in the short term. While appreciative of this aid, most producers say they would rather have trade than aid. Trade news was not all bad, however. A new United States-Mexico-Canada trade agreement replaced NAFTA. Japan, the EU and the UK have agreed to enter bilateral trade talks with the U.S., and soybeans found new markets in Europe and elsewhere around the world.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications were a bright spot for the National Grange in 2018. The White House, Congress, the Federal Communications Commission, and USDA placed rural broadband expansion high on their priority lists and new funding was made available. The National Grange filed official comments, responded to requests for information, contacted members of Congress and wrote opinion editorials in strong support of various initiatives for rural broadband deployment. With several major corporate mergers underway in the telephone, entertainment, and movie world, the National Grange continues to petition the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and Congress to insist safeguards remain in place to assure rural and small-town customers can retain no less than their current service at a reasonable price. National Grange and several state Granges continue to petition state agencies, the FCC and Congress to continue the discount Lifeline phone service to the elderly, disabled and underserved in rural and small-town areas.

Health Care

Health care continues to be both a challenge and a high priority for the National Grange. Patient costs at the doctor's office, clinic, hospital, drug store, physical therapist, psychiatrist, and rehabilitation center are rising fast along with insurance copay charges. National Grange is fighting for patient transparency throughout the health care chain. Medicare and Medicaid eligibility, access and discounts for elderly and rural patients continue to be a high priority at the National Grange. As rural hospitals continue to close, the Grange is pushing diligently for broadband deployment to those locations to establish a telehealth capability.

The National Grange and several state Granges in targeted states were invited to join the Rx Abuse Leadership Initiative (RALI) coalition to confront the opioid and drug abuse crisis in rural America. RALI concentrates on grassroots community

organizations and leaders to get local involvement in the recognition, treatment, recovery and prevention of opioid and other drug abuse problems to save lives. For two years, National Grange has urged Congress to make drug addiction a priority. Both Senate and House overwhelmingly passed and the President signed bipartisan legislation that focuses on prevention and treatment and cracks down on importation of deadly synthetic opioids from other countries.

Broadband connectivity is absolutely vital to the future vitality of rural America. Tele-education, tele-health, tele-business, smart farming, security, and real time efficiencies cannot happen without high speed broadband. The initial build-out of broadband to rural areas is several times more costly than in urban and suburban communities. This is compounded by decades-old laws, regulations, boundaries, ordinances, fees and much more that greatly hinder the more rapid deployment into remote areas. The National Grange works every day to break down these barriers and to support public-private funding partnerships to make rural broadband deployment possible.

Food and Agriculture

Farm and food policy affects both food producers and food consumers. Our challenge is to produce abundant, safe, wholesome, nutritious food at a price the consumer can afford that allows the producer to make a profit. Policy, legislation, regulation, marketing claims and labeling must be based upon sound science and technology. More and more, consumers want to know how farmers and ranchers produce their food and they tend to trust their local farmer the most.

The definition of "milk" is on the regulatory agenda as the FDA reviews its food labeling laws. The existing FDA standards of identity define milk as the product of lactating animals. Increasingly, marketers of alternative products from almonds, soybeans, coconuts and more have been labeling these products as "milk." National Grange has strong policy indicating milk is an animal product and will be partnering with milk producers to retain and enforce the current definition. An emerging challenge is lab grown "fake" meat produced in the laboratory from animal cells.

The Farm Bill seemed to be on the fast track during the summer. When it came time to reconcile differences between the House and Senate farm bill versions, the process hit a political and regional differences wall. Congress now has four weeks in a November-December lame-duck session to try again. If they remain deadlocked, they'll be forced to pass an extension of current law before they go home for Christmas.

Immigration is a mean-spirited subject in Washington. Immigration laws have generally not been well enforced for many years; this has seriously complicated the task of passing laws to stabilize America's broken system. We find ourselves penalizing the most deserving non-citizens while we are overly lenient to those who deserve no leniency at all. Then overlay politics that are possessive of voter numbers, constituency blocs, ethnic trends and more to create an impasse on Capitol Hill. Agriculture is desperate for workers. An ag worker bill that had wide agriculture support could have passed Congress this year, but it was taken hostage by politicians who were afraid to pass any piece of immigration legislation for fear they would lose a bargaining chip to get their pet immigration provision in a later bill.

Infrastructure

After stalling for two years, the House and Senate finally overwhelmingly passed water infrastructure legislation. It would authorize \$6 billion over 10 years to repair coastal and wetland areas damaged by hurricanes, upgrade dams, improve harbors, and address drinking water infrastructure. Other infrastructure improvements will have to wait, maybe a long time. These include roads, bridges, locks, dams, ports and airports. Congress seems to understand an aging infrastructure needs their attention but they just don't have the will to tackle infrastructure right now.

Tax Reform

The National Grange and several state Granges were active in legislative efforts to reform the tax code. The agriculture and small business communities were generally pleased with the net results of the final bill signed into law. Personal standard tax deductions were doubled, cash accounting for agriculture and small business was preserved and the death tax exemption doubled along with several more benefits for agriculture and small business.

Environment

The Waters of the United States (WOTUS) is back from the dead for landowners in 26 states not covered by earlier stays by courts. Environmental groups convinced a South Carolina judge to strike the Administration's suspension of the rule until 2020 to give the EPA and Corps of Engineers time to draft a replacement rule. The South Carolina court ruling is being challenged.

Fly-In

The National Grange Fly-In April 15-18 in Washington was deemed a great success by the attendees. A total of 34 Grangers from 14 states completed 30 meetings with Senators, Representatives and staff liaisons. Grangers discussed the farm bill, rural broadband, health care, ag workforce crisis, opioid epidemic, commodity prices, infrastructure, Lifeline communications and local back-home issues.

Grange Profile

The National Grange continues to regain stature in the nation's Capital and around the country in the public policy arena. Here's a recap of the of high-profile actions on National Grange policy issues since the 2017 convention last November:

Opinion editorials (op-eds)

- Telecommunications/broadband/Lifeline – 15
- Health care/drugs/Medicare and Medicaid – 2
- Ag workforce/immigration - 1
- Other – 1

Official letters about policy issues

- Telecommunications/broadband/Lifeline – 9
- Health care/drugs/Medicare and Medicaid – 9
- Food and agriculture – 7
- Ag workforce/immigration – 3
- Other – 1

Official statements and filings

- Telecommunications/broadband/Lifeline – 6
- Healthcare/drugs/Medicare and Medicaid – 14
- Ag workforce/immigration – 1

Radio shows

- Health care/drugs/Medicare and Medicaid - 3

Coordinated State Activity

- Op-eds, letters and statements coordinated between National Grange and state Granges - 24

Summary

- Op-eds – 19
- Letters – 29
- Statements and filings – 21
- Radio shows – 3
- National/state actions – 24
- TOTAL - 96

View from the Hill

We published monthly email newsletter updates and news about public policy issues that affect Grangers. The newsletter goes to all Grange members on our email list. But too many Grangers have not shared their email address with us because of their privacy concerns. National Grange policy is confidentiality; member email addresses do not leave the Grange.

Grange Advocacy

Grange Advocacy was chartered as a 501(c)(4) organization in 2013 for the purpose, "...to educate the American public and elected officials at the federal, state and local level on issues affecting rural America, including agriculture...lobby Congress and state legislatures... conduct general public political advertisement... engage in grassroots activities related to issues affecting rural America and American agriculture." Grange Advocacy has been increasingly successful in acquiring small grants from issue partners to address numerous public policy issues that coincide with National Grange policy. In several instances, Grange Advocacy has been able to include State Granges in advocacy activities and share grant funding.

Respect and Civility

I'm constantly struck by the timeless foundation, heritage and principles of Grange. The Grange salutation to conduct its business "in Faith, In Hope, In Charity, and with Fidelity" has endured for the past 151 years. Grangers may not agree at times, but they disagree with respect, civility and humbleness. Grangers navigate by a moral compass with appreciation for their fellow human beings. Grange values have endured 151 years. Sadly, as American citizens, we are in serious danger of losing these attributes as a civilized society. Daily now, we witness disrespect, selfishness, even ruthlessness and violence among citizens who disagree. Disrespect for authority and accountability is growing more common. These trends are bigger than policy or politics or ethnicity or economics. They dig at the very soul of our American culture. Our neighbors in rural and small-town America need the fraternal culture of the Grange as much today as in 1867. Can Grangers again bring American values to their hometown neighbors? Therein lies a challenge for every local subordinate Grange's community service plan of work for 2019 and beyond.

MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT

Prepared by Membership & Leadership Development Director Joe Stefenoni

Worthy Master, National Officers, Delegates, Brothers & Sisters,

It is a pleasure to again present the report of the membership department. I want to start this report by congratulating the seven State Granges that achieved a net gain in membership over the last year. They were the State Granges of California,

Florida, Kansas, Montana, Oklahoma, Oregon and Virginia. Additionally, congratulations go to the 429 Community Granges across the country that achieved a net gain in membership.

Over the last year, five Community Granges and 4 Pomona Granges were organized or reorganized. Congratulations to the following Granges:

Grange Name & Number	State	Date of Organization
Sunrise Pomona Grange #9	MA	7/14/2017
Tri-County Grange #215	FL	7/15/2017
Roxy Ann Grange #792	OR	9/26/2017
Escutarsis Grange #231	ME	10/13/2017
Eastern Connecticut Pomona Grange #14	CT	3/5/2018
Mountain Laurel Pomona Grange #15	CT	1/20/2018
Nutmeg Pomona Grange #16	CT	3/4/2018
Bards Grange #225	NJ	3/3/2018
Pleasant River Grange #492	ME	5/20/2018

Congratulations are also in order to the following Granges that achieved the top 5 net gains and percentage net gains in membership:

Grange Name & Number	State	Net Gain
Lake Earl Grange #557	CA	60
Wyandotte Grange #495	CA	52
Clear Creek Grange #84	OK	46
Anderson Valley Grange #669	CA	44
Elm Bend Grange #358	OK	36

Grange Name & Number	State	% Net Gain
Anderson Valley Grange #669	CA	275%
Copake Grange #935	NY	200%
Appleton Grange #127	ID	171%
Lexington Grange #2672	OH	154%
Rocky Mountain Grange #116	MT	143%

When I last presented this report the National Master presented you with the question; "What will we do when the doers are gone?" and this question is still important for us to consider. We are on the verge of the largest shift of social capital in the history of this country. The 78 million members of the Baby Boomer (born 1946-64) generation are preparing to pass the mantle of leadership and community involvement to the 128 million members of generations X (born 1965-81) and Y (born 1982-95), plus those in the post-millennial generation. It is time that we make a dedicated effort to connect with these generations and invite them to become the next generation of doers. However, the approaches that we have used in the past will not continue to work as we attempt to connect with these younger generations. To this end, the membership department will be developing programs on effective ways to connect with generations X & Y, changing our approach to how we communicate the benefits of our organization.

Along with a program to work towards engaging the next generations, I will be reaching out to my fellow directors to develop interdepartmental programs. These programs will focus on a variety of issues and activities ranging from the opioid crisis in rural America to civic engagement at a local level. Each of these programs will be tailored so that the youth and younger members of the Grange can take the lead in their planning and promotion, as a way to engage our next generation of leaders and to showcase the vitality of our organization. Look for these programs to be announced throughout the year as they are developed.

At our 150th annual session the National Master also expressed her desire that regional volunteers be deployed in the field to increase the promotion of the membership department's programs. I have proposed to the Board of Directors that this model be tested at first with two field assistants. This model is not an attempt to decrease the responsibilities of the membership director, but increase the effectiveness of the membership department as a whole. In addition to these regional field assistants, I plan to find a Grange member in Nevada to recommend to the National Master as the new Deputy specifically for that state. All of these field assists will be given training in the programs, benefits and services offered by the National Grange as well as the membership departments new approach to connecting with generations X & Y.

Over the next year I will be working with the communications department to identify conferences, trade shows and events where the National Grange can connect with younger generations who have a need and desire to join our organization. We are also exploring new tools which we can use at these events. These tools go beyond our traditional paper materials and integrate us with a world driven by technology including online platforms and SMS (text-message) programs. These will allow us to engage with potential members and capture their information and interests, then direct them to the closest Community Grange. The two departments will be conducting a Grange Health survey over the phone, with members who we train to

administer these surveys. The results we obtain will be used to identify how we can better serve our Community Granges and what changes can be made to support Community Granges.

Along with exploring new platforms for new member outreach, I will also be working with my fellow directors and staff members to look at our E-membership program. It is necessary that we evaluate the benefits that E-members currently receive and assess what new services we can provide to the E-members that will encourage them to renew their membership, or find the nearest community Grange to them. E-membership is another feature we are able to use in the field at large events to connect with younger generations. I have given to the Board of Directors a list of goals to maximize our return on investment for the E-membership program.

I challenge all of our State Granges to find a new approach to their membership efforts. First, if your State Grange doesn't have a membership director, or even generally a member who is there to encourage membership development, find one. A key to the success of your Grange will be to build a strong team of leaders. Second, with your leadership team look at all of the Community Granges in your state and identify which Community Granges could use a helping hand over the next year. Third, create a plan and priorities of how you are going to expend your human and financial resources. Membership growth will not happen by passive observation. Growth requires acute observation, relevance to those in your communities and efficient use of the time and talent available to you.

Brothers and Sisters, I look forward to working for you again and getting in the field to help make our organization stronger. The task of growing membership and building stronger Granges is on all our shoulders. As we move forward I give you something to take back to your Granges, it is that our history and prior accomplishments will no longer be a driver of membership growth. We must focus on the future by engaging with our communities, showing them how their membership in the Grange can make a difference, and providing programs that make our communities better.

MEMBERSHIP RECOGNITION

Prepared by Sales, Benefits, Programs and Membership Recognition Director Loretta Washington

Details for the period July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018

Fees Received

Sixth Degree Fee - \$395.00

Golden Sheaf Certificate Fees - \$3,642.50

Membership Recognition

Sixth Degree Certs.: 228

40-year seals: 111

70-year seals: 134

Golden Sheaf Awards.: 323

55-year seals: 142

Congratulatory Letter: 26

Silver Star Certs. (25 years): 321

60-year seals: 146

Diamond Award (75 years): 82

65-year seals: 157

Milestone Celebrations

150 Years of Continuous Service: Fredonia Grange #1, New York, April
 125 Years of Continuous Service: Springwater Grange #263, Oregon
 Uxbridge Grange #200, Massachusetts
 100 Years of Continuous Service: Camden Grange #687, Washington
 Chimacum Grange #681, Washington
 Malo Grange #679, Washington
 Dark Creek Grange #646, Washington
 Quillayute Valley Grange #661, Washington
 Miami Grange #2158, Ohio
 Elmdale Grange #2162, Ohio
 Ada Grange #570, Oregon
 Trexlertown Grange #1755, Pennsylvania

Organized, Reorganized Granges

The Grange is continuing to grow. It is due to the state membership directors, state presidents and members who have made this happen while we were without a Membership Director. Here are the new/reorganized charters:

Name of Grange and #	State	Date of Org. or Reorganization	Type
Roxy Ann Grange #792	OR	October 26, 2017	Reorganization
Eastern Connecticut Pomona Grange #14	CT	March 5, 2018	New
Mountain Laurel Pomona Grange #15	CT	January 20, 2018	New

Nutmeg Pomona Grange #16	CT	March 4, 2018	New
Bards Grange #225	NJ	March 3, 2018	New
Pleasant River Grange #492	ME	May 20, 2018	Reorganization
Bomoseen Valley Grange #273	VT	August 17, 2018	Consolidation of Bomoseen Grange # 273 and Poultney Valley Grange #533
Roxy Ann Grange #792	OR	October 26, 2017	Reorganization
Eastern Connecticut Pomona Grange #14	CT	March 5, 2018	New
Mountain Laurel Pomona Grange #15	CT	January 20, 2018	New
Nutmeg Pomona Grange #16	CT	March 4, 2018	New
Bards Grange #225	NJ	March 3, 2018	New
Pleasant River Grange #492	ME	May 20, 2018	Reorganization
Bomoseen Valley Grange #273	VT	August 17, 2018	Consolidation of Bomoseen Grange # 273 and Poultney Valley Grange #533

SALES, BENEFITS & PROGRAMS

Prepared by Loretta Washington, Sales, Benefits, Programs and Membership Recognition Director

National Grange Officers, Delegates and Members

This year was a wonderful, busy year for me. It was great attending my 2nd National Grange Convention, where I got to meet a lot more Grange members this time from the west coast region. I felt very good and energized after the convention, in fact I was busy across the board in Sales, Benefits, Programs and Membership Recognition. The staff strategic planning meetings with Kendall Lott have been very helpful to me as I worked on many different parts of my job. It kept me focused on my goals and the outcomes for the year. I was able to put forth more effort in the benefits part of my job this year and I was able to meet my goal expectations. I hope that you can see that I have been very busy maintaining all parts of my job this year plus trying to be a team player. As always I tried very hard to keep all the balls up in the air, but most important is to keep the members happy and to generate revenue for the National Grange. This report is based on October 15, 2017 to October 15, 2018.

GRANGE STORE

The Grange Supply Store is doing OK. I completed the Supply Store inventory after the convention. Stephanie Wilkins, Director of IT continues to do an outstanding job taking care of all the postage for me. I continue to try to get items out in a week to 10 days from the time the items have been purchased on line. We introduced a new book during last year's convention which the National President revised "Guidelines for Grange Leaders (Sesquicentennial Revised Edition)" book for officers. The sale from this book has been good, because this is a book that every Grange should purchase.

Our partner, Monroe Classic has done an outstanding job for the National Grange. "The New Grange Store @ Monroe Classic" had an ok year. Mike Warner worked very hard to help us design the logo for the slogan "That's the Grange Way." We had a "Grange Way" T-shirt fundraiser which raised \$297.31. Mike worked very closely with Samantha Wilkins, Junior Director on the Rockin' the Grange Junior t-shirt fundraiser. That fundraiser was a success with our partner Mike Warner and Monroe Classic, Inc. waiving all markup and labor costs. The Junior Department raised \$2,110.54.* (not counted in the total sales, because this was a fundraiser of the Juniors)

- Total Sale Income: from October 15, 2017 to October 15, 2018 was \$25,845.24
- Sales Income from the New Grange Store @ Monroe Classic was 7,777.86
- Sales from Grange Supply Store was \$18,067.040

PROGRAMS

I continue to have several programs which we help promote and help local Granges to use for the members' fulfillment, community outreach and to entice new members.

Patriot's Program - This entire program continues to be possible due to the generosity of Potomac Grange #1(DC) who funds the certificates printing and mailing as well as created the DVD that can be used to allow members and communities to learn more about the wars our service men and women have fought in on behalf of our nation. About 190 certificates were made for Vietnam War, Korean War and World War II and other conflicts.

Community Service - National Grange continues to support community services in our Granges and their members. The National Grange awards certificates to all 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th place winners at the State Grange sessions as well as the Granges that participate in all states. This year National Grange recognized 86 Granges in 19 states. I worked very closely with the National Community Service Director Pete Pompper to make sure that the State Granges received their certificates in a timely fashion along with their check for community service awards. Pompper has been doing a great job in this program and look forward in working with him next year.

Distinguished Grange - This program is now in its ninth year. A total of 35 Subordinate Granges and 6 States qualified to receive Distinguished Grange status in 2018, for which I printed certificates or ordered plaques. I worked very closely with Communications Director Amanda Leigh Brozana-Rios on this program.

Grange Legacy - This is a program that anyone can nominate any family with at least 5 generations of Grange members. This program was a huge success at last year's National Convention with 82 families that were recognized. They seemed very happy and proud of the honor. It was great having the Overseer Jimmy Gentry to MC this event and having the Youth Ambassadors and Youth Patron to assist in the event. We will recognize and honor families at this year's convention also.

Dictionary Project "Words for Thirds" - Granges continue to support this program with the purchase of either dictionary or thesaurus for the local 3rd grades in the local schools. 208 Granges have given 30,792 books for the 2018-2019 school year so far. The overall total is 992,094 reference books donated so far in the 16 years of this partnership.

Dogs for Better Lives (formerly Dogs for the Deaf) - It was really great having Michelle Erwin, Media and Outreach Specialist and Monica Schuster, Marketing and Communication Specialist at the 2017 National Convention. These ladies had an outstanding presentation during the Community Service workshop during the convention.

2017 Showcase - This is the 2nd year of the Showcase at the National Convention. It was a successful event. It was great having such large floor space that we were able to include the Quilt Show along with a space for Quilts of Valor. It was great having returning vendors like the Dictionary Project "Words for Thirds", CMS "Center for Medicare Services", and Ag in the Classroom. It was great to have the 'New Grange Store@Monroe Classic inside of the showcase room.

2018 Showcase - I know that each year's convention venue is different. With that being said, I have done a very rough sketch of the space to be used. I am looking forward to our returning vendors along with new vendors. I am very excited to have author Walter Boomsma signing his book new book "Exploring Traditions – Celebrating the Grange Way of Life" on Wednesday at the convention. We will have the Best of the Region on display as well as the Photo & Quilt contests. I am hoping people will visit the showcase and while at the showcase I hope they will stop by the New Grange Store @Monroe Classic to make a purchase of some of the new items that will be on sale.

7th Degree at National Convention - During last year convention we tried to do certificates on site hoping to keep the postage cost down; however this did not work well for many reasons. So going forward I will give leadership in making sure all certificates will be done here at National Grange and mailed out after convention in a timely manner. Stephanie Wilkins, Director of IT will help me with the printing of the certificates.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Legislative Fly-In - I assisted Burton Eller, Legislative Director as directed and needed. I attended the Sunday afternoon meet and greet. I helped schedule the Youth tour to the Verizon Technology Center. I put together all the gift bags as well, and made sure that the food etc. was in place on time throughout the day.

The Veterans Health Care Council - This council is made up of other health care organizations ranging from Mental Health America, TAPS, to Vietnam Veterans of America and other groups. I have been attending the council meeting regularly. In fact the chairman of this group is very happy to have the National Grange as a member of the council. The council has submitted several articles to the Patron Chain and the Good Day! Magazine. This is a great organization for the National Grange to be a part of as we are rural and urban America and we do programs to recognize our veterans.

Patrons Chain and Good Day! Magazine - I continue to submit articles about the benefits, Grange Supply Store and other articles from my other partners for the monthly Patrons Chain. The Good Day! magazine I continue to submit the Membership Recognitions and charter 100-year and 125-year anniversaries.

Good Day! Magazine - It was at the request of President Betsy Huber that I would enter all the Good Day! Magazine subscriptions that come in by mail into QuickBooks. I work very closely with Stephanie Wilkins, Director of IT to make sure that all subscriptions are in the database properly and paid. We are encouraging the members to renew online where they can have an auto-renewal set up. The process is working well with very few problems.

Membership Zoom meeting - I participated in the June membership zoom meeting presenting "How Grange can start or bolster their membership/relationship with local 4-H, FFA, Boy Scout, Girl Scout, NJHA chapter and other youth leadership and agriculture groups." I felt the meeting was good and one of the major take-aways from the meeting is getting email addresses especially from the youth at events like camps etc. for follow up and inviting them to other Grange events. I also participated in July and August zoom meetings.

BENEFITS

I have been working very hard to secure new benefits for the membership this year; in fact I have been trying to devote at least one day a week on benefits. During this year I set my goal of 3 new benefit programs for the year. I worked with Ryan

Monson, National Sales Director, ACCESS who could offer discount program (like dining, movies etc.) to the membership from \$0.05 to \$0.20 per member per month. We had several members test drive this program for a couple of months. I spoke with Stuart Warshaw, co-founder of the VLES design Go-bag concept. The Go-bag is an emergency bag that you would have ready in case of an emergency situation. The bag was great but we could not come to an agreement on a discount for the members. During this year we were able to welcome to the Grange benefit family Clouse Insurance Company. I have worked very closely with Gallagher Affinity this year to new to add a new benefit, PureTalk. I have been in talks with American Senior Benefits, Chris Cleland and Al Foschini, about their program and how Grange and its members could benefit from it. The American Senior Benefits is a proud sponsor of the Friendship Dinner at this year's convention. The Member Benefit brochure content is being updated all the time as the benefits are continually changing. During this year we kept the benefits out in front and reminding the members of them each month in the Patrons Chain and the winter, spring and fall issues of the Good Day! Magazine. During this year I have learned that we don't have demographics of our members like ages etc. I am hoping that States will be willing to give this information to National so I may continue to find good benefits for the members.

Choice Hotel International - The program that we have with Choice Hotel International (all Choice Brand Hotels including Comfort Inn, Comfort Suites, Quality, Sleep Inn and Clarion) is well used by Grange members which makes it successful. Our royalty payment for the year was \$555.34.

Gallagher Affinity - This partner offers a wide variety of benefits including VPI Pet Insurance, MetLife Auto & Home, Car Rental (Hertz, Dollars, Dollars and Thrifty.) Our royalty payment for the year was \$638.99.

National Affinity Services (NAS) - Long-standing partnerships with Mark Blocker of the National Affinity Services continue. The program offers discount health care.

In conclusion, first I want to thank everyone who has purchased from The Grange Supply Store, New Grange Store @ Monroe Classic, and finally purchasing a T-shirt as a fundraiser. Your support is greatly appreciated. I will continue to look for more benefit programs for the members this year. I am looking forward to continuing to give good customer service and care in the upcoming year. I also encourage the members to email or call me with suggestions for the programs, benefits and sales (suggest items to be sold in the New Grange Store @ Monroe Classic). It is an honor and privilege to serve you as your Sales, Benefits, Programs and Membership Recognition Director every day because "That's The Grange Way."

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

Prepared by Charlene Shupp Espenshade

Worthy Master, National Officers, Delegates and fellow Grangers:

To begin my annual report, I am reminded of a quote by Mary McLeod Bethune. She said, "We have a powerful potential in our youth, and we must have the courage to change old ideas and practices so that we may direct their power toward good ends."

Our Grange youth and young adults are an amazing powerhouse in this organization and I am amazed at their passion for this organization. Spend any time with them and you will be inspired by their belief in the future of this organization.

Hopefully, you will have the chance to review the 2019 Grange Youth Handbook. We have a couple of new additions to the book and program changes. First, it is the introduction of an exchange program between youth departments. It's true that we live in an online world. While we can read the statistics about the connectivity of today's youth, I still believe some of the best things we can provide to our youth and young adults are experiences. I would like to encourage each state youth director and Master to think about the opportunities you could provide to a group of visiting youth – whether it's inviting a group of youth to participate in your state's youth camp or bringing in a group of youth to help your State Grange with a youth-oriented event. As I have traveled with my youth team over the years, many of them have shared how they appreciated the chance to visit a different part of the country and gain a Grange experience in another state. It's also a chance for our youth to connect and foster relationships across the country.

Another new program you will see introduced at this session is in partnership with Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America. This program will focus on the opioid crisis. The program's goal calls on our Grange youth to build a plan that we as Grangers can use to help our local communities to address this very real issue. I am sure many of you, like myself, have been impacted by the crisis as I have watched it impact friends, coworkers and others and wonder what could have been done to make a difference. I would like to encourage everyone to rally around our youth as we try to find a Grange solution to solve this very real, difficult problem.

The achievement award will change for 2019. Instead of individual certificates for each of the awards, a cumulative poster design has been created. Youth will still receive seals for each project completed, but instead of a binder of certificates they will be added to one certificate. This will help youth keep track of their youth activities. Also added to the program are cumulative awards that recognize the body of work of our youth.

Now time to look back at the past year. First I want to thank Tessa Taft of New York, Asa Houchin of Ohio and Wisconsin Grange member Abby Kulpa for taking on the challenge of forming a Plant Identification Team to participate in the National Junior Horticultural Association convention in St. Louis. This was the first time we have had a team compete in the Grange division. These three did very well and we should all be proud of their work. It was great to see the Grange flag presentation

during their opening ceremonies and spend our time sharing the Grange story with the other youth competing at the event. I would strongly encourage Grangers to find youth in our Granges and communities to compete in this program. These contests allow us as Grangers to bring new members into our program as well as expose our Grange youth to a potential career path.

This past year, we introduced two new programs – a Junior Mentor award and a community service award. We had a great response with five states submitting applications for each award. This was a great start, I would like to encourage other states to nominate their best youth. I know we have so many more special youth in our state Granges.

Code reading is back for a second year. A special thank you to the Massachusetts State Grange for sponsoring this contest again. Thank you to the Assembly for their support of this program and to all of the youth who will compete at National Session in the contest again. Learning the code is not an easy feat, I appreciate the time invested by our youth to prepare for the contest.

In reporting on the achievement activity report, we are down this year. As of the time of this report, I have 1,351 award seals. I have not received all of the state reports yet, and hopefully will close in much closer to our annual average around 1,000. As I have said in the past, I believe these reports fall short of the actual work our Grange youth complete in our communities. I would like to encourage more states to submit their achievement seal reports. These numbers provide an activity barometer for local and state youth departments.

The Distinguished Grange Youth Program has four winners this year, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Washington. Three subordinate Granges have also earned the distinction, Bushy Fork Grange and Arcadia Grange of North Carolina and Humptulips Grange of Washington State. I would like to encourage other youth departments to set the goal to join these programs next year.

The Parliamentary Procedure Contest will commence on Saturday of this year's session. We have two teams entered in the contest at the time of this report. I would like to thank North Carolina for its many years of support to the program.

The Grange Jeopardy Contest continues to grow as well. We have 14 youth representing different Grange regions ready to compete on Saturday morning of session.

I want to thank all of our host states for the 2018 Regional Youth Conferences/ Leadership Conferences -- Maryland, Michigan, Nebraska, North Carolina, Maine, and Washington. I would like to invite everyone to our 2019 conferences in Pennsylvania, Indiana, Texas, Tennessee, Connecticut and Montana.

As the budget and schedules allowed, members of the Youth Team of Outstanding Young Patron Jennifer Nauss and Youth Ambassadors Jacob Gwin and Tessa Taft attended the conferences as well.

Attendance estimates for each of the conferences included as follows:

Eastern: 65	Northeastern: 70	Midwestern: 20
Great Plains: 75	Western: 60	Southeastern: 50

A drill competition was hosted at Northeastern Regionals with teams from New York and Massachusetts. At each of the conferences, we hosted a public speaking and sign-a-song contest. We had 78 contestants in the regional public speaking contest. A total of 5 entries participated in the sign-a-song contest.

National Agriculture Day

National Grange Legislative Director Burton Eller organized legislative visits for the National Grange Youth Team in Washington, D.C. as part of the National Agriculture Day festivities in March. Team members were able to share key Grange policy points with their elected officials. The highlight of the event was attending the National Ag Day event at USDA where Vice President Mike Pence addressed agricultural leaders from across the country.

State Sessions

This year, I had the opportunity serve as a National Representative for the Oregon and Virginia State Sessions. At each event I enjoyed interacting with the Grange youth, committees and visiting with fellow Grangers.

Youth Contests and Recognition Programs

For this year's National Session, the youth recognition program participants are as follows:

The National Grange Outstanding Young Patron Jennifer Nauss. The National Youth Ambassadors are Jacob Gwin of Washington state and Tessa Taft from New York state.

The Horizon Leadership Class is:

Female Ambassadors
Rylee Furr, NC
Jessie Jo Guttridge, OR
Grace Wadsworth, PA
Morgan Browning WA

Female Outstanding Young Patrons
Katie Fallon, NY
Denae Zvarick, PA
Brittney Oliver, WA

Male Outstanding Young Patron
Andrew Kieffer, PA

National Youth Officer Team
Master Gail Switzer, PA
Overseer Matt Horton, NY
Lecturer Mandy Bostwick, KS
Steward Lexie Suing, OR
Assistant Steward Derek Snyder, PA
Lady Asst. Steward Hanna Ogle, WA
Chaplain Jaycee Jette, MT
Treasurer Tyler Leonard, NC

Secretary Hannah Gentry, NC
Gatekeeper Cole Settle, NC
Ceres Samantha Hanson, IA
Pomona Ashley Drop, NC
Flora Lacey Rude, WA
Exec. Comm. Alejandro Cisneros, WA
Exec. Comm. Amber Long, NC
Exec. Comm. Jonathan Pittman, WA
Exec. Comm. Skyler Zaborac, WA
Musician Joey Brenneman ,WA

Some of our other award winners that will be recognized this year as follows.

Community Service

North Carolina – Amber Long
Oregon – Maryssa Yager
Pennsylvania – Grace Wadsworth
Virginia - Megan Bach

Junior Mentor

Connecticut - Natasha Ignacio
North Carolina - Rylee Furr
Oregon - Elizabeth and Kegan Williams
Virginia - Megan Bach
Pennsylvania - Andrew Kieffer

Grow Club

The GROW Club board includes Samantha Hanson, Midwest; Emily Helzel, South Eastern; Robert Beamon, Eastern; Rick Ferguson, Western; Daniel Greer, Great Plains and Christopher Szkutak, Northeast. The club continues to sponsor a \$500 scholarship and this year's winners are Anthony Papol and Margie Griffin.

The GROW Club board is also sponsoring a travel scholarship to support a Horizon Leadership Ambassador or Young Couple to cover part of their travel costs to attend this year's national session.

Be Proud. Be Leaders. Be Grange Youth.

In March 2008, I received the call asking if I would be willing to serve as the National Grange Youth Director. Today, this is my 11th time addressing this delegate body. Each time, I am left in awe and amazement of how special this job really is. Since then, I have watched youth develop and grow as Grangers and in life. Some have moved onto amazing careers, others have started families and many have moved into other forms of Grange leadership. Those roles could be leading their local Grange or moving to a community and starting a new Grange; others have stepped into leadership roles at their State Grange and some have even served as a State Grange Master. I believe this program does and will continue to develop the best and brightest leaders that will continue to advocate for rural America and our farm communities. The power of this department is the diversity of the walks of life we all have travelled. Despite those differences, we are bound together through the commonality that we are all Grangers and a part of that Grange family.

First, a special thank you to the state youth directors and committees. You are on the front lines working with our youth and young adult members, encouraging them, providing them the opportunities to grow as Grangers and lead.

Thank you to my youth team, Tessa, Jacob and Jenn, thank you for your dedication and commitment this past year.

Thanks again to Master Betsy and the DC staff for your support, your support and assistance are always appreciated.

To all of my co-workers at Lancaster Farming, thank you for your support this past year. Serving as youth director requires a lot of days on the road. This past year, I traveled to six regional youth conferences, the Oregon, Virginia and Pennsylvania State Sessions; National Ag Day; National Junior Horticultural Association Convention; hosted a training weekend for the youth team; National Ag Day and the 150th Gala. In short, the required travel exceeded my allotted vacation days at work. They allowed me to modify my schedule in order to meet the requirements of serving as the National Youth Director. My travel would not be possible without their willingness to remain flexible.

Finally, as every director knows, behind every director is an amazing family. To my husband Matt. You might not have worn the "youth director" nametag, but you were at my side during every step of this journey. My parents always were willing to help out with the farm and the family as I traveled. Without you all, this would not have been possible. Thank you for all of the sacrifices you have made to support the work of the department. Finally, to my boys, I have loved watching you grow as Junior Grangers can't wait to see you eventually step into the role of Grange Youth.

COMPLETE INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS & ACTIONS

AGRICULTURE			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
101	OR	Actively Support Healthy Pollinator Populations	Combined with 118-MD
102	MD	Agricultural Research	Adopted as Amended
103	NY	Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act Of 2017	Adopted as Amended
104	PA	Cell Cultured Protein Product Identification	Withdrawn
105	PA	Cell Cultured Protein Products	Withdrawn
106	NE	Cell-Based Protein	Adopted as Amended
107	OH	Creation of a National Foot and Mouth Disease Vaccine Bank	Adopted as Amended
108	MD	CRP Rents	Present Policy
109	WA	Dairy Pride Act	Present Policy
110	MD	Dicamba	Withdrawn
111	MD	Farm Bill	Withdrawn
112	MD	Fire-Resistant Plants	Adopted as Amended
113	CA	Glyphosate Ban	Adopted as Amended
114	NE	GMOS	Present Policy
115	NE	Marketing	Policy Statement
116	VT	Opposition to Prophylactic use of Neonicotinoids	Rejected
117	NY	Pesticides and Honey Bees	Present Policy
118	MD	Pollinators	Adopted as Amended
119	OR	Protect Farm Workers from Pesticide Drift	Policy Statement
120	VT	Purity of Maple Syrup and Honey	State Issue
121	OR	Regenerative Agricultural Standards	Transferred to Conservation; Adopted
122	OR	Renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)	Present Policy
123	MD	Urban Farming	State Issue
124	WV	USDA Indemnity for John's Disease	Adopted as Amended
125	VT	Whole Milk in School Meal Programs	Present Policy

AUDIT & BUDGET			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
201	Committee	Compensation for Elected Officers	Adopted
202	Committee	Covered Expenses for Officers and Delegates	Adopted

CITIZENSHIP & TAXATION			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
301	MI	Absentee Voter Ballots	Adverse
302	NY	Back Pay for National Guard Officers	Adverse
303	NY	Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers of Pre-9/11 Veterans	Adopted
304	IN	Computer Generated Calls	Adverse
305	NY	Female Veteran Peer Counseling	Adopted
306	PA	Food Stamps to be Used for Nutritional Food Items only	Present Policy
307	PA	Freedom to Raise Children	Present Policy

RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
308	IN	Government Assistance Requirements	Present Policy
309	MI	In Town And Out Of Town Mail Boxes	Adverse
310	NJ	Mandatory Withdrawals from Individual Retirement Accounts (Ira's)	Adopted
311	NJ	Military Hunger Prevention Act	Adverse
312	WA	No Budget, No Pay	Adopted as Amended
313	MA	Oppose Cuts to FCC Lifeline Program for Low Income Consumers	Adopted as Amended
314	OR	Oppose Cuts to FCC Lifeline Program for Low Income Consumers	Covered by Res 313
315	IA	Popular Streaming Sites Relay National Weather Service Alerts	Adopted as Amended
316	OR	Reaffirm Prohibition of Gerrymandered Political Districts	State Issue
317	CA	Reclassification of Public Safety Telecommunications by the Office of Management and Budget	Adopted
318	NY	Resolving Military Aviation Accidents	Adverse
319	NY	Service-Related Information on Health Admission Forms	Adverse
320	MN	Small Town and Rural Communities Vitality	State Issue
321	MI	Space Force	Adverse
322	NE	Spoofing	Policy Statement
323	OH	Support for Citizenship Question	Adopted
324	PA	Tax Preparers Held Accountable	Adopted
325	RI	Term Limits of United States Congress	Present Policy
326	MI	Unsolicited Phone Calls	Present Policy
327	CA	Updating the Department of Energy Weatherization Program	Adopted
328	OR	US Postage Stamp for 400th Anniversary of Plymouth Colony	Adopted
329	WV	Voting Identification	Present Policy
330	WV	Voting Rights	Present Policy

CONSERVATION			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
401	TX	Biodegradable Products	Policy Statement
402	MI	Discarded Plastics	Adopted
403	VT	Endangered Species Act	Present Policy
404	PA	Environmental and Endangered Species Laws	Policy Statement
405	ID	Northwest Hydro Power	Adopted
406	OR	Opposing Re-introduction of Grizzly Bears	Present Policy
407	IN	Plastic bags	Policy Statement
408	OR	Require the Use of Biodegradable Products	Policy Statement
409	IN	Styrofoam containers	Present Policy

EDUCATION & HEALTH			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
501	IL	Active Shooter Drills	State Issue
502	IA	Allergies and QR Codes	Withdrawn

RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
503	NY	Approval for Generic and Bio-Similar Drugs	Policy Statement
504	MI	Cursive Writing And Penmanship	Present Policy
505	MD	Dairy	Adopted
506	WA	Dental And Health Insurance Be Combined	Present Policy
507	FL	Disclosing the Use of Transglutaminase in any Meat Product Sold to the General Public	Policy Statement
508	NY	Federal Funding For School Resource Officers	Adverse
509	TX	Healthcare	Present Policy
510	NJ	Honest Labeling Of Sunscreen	Withdrawn
511	NE	Identification of Foods	Present Policy
512	CT	Legible Directions On Food Preparation Products	Withdrawn
513	IN	Medicare	Present Policy
514	CT	Medicare Coverage In Convalescent Homes	Adopted
515	NY	Mental Health Accessibility	Adopted
516	OR	Mental Health Day	Present Policy
517	MD	Opioid Addiction	Policy Statement
518	MI	Opioid Crisis	Policy Statement
519	OR	Out of Network Ambulance Charges	Policy Statement
520	IN	Package Expiration Dates	Present Policy
521	WA	Prescription Drugs	Adopted as Amended
522	FL	Prescription Opioids	Withdrawn
523	MI	Public Education	Policy Stat/Present Pol
524	MI	Public Education Standards	Present Policy
525	NY	Regulatory Burden on Health Care Providers	Adopted
526	CA	Rural Hospitals and Healthcare Facilities	Adopted
527	NY	Safer Schools	Policy Statement
528	ID	School Prayer	Withdrawn
529	MI	U.S. House Bill 610	Present Policy

GRANGE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
601	NJ	7th Degree	Transferred to A&B; Adopted
602	PA	Child Abuse Clearances	Adopted as Amended
603	MI	Distinguished Grange Requirements	Adverse
604	CT	Grange Youth Department	Rejected
605	IA	Improvement of Grange Information in Books and Technology	Policy Statement
606	CT	Junior and Youth Budget	Withdrawn
607	CT	Keep the Junior Grange Badge Program	Withdrawn
608	RI	National Grange Junior Passport/Merit Badge Program	Withdrawn
609	IA	National Website Improvement	Policy Statement
610	FL	National Youth Session	Policy Statement
611	OR	Pomona Grange Manuals	Adverse
612	NY	Secretary's Minute Book	Adverse

GRANGE LAW			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
701	CA	Demits - Amend Section 6.9.4 of the National Grange Digest	Adopted as Amended
702	CA	Demits - Resolution to Amend The National Grange Digest Regarding Meetings of State Granges	Withdrawn
703	CA	Honoring Religious Diversity in the Grange	Rejected
704	DC	E-membership Dues (Two-Year Resolution 2017)	Adopted
705	CA	National Grange Executive Committee Election	Policy Statement
706	CT	Sale Of Grange Property	Policy Statement
707	Committee	Obligation and Welcoming ceremony obligation	Adopted as Amended

LABOR, JUDICIARY & TRANSPORTATION			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
801	CA	Agricultural Labor Reform	Present Policy
802	OH	Ban on Bump Stock Weapons	Policy Statement
803	RI	Bump Stocks and Military Assault Style Weapons	Policy Statement
804	NY	Bump Stocks/High Capacity Magazines	Adverse
805	OH	Changes in Labor Visas for Agricultural Workers	Policy Statement
806	NC	Citizenship Pathway for Dreamers	Adverse
807	WA	Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act	Present Policy
808	MN	Corporations Are Not People	Adverse
809	IL	Data Breach Resolution Package	Withdrawn
810	ID	Data Mining	Withdrawn
811	PA	Daytime Running Lights	Withdrawn
812	IN	Driving Lights	Adverse
813	TX	Eminent Domain Legislation	Withdrawn
814	MN	Expanding Gun Control	Present Policy
815	OR	Highway Improvement	Adverse
816	ID	Home Gene Testing	Withdrawn
817	NE	Immigration	Present Policy
818	OR	Jordan Cove LNG Facility Pacific Connector Pipeline	State Issue
819	ME	K-9 Units Killed In The Line Of Duty	State Issue
820	IA	License to Operate Drone	Withdrawn
821	MI	Licensing Rules For Child Care Centers	State Issue
822	IA	Mississippi River Lock and Dam System Infrastructure	Present Policy
823	CA	Objection to Merger of Monsanto and Bayer	Reject
824	WA	Opposing Crypto-Currency Mining	Adverse
825	ME	Police Officers Killed In The Line Of Duty	State Issue
826	VT	Raising the Federal Minimum Wage	Adverse
827	IA	Reliable Skilled Workforce	Present Policy
828	ID	Separating Families at Our Southern Border	Withdrawn
829	PA	Service Animal Fraud	Adopted
830	WA	Stopping Identity Thieves	Present Policy
831	NY	Synthetic Marijuana	Transferred to E&H; Adopted
832	PA	Use of Social Security Numbers for identification	Adopted

AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE REPORT POLICY STATEMENT

Agriculture is, as always, a foundation of America's economy, providing directly or indirectly through value-added processing, and is currently approximately 5.5% (\$992 Billion) of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP). For over 150 years, the National Grange has been working to improve agriculture in America and the welfare of those who work the soil or care for the creatures of the field. Our roots are in agriculture, and our future is tied to our faith in the perennial cycle of planting and harvest.

Conservation of our soil, water and air quality remains a priority for the Grange, keeping in mind that all pertinent regulations should reflect local conditions. A key component of the future security of our water supply for both domestic and agricultural uses is the ability to store it. Challenges from environmental groups and climate change have brought progress in that area to a standstill. The National Grange will continue to promote water storage projects that benefit agricultural and domestic needs while appropriately safeguarding fish and wildlife safety concerns.

Agricultural producers have been leaders in protecting the environment. The National Grange urges Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) agencies to implement Nutrient Management Plans (NMP's). Good soil health, including proper nutrient management, is a priority, and we encourage all farmers to develop and follow a Nutrient Management Plan to ensure that no more nutrients are applied than are needed to grow the crop.

The National Grange recognizes that other additional challenges facing producers are the precipitous drop in commodity prices coupled with ever-rising cost of inputs and the yearly increases in property taxes. We will continue to work on solutions to help minimize their impact on the agriculture sector. The National Grange continues to monitor issues concerning GMO-related food production and labeling. The National Grange supports voluntary labeling of Genetically Modified products. We further request that the National Grange Legislative Director share the latest reliable research on this subject with State Granges on a continual basis. As consumers become more concerned about where and how their food is produced, the National Organic Program (NOP) has become more popular. The National Grange supports the continued growth and federal support for the NOP, in order to meet the increasing consumer demand for organic food products.

Support for Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) is a long-standing position of the National Grange and is favored by consumers. We support voluntary labeling programs that provide clear information about country of origin and processing, so that consumers can make informed choices about the food they feed their families.

Food safety continues to be a significant issue for Americans in light of the ever-increasing amount of our food that is imported. We believe the responsibility for all food safety inspection should fall under one federal agency, preferably the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). Healthy pollinators populations are critical to food production in the US. We are pleased that the USDA has information available to assist first-time beekeepers in learning how to begin production. The National Grange supports ongoing efforts to preserve proven pollinators health practices, while identifying new pesticide crop treatments that are not harmful to pollinators populations. Although Neonics are a critical component of seed treatments, their misuse via over-the-counter products has resulted in their increasing presence in water and wetlands. Their toxic effect on pollinators populations has reached the point where we feel it is time to consider designating Neonics as a restricted use pesticide. We support additional education efforts designed to inform producers as to the toxic nature of Neonics that are present in treated seeds and the positive aspects of having untreated seeds available for planting.

The use of drone or UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) technology is rapidly becoming an important tool for agricultural production. However, privacy concerns have arisen as drones have become more popular. The National Grange supports the implementation of developed FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) regulations governing the use of drones, and will continue to work with USDA, FAA and other agricultural organizations to address issues related to drone use as they pertain to agriculture.

The National Grange continues to support extensive research by our Land Grant Colleges and Universities into both short-term and long-term effects on the environment and on human nutrition, of all new crops, whether Genetically-Modified or traditionally bred. One of the major issues facing animal agriculture in our country is the effort for certain "Animal Rights" groups to define "Humane Treatment" of animals.

The National Grange should work together with other like-minded groups, to ensure that sound science is used in determining humane treatment of animals. The National Grange strongly supports agriculture education at all levels, including agriculture science as well as Cooperative Extension Service, and encourages the partnership between 4-H, FFA and Cooperative Extension Service to draw on and develop leadership abilities. Adequate funding of Extension must be continued and increased if we wish to ensure the availability of innovative practices and new tools beneficial to agriculture and society. We support educational programs, such as Farm to Table or Farm to School, that teach the importance of proper diet and nutrition. It is more critical now than ever to help consumers understand the basic food system, where their food comes from, and what, if any, genetic alteration was integral to its development. It is vital that we encourage the younger generation to enter into farming. We support programs or policies that will enhance the ability of young farmers to be successful as they pursue production agriculture as an occupation. Opportunities exist to expand agricultural tourism as an additional source of income for farm families. The National Grange urges government at all levels to remove unnecessary laws and regulations that hamper agricultural tourism expansion.

As production agriculture becomes more dependent on computer technology, access to high speed internet has become critical to farming and marketing activities. The National Grange strongly supports expanded funding efforts necessary to develop high-speed internet access in rural areas that are currently under-served.

The National Grange recommends that the 2018 Farm Bill address several issues. Among them is the USDA Margin Protection Program (MPP), which has not been an adequate safety net for dairy farmers. The 2018 omnibus spending bill updated and overhauled the MPP. It provided additional funding to help close the existing gap between feed costs and average milk prices. This, along with restructured premium rates, benefitted small-to-medium sized dairy producers. These improvements and other provisions designed to provide equitable treatment for all commodities on all farm sizes in all regions of the country need to continue to be addressed in the 2018 Farm Bill. The National Grange also strongly supports retaining adequate levels of financial support for the USDA Risk Management Division and the Federal Crop Insurance Program (FCI), so that coverages accurately reflect cost of production and provide adequate price protection, yet insure that premiums remain affordable. Disaster Relief programs are also a critical component of farm income safety nets and must be addressed in the 2018 Farm Bill. We also strongly urge that provisions are made to adequately address the needs for a reliable source of seasonal as well as year-round farm labor.

The National Grange continues to support the principle that only those foods from mammalian sources should be allowed to use the term "milk." The FDA (Food and Drug Administration) should not allow the labelling of nutritionally-inferior plant or artificial substitutes as "milk," "yogurt" or "cheese." The USDA must retain the authority to regulate the emergence of the efforts to grow "meat" in a laboratory setting. The Grange supports the principle that the term "meat" can only be used to describe animal protein derived from harvested production livestock, poultry, seafood or wildlife, wild or domestic.

Milk prices to the farmer have dropped 5.4% over the past 20 years, while production costs have continued to climb. The Grange must continue to work to educate consumers on the positive qualities of whole milk and lowering the unacceptable level of waste of our food that currently occurs on a daily basis in this country. Education efforts such as these will lead to more demand for our domestically-produced milk, thus leading to higher prices for our producers and less waste of food will make more available for government-assistance food programs.

Individual incomes in developing countries are rising, leading to changes in diet that will increase demands on the world's food supply even as population growth adds its inevitable impact. Cooperative nonpartisan effort is the "Grange way," and an understanding of the direct relationship between science and the natural world will be required, to answer the question "How will we feed them all?" It is a well-known fact that a strong agriculture makes a strong country.

INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS

RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
102	MD	Agricultural Research	Adopted as Amended
103	NY	Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act Of 2017	Adopted
106	NE	Cell-Based Protein	Adopted
107	OH	Creation of a National Foot and Mouth Disease Vaccine Bank	Adopted as Amended
112	MD	Fire-Resistant Plants	Adopted
113	CA	Glyphosate Ban	Adopted
118	MD	Pollinators	Adopted
124	WV	USDA Indemnity for Johne's Disease	Adopted as Amended

ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS

102-MD – Agricultural Research

WHEREAS the state of Maryland has many outstanding agricultural research facilities, including the University of Maryland Agricultural Research Stations and the USDA Research Station at Beltsville; and

WHEREAS there has been a critical need for research to help farmers under tremendous pressure to meet our goals to help clean up the Chesapeake Bay, which is showing signs of success; and

WHEREAS there is also a need to combat the growing problem of weed resistance to herbicides since there are no new types of pesticides being introduced, we must rely on genetics and more innovative solutions to this difficult problem; therefore be it

RESOLVED the National Grange encourages Congress to fully fund the Research Title of the upcoming 2018 Farm Bill so that American farmers can have the additional tools to farm profitably while protecting the environment and fund new research designed to develop new protocols to fight pesticide resistance in weeds; and be it further

RESOLVED the Grange encourages all State Departments of Agriculture and Agriculture Experiment Stations to conduct research designed to achieve those same goals.

103-NY – Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act of 2017

WHEREAS New York State Grange supported the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act of 2013 as a means of making it easier for those wanting to begin farming and ranching; and

WHEREAS the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act of 2013 has been replaced by the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act of 2017 (H.R. 4316- 115th Congress 2017-2018); therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange supports the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act of 2017 or similar legislation that modifies several Department of Agriculture (USDA) Programs that address conservation, credit, rural development, research and education, and crop insurance to authorize enhanced loan assistance programs for beginning farmers and ranchers.

106-NE – Cell-Based Protein

WHEREAS developing technology of cell-based tissue generation has progressed to the point where it is now possible to grow “meat” in a laboratory environment, in a petri dish; and

WHEREAS this technology will soon be commercially available on such a large scale that growing “meat” in a laboratory for the purpose of selling it to the public for consumption will become a reality; and

WHEREAS as regulatory procedures are developed for the government to monitor the proper health and safety concerns, as well as the commercial marketing of these products; and

WHEREAS a clear distinction needs to be made between “meat” grown in a laboratory environment and meat that is derived from harvested production livestock or poultry, and the proper regulatory agency for oversight of this industry needs to be identified; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Grange work with other like-minded organizations at the Federal level to ensure that government regulations involving the term “meat” be clear that that term is reserved exclusively for the use of describing animal protein that is derived from harvested production from livestock, poultry, seafood or wildlife; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Grange work with other organizations and government agencies to develop a commercially-acceptable term for cell-based protein(s) and to identify the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as the regulatory oversight agency that will be responsible for cell-based protein production.

107-OH – Creation of a National Foot and Mouth Disease Vaccine Bank

WHEREAS farmers across the Nation are grappling with the adverse effects of the trade disputes between China and Mexico that can hurt the farm industry creating a harmful effect on thousands of farmers; and

WHEREAS the 2018 Farm Bill includes provisions that will take the pressure off the farming industry and to safeguard an industry that employs more than 550,000 Americans in the pork industry alone; and

WHEREAS while negotiations occur in Washington DC, it is critical to call on our elected officials to protect Americans that rely on Agriculture as a source of income and food; and

WHEREAS one of the first priorities must be the creation of a national vaccine bank for Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) as an outbreak of this disease would be catastrophic for the American meat industry; and

WHEREAS the US is capable of handling only a very small, localized outbreak, farmers would likely not receive a vaccine for weeks; and

WHEREAS a national outbreak would cripple the entire Agricultural sector and result in the immediate loss of jobs in rural America; and

WHEREAS to adequately respond to an FMD outbreak, a Vaccine Bank needs to be provided along with additional resources for the National Animal Health Laboratory Network and state animal health agencies to support and be prepared for a foreign animal disease emergency; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange encourages enhanced Federal financial support for Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) Vaccine Bank to ensure adequate supplies of FMD Vaccine to handle a larger scale Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak.

112-MD – Fire-Resistant Plants

WHEREAS wildfires in the western United States in the past 2 years have caused tremendous devastation; and

WHEREAS properties that planted fire-resistant or fire-retardant plants sustained much less damage; therefore be it

RESOLVED the National Grange encourages US Department of Agriculture and state Agriculture Research Stations to identify and promote fire-resistant plants and encourage them to be planted in developed fire-prone areas.

113-CA – Glyphosate Ban

WHEREAS Glyphosate formulations such as Monsanto’s Roundup have been proven with a preponderant amount of scientific evidence, as recently demonstrated in the courts, that Glyphosate is a dangerous substance that has created significant health issues; and

WHEREAS in August 2018, a California jury ruled in favor of Dwayne Johnson who claimed that Monsanto’s Roundup that contains Glyphosate caused his Non-Hodgkin lymphoma. According to the ruling, Monsanto intentionally failed to warn

consumers about the carcinogenicity of this weed killer and the dangers of Glyphosate resulting in an award of \$289 million which included \$250 million in punitive damages; and

WHEREAS the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the cancer research arm of the World Health Organization (WHO), reclassified in 2015 Glyphosate as a probable human carcinogen; and

WHEREAS following the IARC's determination that Glyphosate is probably carcinogenic, California's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment announced it intended to list Glyphosate as a chemical known to cause cancer which requires consumer products with potential cancer-causing ingredients to bear warning labels; and

WHEREAS tests conducted by the U.S. National Toxicology Program found Glyphosate formulations can significantly kill human cells; and

WHEREAS other Glyphosate studies have linked the chemical to ADHD, Alzheimer's Disease, Autism, Birth Defects, various forms of cancer, Celiac Disease, Colitis, Heart Disease, Inflammatory Bowel Syndrome, Kidney, Liver and Parkinson's Disease; and

WHEREAS Glyphosate is being found everywhere. Many farmers spray Glyphosate formulations directly on wheat, corn and soybean acreage pre-harvest to reduce moisture, where previously it was primarily used as weed control. Glyphosate is now found in every processed food tested, in air samples, rain samples, municipal water supplies, soil samples, vaccines, breast milk (83% in Brazil studies 1) and urine; and

WHEREAS numerous cities, counties and countries worldwide have banned or limited the use of Glyphosate. Some of the countries & cities that have recently banned Glyphosate:

- o Canada - Eight out of the ten provinces in Canada have some form of restriction on the use of glyphosate
- o Belgium - Banned the individual use of glyphosate
- o Denmark - Implemented new rules banning the use of glyphosate on all post-emergent crops to avoid food residues
- o France - To issue an outright ban on glyphosate within the next three years.
- o Netherlands - Banned all non-commercial use of glyphosate.
- o Austin - Banned on all city owned property
- o Portland - Banned on all city owned property
- o Chicago - Stopped spraying Glyphosate in public spaces
- o Santa Rosa - Banned on all city owned parks and property
- o Dubuque, Iowa - City instituted a ban on Glyphosate use in public parks
- o Minneapolis - Eliminated all Glyphosate-based products in neighborhood parks; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange promotes use of Integrated Weed Management (IWM) programs and other safe and effective alternatives to glyphosate use.

118-MD - Pollinators

WHEREAS pollinators are critically important to the health of agriculture and are currently having serious issues; and

WHEREAS the National Junior Grange has a Pollinator Project; and

WHEREAS every state has a Managed Pollinator Protection Plan (MP3) that has valuable information about pollinators, threats to their health, and steps that be taken to improve their habitat; therefore be it

RESOLVED the National Grange encourages Extension and/or USDA to incorporate pollinator health into their programs, such as 4-H, Master Gardeners, Farm meetings, etc.; be it further

RESOLVED that the National Grange encourages farmers to incorporate and implement agricultural practices that support pollinators, such as alternating insectary strips, no-spray areas, hedgerows, meadows, beneficial insects, and reducing or eliminating pesticides that harm pollinators; and be it further

RESOLVED that the National Grange urges all Granges to utilize the Managed Pollinator Protection Plans (MP3) to make their properties a better habitat for pollinators.

124-WV – USDA Indemnity for Johne's Disease

WHEREAS Johne's Disease is very contagious and can spread easily among ruminant animals; and

WHEREAS it is very prevalent among dairy herds (58% affected) and is spreading rapidly to beef herds; and

WHEREAS there is no treatment at this time and can only be detected by a blood test or feces sample; and

WHEREAS some state Departments of Agriculture have a program to test your herd at a cost absorbed by the producer; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange encourages the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to establish a Johne's Disease program similar to the Brucellosis testing and provide an indemnity payment at a fair market value for those cattle which have tested positive for Johne's Disease and are disposed of.

PRESENT POLICY

Agricultural Exports & Embargoes

1. The National Grange encourages its members to work through their commodity export promotion organizations on increasing the producers' participation in export market development. We strongly support retaining the present system

of private enterprise and cooperatives in export sales. We continue to support government export credit programs, including blended credit, and propose the establishment of a revolving export credit fund. We further support the formation of a national marketing federation of regional marketing cooperatives to cover all agricultural export commodities and better serve the world's markets. We encourage all segments of the agricultural community to increase their private investment in export market development for American agricultural commodities

2. The National Grange supports legislation or administrative action that will continue to maintain and increase the exporting of agricultural commodities. We recommend new emphasis on cash sales for agricultural products along with aggressive exportation of high value-added products. Consideration should be given to greater participation by the USDA in the administration and distribution of American food-aid programs.
3. The National Grange urges the Grain Inspection Service of the USDA to take all necessary steps to insure only grain of the quality specified in the purchase be moved into the export markets.
4. The National Grange supports increasing market development programs conducted through the USDA and AID (Agency for International Development) with emphasis on financing and development of the infrastructure of recipient countries to facilitate the receiving and distribution of U.S. agricultural products.
5. The National Grange will oppose restrictions being placed on imports into the United States that could result in retaliatory action being taken against U.S. agricultural exports by the exporting country. We recommend that further legislative and/or administrative actions be taken to enhance the exportation of U.S. agricultural commodities. We strongly support keeping the authority to determine national agricultural export policy in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. We support all efforts to maintain the sanctity of export contracts. We support monitoring and full public disclosure of information concerning sales to foreign countries. We support negotiations to eliminate all tariff and non-tariff trade restrictions against United States' agricultural exports.
6. The National Grange will oppose any attempt to embargo, restrict or otherwise burden the export of logs or any other privately grown agricultural commodity by a complete or partial ban, quota, or tax of any nature.
7. The National Grange supports swift implementation of the Taft-Hartley Act's provisions against workers who refuse to load agricultural commodities for export.
8. The National Grange supports developing agricultural trade with Cuba. We seek means whereby Cuba might be extended loans and/or credit to purchase U.S. agricultural products.

Agricultural Imports

1. The National Grange supports strict enforcement of laws regulating the importation of harmful species of plants and animals. We further support measures which will require tighter oversight and control at port of entry and market outlets in an effort to control the importation of exotic fowl, pet birds, and the establishment of procedures for the treatment of imported cargoes to prevent the importation of plant or animal insects or diseases.
2. The National Grange supports legislation that would require the USDA to certify that food products coming into the USA for human consumption have not been grown or treated with products that are not currently registered for use on food products in the United States.
3. The National Grange does not approve of using inspections, grading, health, and sanitary or labeling standards as non-tariff barriers to trade. We do support placing import quotas and/or import tariffs on agricultural commodities as a means of protecting domestic markets from seasonal and over trend market penetration surges. We urge Congress and the President to investigate dumping of food products from other countries to the US market that affect the agriculture industry in the United States. We insist that all imported agricultural products, including value-added commodities, meet the same strict inspection, unapproved pesticide residues, grading, and labeling standards as domestically-produced products and that these standards be strictly enforced, and the country of origin supply certification that the imported product is free of harmful diseases and pests. We specifically recommend that all imported products be labeled with the name of the country of origin until the consumer purchases it. We further support the elimination of all export subsidies on agricultural products imported into the United States or the imposition of countervailing duties to offset the subsidy value.
4. The National Grange supports strict enforcement of existing countervailing duties to offset the subsidy value on certain agricultural and timber products being imported from Canada to protect the agriculture and timber industries in states along the Canadian border.
5. National Grange supports continued restrictions on imports of animals, meat, meat products and bone meal into the United States from any country having Mad Cow Disease until sound scientific data proves it is safe.
6. To allow for the consumers' right to know where their food comes from, the National Grange supports voluntary country-of-origin labeling for beef, pork, lamb, fish, and shellfish that is compliant with World Trade Organization (WTO) trade rules.

Agriculture Trade Policy

1. The Grange must continue to work for sound trade agreements for agriculture by encouraging the Administration and Congress to aggressively ensure that American farmers achieve access to all markets covered by trade agreements. The National Grange opposes non-transparent, non-amendable fast-track pacts which are not open to debate by our legislative bodies.
2. The National Grange supports the dairy industry being adequately represented in World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations.

3. The National Grange supports the permanent appointment of a Chief Agricultural Negotiator in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. We support the strong representation of U.S. agricultural interests in all negotiations regarding U.S. trade relations, and to ensure that the cost of research and development is not born solely by the American farmer.
4. The National Grange continues to work for an adequate food supply for the entire world. We encourage increased food production in developing countries. To that end, we support an international food program that provides for the support of all nations in a cooperative endeavor to meet current and projected food needs in deficient areas and ensures that food will be available and efficiently distributed. All nations should give more support for research, education and development of programs designed to improve the capability of farmers in food deficient areas to meet more of the food needs of their people.
5. The National Grange supports the development of a consistent policy on the use of sanctions by the U.S. government. The Grange opposes trade embargoes as a first choice of action, but should all choices fail, short of military action, and a trade embargo becomes the only alternative, the Grange urges the federal government to embargo all products - agricultural, industrial and technical - instead of specific agricultural commodities. If sanctions become necessary as a tool of foreign policy, then sanctions should be used only as a consequence of multilateral sanctions.
6. In any new trade negotiations or discussions in re-opening any existing trade pacts, the National Grange strongly supports the inclusion of policy to protect state laws, including defense of such laws by the proper authorities in any trade court.
7. The National Grange insists that representatives of USDA and the Department of Homeland Security be present at all Free Trade negotiations to ensure that an adequate supply of domestically produced dairy products be maintained. Congress should diligently scrutinize all Free Trade Agreements to protect agriculture production in the event of serious food shortages caused by natural disaster, disease or terrorism before voting the Trade Agreement "up or down."
8. The National Grange insists that trade pacts require all imported products from signatory countries, not just agricultural products, meet the same strict standards as domestically-produced goods for environmental protection, residue, labeling and worker safety. These standards must be strictly enforced.
9. The National Grange believes trade pacts should not cede judicial power to foreign tribunals, such as the World Trade Organization, not bound by the Constitution and laws of the United States.

Anti-Trust Issues

1. The National Grange recommends that Congress investigate the possibility that very large corporations that own and operate livestock/poultry slaughtering plants as well as very large livestock/poultry feeding facilities are violating anti-trust laws. We question whether or not those firms are engaged in price manipulation resulting from their control of an extremely large portion of the market; their lack of competitive bidding because of the regionally specific location of the slaughtering plants that are owned by these corporations and their access to their own large numbers of fed animals or poultry in their own feeding facilities. If any firms are found to be in violation of anti-trust laws, the Department of Justice or the Federal Trade Commission should take the necessary action to uphold the laws.
2. The National Grange calls on the Federal Trade Commission to investigate the agricultural supply, agricultural transportation, grain handling, pricing policies and the potential anti-competitive marketing practices of all large corporations in the food processing and food marketing industries. We oppose the concentrated growing, marketing and distribution of agricultural production by large corporations other than farm cooperatives in the US. We call upon the Federal Trade Commission to investigate the pricing policy of the food industry and anti-competitive marketing practices, such as the purchasing of shelf space and product location that places new and less expensive generic brands at a marketing disadvantage. We express deep anti-trust concerns regarding the control of the U.S. seed supply to both Congress and the Department of Justice and urge both to conduct a close review of recent acquisitions and mergers.
3. The National Grange urges the Secretary of Agriculture to appoint a study committee composed of representatives from farm organizations, commodity groups, and integrators to study the terms of grower contracts to determine fairness to both parties and their acceptance by lending institutions. We further support better nationwide reporting of price and contract information, including forward contract prices, and on-going studies of the relationship between farm gate prices and retail prices. We urge the USDA to fully fund these efforts.
4. The National Grange urges continued awareness of issues related to the electronic trading of grain and other agricultural production. We urge the imposition of necessary regulations on Internet trading of grain where appropriate to protect the farmer.
5. The National Grange opposes any effort to exempt commodity check off funds from being subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to continue transparency.

Biotechnology Policy, Research and Application to Agriculture

1. The National Grange supports a federal policy to allow the use of biotechnology in agriculture. We recognize that genetic engineering of plants and animals has already had a positive impact on increasing the availability of food; decreasing the environmental impact of agriculture and creating foods that are safer, longer-lasting, more nutritious and better tasting. We further support continued research on biotechnology and genetic engineering, including further scientific research into non-human cloning. We support an approval process for genetically modified plants and animals that utilizes science-based decision making to assure the safety of agricultural products. To that end, the National Grange philosophically supports the efforts of

National Science Foundation (NSF) concerning their Plant Genome Initiative.

2. The National Grange supports legislation that provides that patented plants and livestock that have been developed through biotechnology (gene-splitting, cloning, genetic engineering, etc.) will be made available to farmers by provisions that will not result in a concentration of the patented livestock in the hands of a few large firms and will not interfere with their availability to all farmers.
3. The National Grange urges the FDA, EPA, USDA and other national farm organizations to publicize the safety of GMOs to help reduce the resistance to the use of this technology providing correct and scientifically verified information on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) to news media and other outlets to enhance the availability of truthful information and ultimately provide more information to the world community. The Grange supports a voluntary GMO-free labeling certification program regulated by USDA and urges that the USDA Certified Organic label automatically qualify as GMO-free.
4. The National Grange supports ongoing educational efforts by the Cooperative Extension Service that address growing concerns about GMO genetic material drift to non-GMO plants.

Chemicals for Agriculture: Weed, Pest and Predator Control

1. The National Grange urges the EPA to consult with state, industry, and user groups when developing policy and regulations that relate to pesticide industries. The National Grange also urges the EPA to use a reasonable approach in carrying out the provisions and requirements of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act. We recommend relying on impartial scientific research data that is based on the normal human consumption patterns of a product before suspending or canceling the use of a particular chemical. We urge more review and study of a chemical before the public is advised that an agricultural chemical may be harmful to their health. We support increased research and education being done by the USDA and EPA to improve integrated pest management, including comprehensive strategies to minimize weed resistance issues. To that end, we support the reinstatement and full funding of the USDA's Pesticide Data Program. We further recommend that Congress provide additional funds for Land Grant Colleges and Universities to be more actively involved with biological pest control research.
2. The National Grange supports efforts to provide information to growers and farmers on actions that can be taken when adverse public statements are made questioning their use of agricultural chemicals that are legally registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). We support legislation that would allow producers and handlers to seek criminal and punitive damages from people or organizations that disseminate false or unsubstantiated information that causes punitive harm to a grower or handler of an agricultural product, including seeking equal media time. We further seek legislation that would protect a farmer from criminal or civil liability regarding that farmer's use or disposal of an EPA registered and approved herbicide or pesticide in accordance with the manufacturer's printed instructions.
3. The National Grange supports the reasonable and practical use of agricultural chemicals as well as reasonable and practical standards for reentry to fields or areas treated with agricultural chemicals. We continue to support the USDA to establish a certification program that encourages herbicide applicators to use best management practices to prevent damage to adjacent property. We continue to support adequate funding for increased research by all appropriate government agencies to develop, improve, and disseminate information on alternative or sustainable agriculture. We continue to support educational programs for farmers on the safe use and disposal of agricultural chemicals, including their containers, in an environmentally safe way.
4. The National Grange supports certification and re-certification programs for all restricted use pesticides. All applicators of restricted-use pesticides should be certified in the application of restricted-use pesticides.
5. The National Grange opposes the federal Environmental Protection Agency's proposed increased requirements for recertification of private and commercial pesticide applicators licenses.
6. The National Grange supports allowing the continued and appropriate use of the following farm chemicals: 2-4-D for weed control; triazanes as a crop protectant; Elgetol for thinning apples; Compound 1080 for predator control; Methyl bromide for controlling insect infestations in stored commodities and any chemicals found to be effective in controlling fire ants. We further encourage the EPA to reevaluate their restrictions on certain pesticides that are used for grasshopper control so that a more effective environmental control program may be offered to farmers and ranchers.
7. The National Grange supports legislation that provides increased and continuous funding for the Inter-regional Research Project Number Four (IR-4) minor-use pesticides program. We recommend streamlining the approval process for minor use pesticides by reducing the cost and time necessary for registration or re-registration.
8. The National Grange supports a federal Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) that updates standards pertaining to pesticide and chemical residue in food be revisited, utilizing new technologies for determining food safety based on the negligible risk standard. We specifically urge the Environmental Protection Agency to implement the FQPA by using sound scientific data based on actual use of pesticides and agricultural chemicals and by providing a transition period for agriculture to adjust to the withdrawal of an approved pesticide.
9. The Cooperative Extension Service and the State Departments of Agriculture, in cooperation with retail and wholesale dealers of lawn and garden pesticides, should conduct special pesticide application classes for homeowners to ensure the proper use and disposal of unused chemicals and their containers. The sale of lawn and garden pesticides should be monitored closely by local and state authorities to ensure that restricted-use pesticides are not sold to uncertified applicators.

10. The National Grange opposes the EPA classifying plants as a pesticide based upon genetic engineering.
11. All fertilizer manufacturers using toxic, heavy metal, chemical or radioactive wastes should be required to list those components on the package label.
12. The National Grange will support a high priority program for the control of noxious weeds on all lands, including Witchweed, Tartinian Honeysuckle, Russian or Autumn Olive and Multiflora Rose. The National Grange supports Integrated Pest Management Programs and other safe alternatives to Glyphosate use.
13. The National Grange urges the USDA to continue funding for the control of the Asian Gypsy Moth, Pine Beetle, Tussock Moth and the Asian Long Horned Beetle. We support additional funding and legal authority to restrict the importation of foreign pests into the U.S. We urge USDA to alert the general public to the potential threat that foreign insects pose to our native species.
14. The National Grange supports legislation allowing farmers, ranchers and others to protect their property from predators, including endangered species.
15. The National Grange urges Congress to prohibit all sales of any form (live, dried, seeds) of any plant that has been placed on a state, regional or national noxious weed list.
16. The National Grange urges the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to continue to allow the use of atrazine after its registration review.

Dairy Policy, Milk Marketing Orders, Dairy Prices, and Inspections

1. The National Grange supports a milk supply management program that recognizes regional differences based upon the cost and amount of production, availability of markets, percentage of production that is allocated to CCC (Commodity Credit Corporation) stocks, and the percentage of Class I use.
2. The National Grange supports the use of Basic Formula Price (BFP) in determining the base price for dairy products, as well as multiple-component pricing for all classes of milk in all federal milk marketing orders.
3. We support the continued payment of Class I differentials and oppose any effort to form a national pool of Class I milk differentials.
4. The National Grange opposes any change in the classification of reconstituted milk and the depooling of Class III milk.
5. The National Grange requests of all appropriate agencies, associations, and boards that milk prices received by dairy farmers be quoted in terms to which consumers can relate, such as price per gallon rather than price per hundredweight.
6. The National Grange urges Congress to pressure the USDA to raise the support price of milk to a level for the benefit of both the producer and the consumer. The National Grange supports legislation that is geared toward controlling volatility of month-to-month milk prices.
7. The National Grange also supports efforts that assist struggling dairy farmers by revising the national milk pricing system. We believe that a federal order system for milk pricing should include such concepts as: (1) supplying side controls, (2) charging Class I processors an assessment to fund the cost of cooperatives that balance the pool of milk in their areas, (3) keeping multiple component pricing, (4) declassifying Class I prices from other classes, (5) making major improvements to the dairy producer income insurance program that is complimentary to the Livestock Gross Margin Program, returns to the original feed cost formula and takes into account local prices paid, (6) creating a mechanism to more quickly respond to changing market conditions and reduce price volatility, which would include a growth management program that is flexible and responsive to market conditions while providing producers with the ability to grow, and (7) providing that any Growth Management Program must contain a minimum time period of 5 years before a total buy-out of a dairy operation can be restarted or if a partial buy-out of a herd, before an increase in production from the operation will be allowed.
8. The National Grange supports the implementation of a forward contracting pilot program for all classes of milk other than Class I. We support close monitoring of this program to assure that forward contracting does not adversely affect dairy farmer profitability. However, any monitoring or review of the forward contracting policy program must be sensitive to, and protect the privacy of, individual dairy farmers participating in the pilot program.
9. The National Grange continues to seek an increase in exports of milk and milk products. We support funding of the Dairy Export Incentive Program (DEIP) to the full limit permitted by WTO agreements. We urge milk cooperatives and other associations to become actively involved in the development of export markets for dairy products. We support additional funding for USDA to provide technical assistance to private sector dairy export trading entities.
10. The National Grange opposes the importation of caseinates and urges the adoption of tariff rate quotes on Milk Protein Concentrates entering the country. The National Grange also supports having milk used to produce Milk Protein Concentrate (MPC) included in the total milk produced in the area Federal Milk Marketing order and urges the adoption of standards on how MPC is used and inspected to ensure compliance.
11. The National Grange continues to support the National Dairy Product Promotion Program as a means to promote and increase the consumption of dairy products. We urge the USDA to periodically account to the public for any monies that have been collected from dairy farmers under any assessment programs, including required reports to Congress.
12. The Extension Service, nutrition educators, farm organizations, processors, and vendors should promote the nutritional value of "Real" dairy products and should promote use of the "Real Seal" merchandising program. Only those foods from mammalian sources should be allowed to use the term "milk".
13. The National Grange continues to support government purchases of dairy for domestic programs.
14. The National Grange opposes the Food and Drug Administration's proposal to allow products with the "nutritional

equivalency" of a food to be labeled "substitute." We suggest that any "imitation" or "substitute" product which resembles a dairy product, whether or not nutritionally equivalent yet includes substitute dairy ingredients, may not in any manner be allowed to bear the name of the dairy product which it is purported to resemble. This also includes imported "imitation" or "substitute" products. The National Grange supports Federal Government oversight to enforce strict labeling regulations concerning organic milk, ensuring that all milk labeled organic comes from certified organic farms only.

15. The National Grange opposes legislation that requires the labeling of milk/milk products as it relates to rBST.
16. The National Grange supports legislation that would extend the present pay and trust provision of the Packers and Stockyards Act to the dairy industry. We further support a national security fund, funded by processors or secured by bonding, to protect against processor bankruptcy if the fund does not preempt a stronger state program.
17. We recognize the need for dairy farm and dairy plant inspections to help insure the highest quality of dairy products but insist that duplication of inspections by the several government entities (city, county, state and federal) be discontinued where possible. The several levels of government should agree to accept uniform and reciprocal dairy farm and dairy plant inspections.
18. The National Grange encourages the continued performance of dairy genetic evaluations for the dairy industry.
19. The National Grange at all levels encourages the Dairy Co-ops to voluntarily initiate a program that allows membership of the Co-op to vote on any program that takes money out of the farmer's pocket with a yes vote for approval
20. The National Grange urges the Food and Drug Administration to keep dairy as a separate food group and assure a place on the Food Pyramid or daily recommendations for dairy and meat products.
21. The National Grange should actively participate in education activities that are focused on informing the public of the value and protection provided by the pasteurization process.
22. The National Grange urges a change be made whereby Commodity Credit Corporation purchases of surplus dairy products are of dairy products that are in demand by domestic and international markets.
23. The National Grange supports legislation that would expand the definition of qualifying livestock eligible for the 50 percent bonus depreciation to include all dairy cows purchased by a dairy farm operator for business use.
24. The National Grange urges the reform of Federal Milk Marketing Order regulations so that excess milk can more easily be donated to food banks while still protecting milk processors from unfair pricing practices and protecting the price being paid to farmers for their milk.
25. The National Grange encourages fundraisers to purchase excess milk to donate to food banks.
26. The National Grange urges FDA to adopt the 2017 higher California Standards for protein and solids-not-fat fluid milk to help standardize and improve milk quality.

Disaster Assistance and Risk Management

1. The National Grange strongly supports the continuation of the multi-peril federal crop insurance program (FCI) that provides coverage on all program, non-program and specialty crops on a nationwide basis. We support changes in the FCI program that would include multi-peril insurance for all crops, [including double-crop soybeans](#). We recommend that federal crop insurance coverage be updated annually to reflect the cost of production. We further believe that area coverage should be dropped, and a realistic production base should be established for each tract of land.
2. The National Grange urges the USDA Risk Management Division to take steps to accelerate the processing and payment of claims. We support using uniform standards for grading fruits for market, hail and other damage payments.
3. The USDA Risk Management Division should discontinue providing insurance coverage on a percentage basis. Coverage should be changed to insure crops on a dollar amount of loss per acre (or unit). The National Grange recommends removing any percent cut on estimated yields if weather conditions prevent timely planting. In addition, the USDA Risk Management Division should delete the current footnotes and should clearly state all exceptions, limitations and other provisions concerning crop coverage in the insurance policy.
4. The National Grange supports disaster aid relief that is based on individual rather than countywide losses. We urge the federal government to distribute surplus stored grain, at no cost and on a need basis, to limited resource farmers in disaster-stricken areas as well as make available a recourse loan on a need basis for damaged commodities.
5. The National Grange urges the USDA Risk Management Division to allow an option that will permit wheat producers covered by the USDA Risk Management Division's crop insurance to obtain a replant payment if replanting is required.
6. The National Grange urges the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to streamline procedures that will expedite implementation of the disaster and market loss program payments. Funding for these payments must be "emergency" and not otherwise reduce any other program spending.
7. The National Grange supports the Farm and Ranch Risk Management (FARRM) account program allowing farmers and ranchers to deposit a set-aside amount of pre-tax dollars into an interest-bearing account to average income fluctuations.
8. A farm yield or county average yield history for any government farm programs shall not be influenced when a yield is less than 50 percent of the normal yield of a given crop and is caused by any God-given weather-related disaster (drought-heat, flood, wind, hail, etc.) that is out of a farmer's control.
9. The National Grange supports a compromise that will lower the federal crop insurance subsidy for farm operations with an adjusted gross income over \$750,000 or \$1.5 million for a married couple from 62 percent to 42 percent and opposes lowering the subsidy for farmers with an adjusted gross income of less than \$750,000. The National Grange further supports

crop insurance subsidies for all agricultural producers and urges the Risk Management Agency to adequately train insurance agents about the Whole Farm Revenue Protection Program.

10. Because extreme weather conditions are devastating to producers, The National Grange encourages Congress to provide additional insurance programs for catastrophic losses to livestock, crops and timber not covered by existing insurance programs. The National Grange supports the continuation of the current funding levels for the Livestock Forage Disaster Program, Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program and the Conservation Reserve Grasslands Program in the 2018 Farm Bill.

Family Farm Policies and Farm Preservation Programs

1. The National Grange believes that policies that promote a viable family farm structure in America's agricultural sector are in the best interests of all citizens. We reaffirm our support for farm commodity programs that serve the best interests of producers and consumers. The purpose of the Federal Farm Program is to ensure Americans an adequate supply of safe and wholesome food, provide some income protection to the food producers and protect our environment by providing incentives for soil and water conservation. The National Grange supports programs that will stimulate interest and appreciation for an expanding agriculture industry that provides an abundant supply of reasonably priced food and fiber to meet our domestic needs and still export the products of one out of every three acres into the world markets.
2. The National Grange continues to strongly support family farms as an integral and important contributor to a stable agricultural production and rural communities. We call upon the President and Congress to support programs and policies that will help sustain and enhance family farms by increasing the net farm income, providing economic and tax incentives, and credit and/or tax credits for soil and water conservation - without escalating the advantages to non-farm investors. This includes recognizing Alpaca and Llama farming as a livestock business enterprise.
3. The National Grange believes that a family farm is a business or enterprise involved in the production of food, fiber and related products or services that is owned and operated by the members of a family who make the management and financial decisions and supply at least part of the labor. We urge USDA to modify its programs to provide additional assistance to beginning farmers and ranchers.
4. The National Grange request federal, state and county governments streamline the process to transfer farms and other small businesses from one family member to another, so that the cost of compliance and tax consequences do not prevent the transfer from occurring.
5. The National Grange will continue to support the use of lands for production of food and fiber, as long as the enterprises are operated under best management practices as established by the Farm Service Agency and the Natural Resource Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
6. The National Grange encourages the U.S. Department of Agriculture to maintain the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) as individual agencies in order to enhance their critical roles in supporting farmer-owned cooperatives and the rural communities they serve.
7. Federal, state, and local agencies should work for efficient economic development policies that treat the agriculture industry on equal terms with other businesses and industries, such as small farmers. The National Grange supports government rural development programs that provide local off-farm employment for rural people and that provide an improved income for small and medium-sized farms.
8. The National Grange supports public relation programs that disseminate accurate information on the efficiency and productivity of American agriculture, as well as the contributions it has made in providing an adequate supply of food and fiber, and the important role the food and agricultural industry plays in the nation's economy. A coalition of farm and commodity organizations working together on common problems is in the best interest of agriculture and rural communities. Such a coalition will strengthen and preserve the economic well-being of the family farm. The National Grange will continue to support and take an active role in maintaining an effective national farm coalition. We support efforts to organize farm-city meetings, farm-city visits, as well as efforts to enlist the cooperation of the news media in presenting agricultural news. We endorse the efforts of the Agriculture Council of America, Livestock and Meat Board, Animal Industry Foundation, National Milk Producers Federation, and other agricultural organizations in a united program to tell agriculture's story to the American public. We will cooperate with and support the efforts of other agricultural organizations in their educational programs pertaining to false, unproven, and misleading statements about the production and safety of agricultural commodities in order to present a true picture of environmentally safe farm and ranch best-management practices.
9. The National Grange supports efforts to enhance new economic opportunities for urban agriculture by supporting programs that provide mentorship and education.
10. The State Granges and the National Grange urge state and federal government to strengthen, expand, and enforce farmland protection programs to save our farmland for food and fiber production by designing tax laws to enable farm families to pass their land on to future generations. The National Grange supports a reduction in capital gains for retiring farmers who are willing to sell to beginning farmers. The National Grange will also work with Congress to find additional ways to contain urban sprawl through the use of purchasing development rights and conservation easements on agricultural land. However, we oppose the development of agricultural land trusts by financial institutions. We further oppose land purchase programs that involve the federal government as the purchaser and leaser of farmland.
11. The National Grange supports Farmers' Markets, family farms and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA's) that produce

and sell homegrown agricultural products. Grange policy also supports the creation of pilot programs that endorse the buying of local fruits, vegetables and produce.

12. The National Grange urges the USDA to strictly enforce the Agriculture Foreign Investment Disclosure Act. We further oppose the use of public funds and/or the services of government agencies in the development of U.S.-based, foreign-owned agricultural enterprises.
13. The National Grange urges that a high-level staff position with appropriate resources, targeting the prevention and minimization of agro-terrorism be appointed as part of the Department of Homeland Security.
14. The National Grange encourages federal, state and local governments to protect agriculture against bio-terrorism.
15. The National Grange supports allowing farm parcels with less than the new 10-acre minimum, but which have a previous history in the federal farm program, to continue to receive federal farm program payments.
16. The National Grange strongly supports beginning farmer and rancher programs and urges USDA to modify its programs to give additional consideration individuals and families who qualify.
17. The National Grange supports price insurance protection for farmers that considers the diversity of crops, commodities, production methods, target markets and regional differences.

Farm Labor

1. In the organization of farm laborers on the West Coast and other farm labor-intensive areas, it is evident that the consolidation of production units may lead to increased costs to the consumers and the producer because of possible disruptions caused by labor disputes. Therefore, while we continue to support the rights of individuals to organize, we call for sound approaches when dealing with labor problems in the agricultural industry. Labor and management in the food and agricultural industries should seek solutions to labor problems without striking. To further this goal, we recommend establishing procedures for negotiating labor disputes that will minimize disruptive labor strikes, especially during critical growing and harvesting periods. We also support a prohibition on the exclusive use of hiring halls for supplying agricultural labor and a prohibition on the use of secondary boycotts.
2. The National Grange supports a youth differential minimum wage rate for youth under the age of 18 so agricultural employers will be willing to employ such persons.
3. The National Grange supports legislation that will reduce federal funding of the Legal Service Corporation (LSC), a federal agency that provides legal services to the poor, including migrant farm workers. The LSC legal services should be limited to representing the poor in the courts, not an advocacy group for farm employees that investigate perceived violations of the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act.
4. The Workman's Compensation Insurance Program should be the exclusive remedy for work-related injuries under the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Workers Protection Act.

Farm Safety

1. The National Grange supports a comprehensive farm-safety training program for operation of farm machinery, use of chemicals, and animal management to be funded through the Cooperative Extension Service at land grant universities.
2. Machinery and wagons should be equipped with reflector tape. Farmers should be encouraged to use lights and reflectors or a reflective material on all sides of tractors and machinery that is traveling on public highways.
3. The National Grange strongly opposes any attempt by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) to require that farmers, farm workers or ranchers have commercial driver's licenses (CDLs) to transport their crops and/or their landlord's crops on the public highways.
4. The National Grange supports public awareness initiatives for rural road safety involving the presence of agricultural equipment, to improve signage, education awareness and promotional efforts.

Farmer Credit Programs and the Farm Credit System

1. The primary function of the Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan officers should be a lender of first opportunity for farmers/ranchers and veterans seeking funds for agricultural purchases. Caution must be exercised to avoid granting undue advantage to large operations at the expense of family-sized farming units. The Grange urges the FSA to strengthen farm loan programs. Loan programs should provide needed short and long-term low interest credit for soil and water conservation. We support providing emergency loans and management assistance during times of natural disasters, commodity embargoes, or economic setbacks to expedite the application, review and granting process for these loans. During situations of economic stress facing FSA farm borrowers, we support maintaining the right of mediation on farm loan foreclosures. We further believe that the present owner/operator or beginning farmer should be given the first consideration of sale or lease in disposing of foreclosed farms.
2. The National Grange supports the separation of the truly agricultural production and farm ownership lending programs from lending programs generally associated with rural development such as the Business and Industry Loan Program, water and sewer loans, and non-farm family homes, to free Farm Service Agency county office staff to better supervise agricultural production loans. Business and Industrial Loan Guarantee Programs should be administered so they do not interfere with providing credit to family farmers.
3. The National Grange supports Farm Credit Services programs that will service the needs of farmers who are actively and directly engaged in the production of agricultural commodities. We support retaining the present tax exemptions that apply

to the Farm Credit, Services, and we specifically recommend that the Farm Credit Services create policies and programs that will assist young and beginning farmers. We oppose efforts by the Farm Credit System to increase its activities regarding insurance coverage for its farm borrowers.

4. The National Grange recommends that the lending authority of the Farm Credit Services be expanded to address the total needs of rural communities, including rural economic development. We support the financing of on-farm and off-farm facilities that add value to agricultural commodities or provide services to agricultural production and marketing as well as financing for agricultural exports to all foreign markets. We further support FCS financing directed toward the development of rural enterprises engaged in the development of alternative uses for agricultural commodities and the development of rural infrastructures, such as water and sewer systems and the creation of state-of-the-art telecommunication systems for rural areas.
5. The National Grange supports requiring all agricultural lending institutions, including those under the Federal Reserve System, to consider the security and payment history of the applicant rather than relying entirely upon his/her cash flow.

Federal Programs, Commodity Loans, Target Prices, & Farm Storage Programs

1. The National Grange supports legislative and administrative actions that will obtain an economic return for the farmer on his investment of capital, labor, and management that is equal to that of the other segments of the economy. We support permanent programs for cotton, tobacco, peanuts, rice, corn silage, wool and mohair. Farm programs should be based on units of production, not acreage, and provide the individual farmer with maximum flexibility in their planting and production decisions. Target prices for major commodities should be based on economic need, set in relationship to the national average cost of production, and set at a level that will not encourage over or under-production. Marketing loan programs for major commodities, including soybeans and minor oilseeds, wheat, feed grains, cotton, rice, and other government-supported commodities, should provide for a loan rate that is set at the national average cost of production and that redeems the loan at the lesser of the original loan or the state's monthly, weekly, or daily average market price as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture. The difference between the regular loan rate and the marketing loan is to be retained by the farmer, provided the loan differential is subject to the \$50,000 payment limit. In the absence of a marketing loan, the traditional loan rate should be set at or near the cost of production.
2. The National Grange supports the Farm Storage Facility Loans Program (FSFL) and a farmer-owned reserve program that will place limits on the total amount of a specific commodity that is to be held in reserve as well as place limits on the amount of a commodity that any one farmer can place in the reserve. Storage rates should be commensurate with the cost of on-farm storage to enable farmers to be in a better position to take advantage of storage payments. The Secretary of Agriculture should have discretionary authority to waive the interest charges on reserve loans. We further urge that there be a strict monitoring of grain stored under loan contracts by county, state and national USDA officers, and State Departments of Agriculture.
3. The National Grange supports port terminals and storage facilities for feed grains.
4. The National Grange continues its long-standing support of the County and Community Committee System as the proper means of supervising and administering all farm programs. We pledge our full support for the federal government in investigating incidences of discrimination and in implementing action that will bring about changes to end racial discrimination in USDA policies. We urge stricter monitoring and enforcement of the USDA's farm programs in order to eliminate any abuse of farm program regulations. The Grange supports funding and staffing of local USDA programs and offices at levels that are consistent with congressional mandates. In meeting these mandates, we will support co-location and cross-agency use of personnel from various agricultural agencies within counties where offices now exist.
5. The National Grange continues its long-standing support of the County and Community Committee System as the proper means of supervising and administering all farm programs. We pledge our full support for the federal government in investigating incidences of discrimination and in implementing action that will bring about changes that end racial discrimination in USDA policies. We urge stricter monitoring and enforcement of the Farm Service Agency's farm programs in order to eliminate any abuse of farm program regulations. The Grange supports funding and staffing of the Farm Service Agency at levels that are consistent with congressional mandates. In meeting these mandates, we will support co-locations and cross-agency use of personnel from various agricultural agencies within counties where offices now exist.
6. The National Grange encourages the United States Department of Agriculture to actively enforce the Packers and Stockyards Act.
7. The National Grange supports immediate legislation by Congress, enacting the "Constructive Receipt" exemption in the 2002 Farm Bill, and in all future Farm Bills, to exempt advance program payments from taxable income for the year they are received and, instead, treat those payments as potentially taxable income for the year they were intended to cover.
8. The National Grange supports expanding funding in the 2018 Farm Bill to develop Broadband infrastructure in rural areas.
9. The National Grange urges Congress to maintain funding for the National Organic Program and the Specialty Crops Block Grant Program through the 2018 Farm Bill.

Food and Meat Inspection Programs

1. The National Grange urges an increase in inspection on all livestock, feed, meats, dairy products and all by-products being imported from all countries to the United States for the protection of our animal industry. We support extending mandatory inspection regulations to seafood. We support legislation to implement pathogen detection and reduction strategies based on

sound science that targets micro bio-contamination by pathogens that may be harmful to consumers. We request the USDA to strengthen the inspection process for meat and poultry that is being imported into the United States. However, we will oppose adopting "user fees" to pay for inspection services and or any changes in the system that will result in less than continuous inspection during processing of meat and poultry for human consumption.

2. The National Grange supports legislation to eliminate the unfair prohibition against the interstate shipment of state inspected meat and poultry products if the state meat and poultry inspection service is equal to or better than the federal meat and poultry inspection service system.
3. The National Grange urges Congress to fund, and the USDA to develop and disseminate, educational programs relative to safe handling of foods.
4. The National Grange will seek legislation to have the uniform expiration date stamped, not coded, on all processed food.
5. The National Grange strongly urges that the USDA work with State Departments of Agriculture on a cooperative effort to enforce and inspect egg production, including egg grading and egg safety. Furthermore, the National Grange supports the effort where USDA and FDA work more closely together on food safety issues and that the two agencies should be given more power to order food recalls and close firms with records of serial contamination violations.
6. The National Grange supports legislation requiring more open notice to the consumer on products containing M.R.M (machine removed meat).
7. The National Grange opposes federal legislation that would presume that all food, including food produced for local market sale and consumption, should be treated as potentially hazardous and would require family farmers to produce and maintain onerous amounts of paperwork indicating what production inputs were purchased and when food produced on an individual farm will be consumed, in order to reach an unattainable goal of total traceability of all food produced in the United States, all the way through the food system. Additionally, the National Grange opposes federal legislation that would add an unwelcome layer of national bureaucratic paperwork to the business of producing food to meet local demand without demonstrating any commensurate food safety benefits to consumers, or cost reductions that benefit family farmers or their local customers.
8. The National Grange supports the establishment of additional mobile slaughterhouses meeting USDA standards.
9. The National Grange supports legislation that would eliminate the second inspection of bulk bin apples by the Department of Agriculture before being exported to Canada.
10. The National Grange supports a rewrite of the Veterinary Feed Directive regulations to exclude on-farm animal feed or storage products.

Horticulture, Beekeeping and Honey

1. The National Grange recommends continuing research to improve the development of more freeze-resistant nursery stock and methods of frost control.
2. The National Grange recommends that a realistic tariff be placed on imported honey to protect the financial position of the U.S. bee industry that is necessary for the pollination of U.S. agricultural crops. We support the enactment of federal laws that will provide for the inspection of honeybees and honeybee hives that are transported across state lines in an effort to better control the spread of honeybee diseases and parasites. We urge Congress to set up a "bee zone" and appropriate the necessary funds to stop or at least slow down the northward invasion of the killer bees. We further recommend that the USDA promote a program to educate the general public on the importance of bees, and on the destructive Africanized bees now invading the southern U.S.
3. The National Grange supports research efforts aimed toward solving the problem occurring with honey bee colony collapse. While a cause for this syndrome has not been identified, research strongly suggests that colony collapse may be caused by a combination of many factors, one of which is the prophylactic use of neonicotinoid pesticides in agriculture production. Therefore, the National Grange supports the designation of neonicotinoids as restricted use pesticides.
4. The National Grange supports continued efforts by all Granges to utilize Managed Pollinator Protection Plans to make their properties better habitat for pollinators and to improve honey bee health.
5. The National Grange encourages agricultural universities and pesticide companies to develop pesticides that are not harmful to bees and other beneficial insects.
6. The National Grange opposes the ban or prescription restriction of over-the-counter antibiotics for treatment of honeybees unless such restrictions are based on scientific information.
7. The National Grange supports increased research through the states in growing mushroom spawn.
8. The National Grange supports expansion of Federal Crop Insurance and Multi-Peril Insurance Programs to include horticultural crops.
9. The National Grange calls upon the Department of Agriculture, Land Grant universities, and industries to continue research efforts to determine expanded uses for surplus fruits and vegetables.

Livestock and Poultry Disease Control

1. The National Grange supports continued efforts to eradicate Brucellosis, Johne's Disease, Foot and Mouth disease, Bovine Leukemia virus, tuberculosis, and screw worms, as well as the continued monitoring of our nation's borders against re-infestation of these and other infectious livestock diseases.
2. The National Grange supports funding of increased research to control and eradicate poultry diseases and parasites. The

National Grange also urges the USDA to work with State Departments of Agriculture on a cooperative effort to enforce and inspect egg production, including egg grading and egg safety.

3. The National Grange supports blood testing for Johne's disease in cattle. We further support the development of a test that can isolate the causal organism of Johne's disease in a shorter time frame.
4. The National Grange requests that health charts show freedom from TB and Brucellosis when dairy cattle are either sold or shown.
5. The National Grange opposes any ban on the use of antibiotics in livestock and poultry feed, unless the Food and Drug Administration or other agencies have scientifically established and determined that the use of these antibiotics are detrimental to human health. We oppose any proposals to reclassify over-the-counter animal drugs as prescription-only drugs unless scientifically based information suggests drugs should be reclassified on a drug-by-drug basis. We strongly recommend that all producers who use antibiotics, growth stimulants and other feed additives abide by the directions for the use of, and withdrawal provisions for, such products
6. The National Grange supports the establishment of firm guidelines for the management of bison and elk in the National Parks to control the spread of brucellosis and the high risk of undulant fever in humans.
7. The National Grange supports enforcement of puppy mill laws and regulations.

Livestock Production and Animal Care

1. The National Grange supports effective regulations to require interstate transporters of livestock to maintain transport vehicles in a sanitary condition in order to prevent the spread of disease.
2. The National Grange seeks a federal indemnification standby program for livestock and poultry diseases that are not presently covered. Such a program would apply only in cases that require condemnation and slaughter to eradicate or control the given diseases. We further support federal indemnity programs to indemnify farmers against loss through no fault of theirs in cases such as radioactive fallout, chemical contamination, and bio-terrorism.
3. The National Grange opposes any effort of the federal government to require individual identification of farm animals sold for processing.
4. The National Grange supports legislation and rulings that will strengthen the Packers and Stockyards Act to ensure producers have adequate price discovery, price transparency, and fairness in the marketing of U.S. livestock.
5. The National Grange supports exotic animal farming, provided it does not create a health hazard for the domestic livestock industry.
6. The National Grange continues to support the beef promotion programs. We urge State Beef Councils to join in cooperative efforts to target Beef Check-off Funds to larger consumer audiences. However, the National Grange recommends that the National Beef Promotion Board consider eliminating the \$1 "Beef Check-off" on any animal that, when sold, the farmer would receive \$20 or less.
7. The National Grange strongly supports the livestock, poultry and dairy industries as suppliers of food and fiber that are so necessary for today's standard of living. We will continue to inform the public of the economics and importance of the livestock industry and their contributions to a balanced nutritional diet. We will continue to cooperate with the Animal Welfare Coalition to combat misleading statements made by animal rights organizations regarding animal agriculture.
8. The National Grange believes that the regulation of livestock and poultry care should be a state issue and does not support the establishment of federal standards.
9. The National Grange supports the use of lean fine textured beef in any beef products. The National Grange will work to develop a commercially-acceptable term for cell-based proteins and support USDA to be the regulatory oversight agency responsible for cell-based protein production.
10. The National Grange supports using animals in animal agricultural research in order to advance the science of animal husbandry in the most humane and economic fashion. The National Grange opposes efforts to declare animals to be "sentient beings," and all efforts to give animals the legal protections to which humans are entitled. We support the development of educational programs that demonstrate the advantages and humanness of modern animal husbandry. We oppose any legislation and/or regulations that would hinder good animal husbandry practices. Instead, we support developing a code of "best management practices" for the care and maintenance of agricultural animals and other animals that are under human control. We also support efforts to severely punish any individuals and organizations that commit illegal actions against animal agricultural producers and animal agricultural and biomedical researchers and facilities. We support the voluntary efforts of farmers in reducing the number of injured or downer animals. We encourage livestock auction markets to continue their programs of not accepting animals that are injured or are too weak to stand. We support the efforts of commercial processing facilities to continue the humane disposal of unwanted agricultural animals.
11. The National Grange strongly opposes legislation calling for the severe curtailment of the veal industry by such measures as eliminating confinement stalls and crates. However, the Grange will work with the National Veal Association to correct or remove the veal production practices that are not within the guidelines of best veal management. We further recommend that a USDA grader be assigned to all veal calf slaughtering plants, so that a farmer or seller receives a fair price from the packing plant for their veal based on the grade that was determined by the inspector and not the plant manager.
12. The National Grange supports rodeos, the use of animals in rodeos and the great heritage rodeos represent.

13. The National Grange supports efforts to deal with concentrated animal feeding operations issues emphasizing sensible control and enforcement, the development of nutrient management plans, developing cost efficient odor reduction technology, and the zoning of agricultural districts. We continue to support the development and use of "the best management practices" for the handling of animal and poultry wastes. We support liability protection for farmers who follow the appropriate regulations and "best management practices." We also support strict laws that regulate large livestock enterprises, so that they apply nutrients according to an approved nutrient management plan to assure that excess nutrients will not contaminate the waters of the United States. We continue to support strict construction standards to new earthen manure lagoons and set a phase-in period after which existing lagoons would have to meet appropriate standards. We support prohibiting indefinite storage of animal waste by requiring treatment according to federal wastewater standards, if the waste is not applied to land or used in another environmentally sound matter. We further support regulations or other provisions to prevent animal owners from using contracts or similar arrangements to avoid responsibilities for animal waste management. We support imposing tough new penalties on the worst polluters. However, we believe that the implementation of any rules and regulations forcing compliance with the Clean Water Act for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations should not become mandatory until all technical expertise and funding is secured and available for the timely compliance with these directives.
14. The National Grange believes the Environmental Protection Agency should not be empowered or allowed to levy fines, fees, or any other monetary pressure based on natural emissions of livestock that may ultimately affect greenhouse gases.
15. The National Grange at all levels seeks legislation to accomplish a national identification for livestock and poultry. The program should include safeguards to protect the privacy of the farmers and the Grange will work at all levels to have farmer privacy provisions included in the national identification for livestock program legislation.
16. The National Grange encourages all livestock operations to follow the goals of the Beef Quality Assurance Program and the Pork Quality Assurance Program. These actions will help manage their herds with respect to the following:
 - a) proper use of pharmaceuticals;
 - b) management of their feed sources;
 - c) low stress animal handling techniques;
 - d) proper housing and living standards;
 - e) proper transportation techniques and transport space requirements;
 - f) culling strategies to maintain optimum herd health; and
 - g) numerous other management tools that help to make the animals healthier, more comfortable and as a result, more productive.

Marketing and Cooperatives

1. The National Grange opposes any repeal of the Capper-Volstead Act of 1922, and strongly supports agricultural cooperatives and the special legal status granted to agricultural cooperatives under this Act.
2. Agricultural cooperatives should be owned and controlled by farmers. We support tax law changes that would allow cooperatives to raise additional equity capital to expand cooperative operations as long as such equity does not undermine farmer ownership and control of their cooperative. We support allowing grain-marketing cooperatives to receive commodity loans.
3. The National Grange supports purchasing, processing, and marketing rural electric and telephone cooperatives that are providing high quality products and services to their members.
4. The National Grange urges the USDA and other appropriate agencies to continue their educational programs for farmers on the use of the futures market through hedging and other marketing options to increase farm profitability.
5. The National Grange continues to support the efforts of commodity organizations to improve the promotional activities for their products.
6. The National Grange endorses federal and state legislation to protect the bargaining status of cooperatives. Purchasers should be required to recognize and negotiate in good faith with the designated representatives of their producers. The right of producers to control by democratic means the selection of bargaining cooperatives to represent them should be guaranteed by law. Processors of agricultural products should be prohibited from intimidating growers or withholding growers' contracts because of membership in a bargaining association.
7. The National Grange supports extending the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1937 to include all agricultural commodities. Following the marketing order approval by a referendum of respective producers, regulations covering allocating aggregate market supply among markets in time, space, and form; trading practices; grading standards; container and other terms of sale should be issued under the order. The USDA should have the administrative responsibility to implement Federal Marketing Orders.
8. The National Grange urges the USDA to cooperate fully with the states in developing direct farmer to consumer marketing programs.
9. The National Grange recommends that the provisions of any check-off be approved by a majority of the producers of that commodity in a national referendum. Following producer approval, the programs shall be mandatory, without refunds, and no more than 5 percent of the check-off funds can be used for administrative costs. The funds shall be under the control of the promotion board with oversight responsibility in the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
10. The National Grange supports a study to determine the feasibility of a check-off program for wheat to fund a research,

educational and promotional program on the nutritional benefits of wheat flour products.

11. The National Grange supports increased research by government and industry to discover and develop new uses and markets for agricultural commodities, including the development of value-added products with the aid of non-farm groups. We further support a national agricultural marketing policy which would encourage farmers to retain important production and marketing decisions in their own hands and that would encourage domestic regional marketing cooperatives to develop a cooperative marketing federation that is capable of entering into the international market for selling farm commodities.
12. The National Grange supports integrating and coordinating existing state and federal governments' export marketing programs, such as the Market Access Program, the Market Promotion Program, and other similar programs that are designed to develop and expand foreign markets for U.S. farm products. We believe that these programs should be limited to domestic firms and targeted to new exporting companies, small businesses and individual farmers who sell directly into export markets. We urge Congress and the USDA to reinstate the Export Enhancement Program in order to meet the price competition in world markets. New efforts should be made in the development of marketing programs to expand agricultural exports that encourage the participation of new export marketing groups, such as farm cooperatives and export trading companies. Farmers selling commodities directly into the export market should be subject to all of the protections and restrictions that apply to corporations and other commercial ventures that are selling into the export market.
13. The National Grange supports retaining present state standards for maple syrup and opposes any mandatory federal regulations that would be less stringent than present state regulations.
14. The Grange vigorously opposes any effort that would abolish the current practice of carcass quality pricing of beef and swine in favor of one value fits all price concepts.

Production Management Programs

1. The National Grange supports voluntary production control programs as a way of balancing supply with demand. Production control programs should be based on controlling the number of bushels (amount of product) allowed to qualify for price supports and by the requirements to set aside a specific percentage of a farm's crop production. We support eliminating any offsetting compliance requirements between farms related to production control programs, but support maintaining cross compliance requirements for crops grown on the same farm. We support paid production diversion with payments made in cash or in-kind, if farmers first comply with set-aside and other non-paid production control programs. We further recommend that any land diverted from agricultural production under farm programs remain eligible for conservation cost-share practices. Program benefits, such as loans, deficiency payments, etc., should be set at a level that is sufficient to accomplish the program's objectives and should be made available only to producers who comply with the program's requirements.
2. Production yields should be based on the proven yield of the land on that farm. We support allowing farmers to re-establish their proven yields, but we further support requiring all crop production bases to be established using a soil suitability criterion rating rather than past crop history and changing farm programs, so that a farmer will not lose their farm base from under-planting.
3. The National Grange supports the concept of a Cover Crop Program that is voluntary and incentive-based for all farm programs that involve government funding.
4. Surplus food purchased by the Government should in no way be sold at reduced prices to be in competition with ongoing farm prices. Instead, we encourage surplus foods to be given to charitable organizations. The National Grange encourages increased USDA purchases of surplus agriculture products to be given away through various food assistance programs.

Research and Extension

1. The National Grange strongly supports the cooperative Extension Service (ES), as well as the land grant universities in their effort to maintain a quality extension program in their respective states. The ES should continue to provide leadership to the agricultural and rural sectors with programs directed primarily to improving the quality of rural life. We recommend renewed federal funding for the State Farm Safety Specialist position and farm safety programs, establishing a job retraining program for displaced, disabled, or injured farmers and ranchers, maintaining a viable 4-H Program, and increased funding by all government entities so that the ES can provide information on alternative and sustainable agricultural practices and marketing methods.
2. The National Grange continues to strongly support adequate funding for basic and applied agricultural research from federal, state and private sources. We encourage state departments of agriculture and state experiment stations to conduct research designed to achieve the same results. We specifically recommend full funding of the federal share of agricultural research, especially in cases of emergencies when increased research is required. We strongly support additional research to provide the technology that is pertinent to small-scale agriculture, including more emphasis on research in the areas of marketing, insect control, disease control, energy use, improved product quality, and soil and water management.
3. The National Grange supports increased funding for the National Seed Storage Laboratory in an effort to preserve plant material and seed germ plasm.
4. The National Grange will support the goals of sustainable agriculture research and education programs that will promote the most efficient and effective Best Management Practices (BMP) to reduce soil loss due to erosion, protect water quality from degradation by substance discharge from agricultural operations, and to identify methodologies that will result in

higher profitability from production through market development.

5. The National Grange supports expansion of precision agriculture practices to include poultry and livestock production to make animal nutrition more effective, reduce the amount of waste, and reduce the nutrient levels in the waste.
6. The National Grange endorses organic farming research and education.
7. The National Grange urges continued research on the benefits and risks of using biosolids as agricultural fertilizer.
8. The National Grange encourages USDA and state agriculture experiment stations to identify and promote fire-resistant plants and encourage their planting in fire-prone areas.

Tobacco Policy

1. The National Grange recommends that the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture use simple regulations in requiring cigarette manufacturers to report only the total use of domestically-grown and imported tobacco by class or kind of tobacco, thus leaving manufacturers the flexibility to adjust blends for their various brands of cigarettes to meet their customer demand.
2. The National Grange supports programs at the federal level to help tobacco farmers diversify their farming operation by raising and marketing of alternative crops and will support new research programs to discover new uses for tobacco, such as a new source of protein.
3. The National Grange supports negotiations, regulations, or legislation to control the importation of low grade, inferior quality tobacco.
4. The National Grange supports steps to make U.S. tobacco more competitive in the world market. We urge that all tobacco that is exported as U.S. tobacco must be certified as 100 percent U.S. tobacco.
5. The National Grange continues to support the Tobacco Auction System and the necessary improvements to modernize the Auction System to meet new packaging ideas and technology in order to facilitate the movement of tobacco through the Auction System.
6. The National Grange opposes any proposals to ban the use of menthol in cigarettes.

USDA Responsibilities, Authorities & Organization

1. The National Grange strongly supports the U.S. Department of Agriculture remaining as an independent agency with the Secretary of Agriculture as a member of the President's Cabinet.
2. The National Grange supports the repeal of the USDA's personnel regulations that forbid USDA employees from actively participating in the meetings and other activities of farm organizations, from holding office in farm organizations, from participating in membership recruitment campaigns, or from acting as a volunteer financial or business agent of a farm organization. This should not change or alter the USDA's other regulations concerning general employee conduct.
3. The National Grange strongly urges the USDA to devise plans to reduce the paperwork for farmers to participate in federal farm programs. We urge the USDA and its agencies to format all reports, applications and paperwork that are to be filed by farmers, so that they may be filled out via computer media using commonly accepted word processing programs and returned to the agency for processing.
4. The National Grange urges the USDA to increase oversight of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to decrease fraud and ensure that SNAP is only used for its defined purposes.
5. The National Grange urges the USDA to review and recommend changes to current EBT (electronic benefit transfer) eligibility guidelines in order to avoid unintended consequences to the beneficiary.
6. The National Grange supports legislation to simplify the business application of the current Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) so that businesses may more easily become participants.

Miscellaneous

1. The National Grange supports the agricultural weather forecasting service.
2. The National Grange continues to support the development of aquaculture. We urge aquacultural farmers to use care and caution in the placement of rearing pens in public waterways so as not to interfere with common waterway uses.
3. The National Grange supports legislation that would ensure a producer the "right to harvest" any legally planted crop regardless of any environmental or regulatory action arising between planting and harvest time.
4. The National Grange supports the production of industrial hemp when production is done within the guidelines of applicable state and federal laws.
5. The National Grange opposes EPA regulations that concern dust blowing attributed to agricultural operations.
6. The National Grange actively supports revising the standards, so that all meats in the national school lunch program are required to meet the new standards used by the United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service.
7. The National Grange urges the United States Congress to direct the USDA Food and Nutrition Service to amend their rules to allow consumption of grapes, whole milk, *flavored milk* and potato products by students in school meal programs and to insert that language into the 2018 Farm Bill.
8. The Grange at all levels support initiatives to encourage the use of farm structures as a base for communication antennas.
9. The National Grange seeks a more aggressive position on the issue of irrigation water shared by the U.S. and Mexico on behalf of the U.S. interest and that the period of payback for the excess usage of irrigation water be limited to two years rather than five years.

10. The Grange supports legislation that offers a form of reimbursement of student loans for large animal veterinarians committing to work in private practice.
11. The National Grange supports the market availability of GPS (Global Positioning System) tracking devices to monitor the locations of agricultural/farm equipment.
12. The National Grange supports legislative efforts that would allow individuals involved in agriculture as well as independent mechanics to have access to diagnostic software, information and other necessary technological tools used to repair modern farm equipment.
13. The National Grange opposes the expansion of areas considered navigable waters under the Clean Water Act.
14. The National Grange urges all appropriate agencies of federal, state and local governments to expedite the harvest and removal of beetle-kill trees from all public lands.
15. The Grange will support a cotton program that provides for a marketing loan at a level that will encourage the continued exportation of cotton, as well as research into the eradication of detrimental insects. s

I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Agriculture Committee for their hard work and many long hours before and during the Convention. Thanks to National Grange, Betsy and Burton for allowing us to ZOOM prior to this meeting. We were able to use that time to agree on the points of the National Grange Agriculture Policy that needed to be updated or researched prior to arrival at the session.

Thank You.

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Kevin Cooksley, NE	Allen Stiles, MD	Lynette Schaeffer, IL
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Fraternally submitted,
Wayne Campbell, Agriculture Committee Chair

POLICY STATEMENT

The members of the Audit and Budget Committee thank the National Master, Executive Committee and the National Grange staff for presenting us with a budget that allows us to continue with the programs and projects of the National Grange.

Dues on all levels of the Grange are the lifeblood of our Order and it is imperative that Granges on all levels and in all states encourage membership growth. Every member should make a serious effort to attract new members while working to retain our existing members.

We encourage all members to continually monitor the many member benefits that are listed on the National Grange website. We recommend that the members take advantage of these programs as they are not only a benefit to the membership but many of these programs provide an ongoing revenue stream to the National Grange. Few organizations give such value for the small monetary contribution from its membership.

Generations of our members have enjoyed our National Grange headquarters and it is a major asset to the Order. The income generated by the rentals is a significant portion of our annual operating funds. We must maintain this financial asset for future generations. A nearly 60-year-old building needs regular maintenance and we encourage the Executive Committee to put away funds for future maintenance needs as the budget allows. We encourage members and Granges to consider making donations to the National Grange for ongoing building maintenance.

The Communications Department continues to expand communications to the State Granges, Community Granges and our membership. Some of these programs include The Patrons Chain, Grange Radio and our quarterly subscription-based Good Day!™ publication.

In order to remain financially viable, we encourage all members to subscribe to the Good Day!™ magazine. With current subscriptions at approximately 1,250, there is a need for an increase in subscriptions of at least 20% in order to make the production of the magazine financially viable. Why not consider a subscription to the magazine to your local library or FFA chapter in an effort to make the Grange more visible? Communication between the National Grange and our membership is vital and the outstanding Good Day!™ publication is an essential part of that effort, but to continue it, it must receive support by us as leaders as well as our members. Why not take five minutes and renew your subscription, or subscribe to the magazine today?

We encourage the National Grange Executive Committee to review our financial status as of June 30, 2019 and determine if there are funds available for the addition of a part-time staff member to take on some of the clerical duties that would allow our staff to work in other areas that would increase the visibility of the National Grange both in Washington, D.C., and the Grange states.

The revitalization of the Membership Department will allow us to work on membership growth and development. It our responsibility as leaders of the Grange to work with our Membership Director to design and implement strategies for success in this effort.

The past several years have been a financial challenge to the National Grange. We commend the delegates and the National Master and Executive Committee for their perseverance in seeing that we come out of the challenges that we have faced stronger and more visible.

INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS

RES. #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
201	A&B Committee	Compensation for Elected Officers	Adopted
202	A&B Committee	Covered Expenses for Officers and Delegates	Adopted as Amended
601	NJ	Seventh Degree	Adopted

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY DELEGATE ACTION

201 – Compensation for Elected Officers

RESOLVED the Audit and Budget Committee affirms the following compensation approved in the budget at the 151st annual session held in 2017 for elected officers: National Master, \$55,000; National Lecturer, \$500 honorarium; National Secretary, \$500 honorarium.

202 – Covered Expenses for Officers and Delegates

RESOLVED the National Grange pay room costs for the required days at the National Grange Convention for delegates, officers and approved non-delegates for the 2019 National Grange Convention.

601-NJ– Seventh Degree

WHEREAS the Seventh Degree is a major budget item for the National Grange each year; and

WHEREAS the Assembly of Demeter has been directed to review the Degree and offer options that could reduce costs of the Degree, but has not to this point; and

WHEREAS the number of people who take the degree each year has dwindled, some years to fewer than 100 members and no more than 375 members in any given year since 2011; and

WHEREAS the current fee of \$30 per person taking the Seventh Degree and \$0 for entry to witness the Degree if a member already has their Seventh Degree has covered less than ten percent of the total cost of the Degree annually since at least 2011; therefore be it

RESOLVED that The Assembly of Demeter take action to reduce the costs of the Seventh degree over the next three years and report annually to the National Grange starting with the 2020 session, the costs and savings reached.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Audit and Budget Committee for their hard work and participation. We would also like to thank the Executive Committee for their assistance with the budget process.

John Benedik, NJ Chr.	Judy Sherrrod, TN Sec.	
Dwight Baldwin, IA	Duane Hamp, WA	Patty Thomas, MA
Jim Owens, ME	Phil Prelli, CT	Chip Narvel, DE

Fraternally submitted,
John Benedik, Audit and Budget Committee Chair

Income	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Budget	2018 Q3	2019 Proposed Budget	% of Budget
Dues and Fees Income						
Subordinate dues	\$ 767,166.50	\$ 742,535.50	\$ 740,000.00	\$ 501,760.50	\$ 670,000.00	68%
E-membership	\$ 819.00	\$ 250.25	\$ 250.00	\$ 455.45	\$ 500.00	182%
Subordinate & Pomona charter fees	\$ 50.00	\$ 105.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 40.00	\$ 100.00	10%
Junior Grange charter fees	\$ 30.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 50.00	20%
6th degree fees	\$ 40.00		\$ 500.00		\$ 500.00	0%
7th degree fees	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 2,010.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 420.00	\$ 3,000.00	7%
Dues and Fees Subtotal:	\$ 769,755.50	\$ 744,910.75	\$ 747,200.00	\$ 502,685.95	\$ 674,150.00	67%
Other Income						
Building Income	\$ 1,156,266.51	\$ 1,663,199.25	\$ 1,265,425.00	\$ 912,102.68	\$ 1,237,850.00	72%
Sales Income	\$ 54,696.60	\$ 31,723.22	\$ 42,500.00	\$ 20,415.96	\$ 31,000.00	48%
Supportive Memberships	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 62,500.00	\$ 62,500.00	\$ 46,875.00	\$ 62,500.00	75%
Legislative Sponsorships (Grants)	\$ 37,500.00	\$ -	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 19,900.00	\$ 37,500.00	40%
Fundraising and donations	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	0%
License Agreement	\$ 22,960.00	\$ 25,410.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 18,570.36	\$ 20,000.00	93%
Communications Income	\$ 39,025.01	\$ 143,075.00	\$ 41,250.00	\$ 18,483.44	\$ 37,000.00	45%
Electronic Media Income	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%
Advertising	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%
Foundation Management Fee	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ 100.00	0%
Bonding Commission	\$ 5,580.20	\$ 8,257.40	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 10,489.40	\$ 8,500.00	175%
Interest, dividends	\$ 25,653.05	\$ 50,211.95			\$ -	0%
Reimbursement from Subsidiaries	\$ 17,073.70	\$ -			\$ -	0%
Miscellaneous	\$ 145,466.82		\$ -	\$ 560.00	\$ 560.00	-100%
National Convention	\$ 116,973.38	\$ 77,917.06	\$ 66,000.00	\$ 13,220.19	\$ 98,000.00	20%
Loan					\$ 962,000.00	
Other Subtotal:	\$ 1,698,195.27	\$ 2,062,293.88	\$ 1,558,775.00	\$ 1,060,617.03	\$ 2,495,010.00	68%
Total Income:	\$ 2,467,950.77	\$ 2,807,204.63	\$ 2,305,975.00	\$ 1,563,302.98	\$ 3,169,160.00	68%
Cash Forward:	\$ -					
Total Income and Cash Forward:	\$ 2,467,950.77	\$ 2,807,204.63	\$ 2,305,975.00	\$ 1,563,302.98	\$ 3,169,160.00	68%

NOTE

Budget

A. The National Grange extend its loan amount with Eagle Bank. The funds are expected to be used in 2019 to payoff some of the chiller related debts and to perform other needed building repairs.

Expense	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Budget	2018 Q3	2019 Proposed Budget	% of Budget
Personnel						
Board of Directors	\$ 1,226.39	\$ 3,383.42	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 4,677.74	\$ 6,500.00	72%
National Master Expense	\$ 19,514.20	\$ 7,172.59	\$ 23,150.00	\$ 12,052.33	\$ 18,650.00	52%
National Master Salary	\$ 55,211.42	\$ 54,999.88	\$ 55,000.00	\$ 39,980.68	\$ 55,000.00	73%
National Lecturer	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00	0%
National Secretary	\$ 541.30	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00	0%
Staff Salaries, taxes, benefits	\$ 578,983.41	\$ 572,311.00	\$ 559,861.81	\$ 408,395.27	\$ 614,398.03	73%
High Priest	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,539.49	\$ 1,800.00	\$ -	\$ 3,300.00	0%
Subtotal:	\$ 656,476.72	\$ 640,406.38	\$ 647,311.81	\$ 465,106.02	\$ 698,848.03	72%
Departments						
Building expense	\$ 473,007.47	\$ 617,514.54	\$ 516,000.00	\$ 504,051.29	\$ 537,000.00	98%
Marketing & Sales	\$ 16,467.25	\$ 11,898.64	\$ 26,750.00	\$ 7,902.30	\$ 33,650.00	30%
General Administration	\$ 1,265,805.97	\$ 1,110,345.85	\$ 605,700.00	\$ 1,084,437.43	\$ 761,000.00	179%
Interest payment-Oregon State Grange	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 14,581.23				
Loan Repayment-Oregon State Grange	\$ -	\$ 18,845.89	\$ 33,027.12	\$ 25,070.34	\$ 33,427.12	76%
Eagle Bank Loan-Principal & Interest	\$ 116,241.95	\$ 126,809.40	\$ 126,809.40	\$ 95,107.05	\$ 169,334.28	75%
Loan-Chiller-Grange Advocacy		\$ 8.49	\$ 18,775.44	\$ 18,775.44	\$ -	100%
Loan-Chiller-Red Lion Foundation			\$ 21,243.96	\$ -	\$ 21,243.96	0%
Loan-Chiller-Red Lion Grange			\$ 3,200.00	\$ 3,200.00	\$ 3,200.00	100%
Loan-Chiller-Potomac Grange				\$ 14,638.68	\$ 4,182.48	-100%
Loan-Chiller-New Jersey State Grange				\$ 3,986.17	\$ 7,972.34	-100%
Loan-Chiller-Indiana State Grange				\$ -	\$ 1,800.00	0%
Loan-Chiller-Oregon State Grange (Balloon Payment)				\$ 1,500.00	\$ 200,000.00	-100%
Loan-Chiller-Vermont State Grange				\$ 1,350.77	\$ 5,403.08	-100%
LMA line of credit payoff				\$ 286,000.00	\$ 286,000.00	62%
Communications/Publications	\$ 23,207.13	\$ 109,099.86	\$ 58,750.00	\$ 36,457.03	\$ 66,450.00	72%
IT Systems	\$ 56,439.49	\$ 37,238.13	\$ 46,200.00	\$ 33,286.51	\$ 46,000.00	70%
Junior Grange	\$ 13,231.10	\$ 13,546.52	\$ 19,130.00	\$ 13,309.85	\$ 19,180.00	70%
Legislative	\$ 22,410.39	\$ 15,628.18	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 6,623.30	\$ 13,700.00	22%
Membership/Leadership	\$ 11,427.77	\$ 700.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 19,250.00	20%
Youth Development	\$ 19,403.05	\$ 19,393.40	\$ 19,130.00	\$ 13,934.16	\$ 19,180.00	73%
Subtotal:	\$ 2,032,641.57	\$ 2,095,610.13	\$ 1,525,715.92	\$ 1,863,830.32	\$ 2,247,973.26	122%
Events, Services, Training						
National Convention	\$ 127,715.91	\$ 184,070.25	\$ 129,000.00	\$ 1,680.09	\$ 143,000.00	1%
Subtotal:	\$ 127,715.91	\$ 184,070.25	\$ 129,000.00	\$ 1,680.09	\$ 143,000.00	1%
Other Expenses						
Building Reserve Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%
Contributions	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%
Furniture and equipment	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%
Special Fundraising/Special Event	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%
Subtotal:	\$ -	0%				
Total Expenses:	\$ 2,816,834.20	\$ 2,920,086.76	\$ 2,302,027.73	\$ 2,330,616.43	\$ 3,089,821.29	101%
Budget Contingency:	\$ (348,883.43)	\$ (112,882.13)	\$ 3,947.27	\$ (767,313.45)	\$ 79,338.71	-194339%
Gross Contingency:	\$ (348,883.43)	\$ (112,882.13)	\$ 3,947.27	\$ (767,313.45)	\$ 79,338.71	-194339%

POLICY STATEMENT

The National Grange supports Broadband internet service for all areas of the United States.

The Grange also recognizes that Personal Privacy for online users is a responsibility of both the provider and the user.

We, as the National Grange, know that manipulating the caller’s phone number, known as “Spoofing”, is a deceptive tool used by telemarketing companies. The National Grange opposes the unethical use of spoofing by individuals or companies.

The National Grange supports equal treatment of our Military Personnel, while on active duty and after they serve our country.

We support drug testing of people applying for and receiving government monies as assistance, just as we support drug testing employees for safety reasons.

This covers Resolution 322-NE and parts of the Master’s External Address.

INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS

RES. #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
303	NY	Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers Of Pre-9/11 Veterans	Adopted
305	NY	Female Veteran Peer Counseling	Adopted
310	NJ	Mandatory Withdrawals from Individual Retirement Accounts (Ira’s)	Adopted
312	WA	No Budget, No Pay	Adopted as Amended
313	MA	Oppose Cuts to FCC Lifeline Program for Low Income Consumers	Adopted as Amended
315	IA	Popular Streaming Sites Relay National Weather Service Alerts	Adopted as Amended
317	CA	Reclassification of Public Safety Telecommunicators by the Office of Management and Budget	Adopted
323	OH	Support for Citizenship Question	Adopted
324	PA	Tax Preparers Held Accountable	Adopted
327	CA	Updating the Department of Energy Weatherization Program	Adopted
328	OR	U.S. Postage Stamp for 400th Anniversary of Plymouth Colony	Adopted

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY DELEGATE ACTION

303-NY – Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers of Pre-9/11 Veterans

WHEREAS under the Veterans Administration (VA) program of “Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers,” loved ones who provide lifesaving services to injured heroes who have incurred or aggravated the line-of-duty injury on or since 9/11 and are eligible for wide-ranging benefits, including monthly stipends, health care insurance, hospice care and transportation expenses; and

WHEREAS caregivers of World War II, Korea or Persian Gulf War are not eligible for these benefits; and

WHEREAS Senate Bill S-2193, “Care for Our Veterans Act of 2017,” would extend caregivers benefits to eligible relatives of Pre-9/11 veterans as well. It would be provided in phases but eventually essential services for caregivers of all War Eras would be covered; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange supports Senate Bill S-2193 or similar legislation that would extend “Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers” to caregivers of all War Era veterans.

305-NY – Female Veteran Peer Counseling

WHEREAS female veterans face a variety of challenges reintegrating in their homes and communities when they are discharged; and

WHEREAS female veterans are more likely to be divorced, single parents, unemployed, struggle financially and lack a social support network; and

WHEREAS many female veterans are coping with sexual trauma and substance abuse disorders; and

WHEREAS H.R. 4635 will emphasize facilitating peer-to-peer counseling for women veterans who suffered sexual trauma while in the Armed Forces, have post-traumatic stress disorder, or suffer from another mental health condition or are otherwise at risk of becoming homeless; and

WHEREAS this bill will conduct program outreach, and will coordinate with community organizations, state and local governments, institutions of higher education, local business organizations and legal assistance organizations; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange supports H.R. Bill 4635 or similar legislation that would direct the Veterans Affairs secretary to assist female veterans in reintegrating in their communities after discharge from the Armed Forces.

310-NJ– Mandatory Withdrawals from Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs)

WHEREAS when originally established in 1982, the rules for Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) required that an account holder start to make mandatory withdrawals from the account starting at age 70 ½; and

WHEREAS the limits for contributions to IRAs and the types of retirement account plans available at that time were much different than what is available today; and

WHEREAS the life expectancy has increased since 1982 and now exceeds 75 years of age for both men and women; and

WHEREAS more and more people are working either full time or part time well into their 70s and do not necessarily need to withdraw funds from their retirement accounts to balance their monthly budget; and

WHEREAS there has been an Executive Order by the President of the United States to the Treasury Department to review the Required Minimum Distribution rules; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange supports passage of legislation on the federal level that would allow distribution as needed with no Required Minimum Distributions based on age on Traditional Individual Retirement Accounts.

312-WA – No Budget, No Pay

WHEREAS the U.S. Congress gets paid even when there is a government shut down because Congress is not doing their job; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange encourages Congress to introduce legislation that when the U.S. Government shuts down because the U.S. Congress has not done the proper funding, the members of the U.S. Congress will not be paid for the time the U.S. Government is shut down.

313-MA – Oppose Cuts to FCC Lifeline Program for Low Income Consumers

WHEREAS Lifeline is a federally supported program that provides discounted phone and internet services to low-income Americans; and

WHEREAS the Lifeline program was created under the Reagan Administration in 1985 and is paid for by communications companies; and

WHEREAS a large percentage of low-income Americans are found in rural areas; and

WHEREAS the FCC is currently considering measures to drastically reduce the Lifeline program; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange opposes measures that would limit or reduce the Federal Communications Commission Lifeline Program.

315-IA – Popular Streaming Sites Relay National Weather Service Alerts

WHEREAS the National Weather Service puts out alerts on TV programming, radios, and phones, but not on streaming services such as Netflix, Hulu, YouTube, etc.; and

WHEREAS people are less likely to see and/or receive these important life-saving alerts about storm watches, warnings, and threats; and

WHEREAS these streaming services already are connected to our internet and know our zip codes and general locations which can be used to pinpoint which alerts are sent where; therefore be it

RESOLVED the National Grange supports the efforts of the National Weather Service and any other Alert Systems that will relay important life-saving storm watches, warnings, and threats over streaming services.

317-CA – Reclassification of Public Safety Telecommunicators by the Office of Management and Budget

WHEREAS Public Safety Telecommunicators, namely 9-1-1 call-takers and Dispatchers, are currently classified by the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as administrative and clerical assistants; and

WHEREAS Public Safety Telecommunicators coach 9-1-1 callers through immediate first aid and life-saving techniques; coordinate police, fire and emergency medical personnel to keep the public safe; operate specialized technical computer systems for tracking first responders, locating 9-1-1 callers, and communicating in emergencies; and deal with life or death situations to preserve life and property; and

WHEREAS Public Safety Telecommunicators are now statistically suffering the same long-term post-traumatic stress as first responders in the field, but are not eligible for additional services because of the current “clerical” classification; therefore be it

RESOLVED the National Grange supports the legislative efforts of Public Safety Telecommunicators, namely 9-1-1 call-takers and Dispatchers, to be reclassified by the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to the same protective first-responder occupation as police officers and firefighters.

323-OH – Support for Citizenship Question

WHEREAS preparations are being made for the 2020 U.S. federal population census forms; and

WHEREAS the purpose of the federal population census is to determine the citizenship population of the U.S. in order to allot representation in the U.S. House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS only U.S. citizens can vote for members of the U.S. House of Representative; and

WHEREAS it is important to identify and count those living in the U.S. who are not U.S. citizens; and

WHEREAS it is estimated that the state of California may have as many as five members of the U.S. House of Representatives too many because of the inclusion of illegal immigrants; and

WHEREAS the question asking whether a person is a U.S. citizen has occurred on many previous U.S. censuses; therefore be it

RESOLVED the National Grange supports the inclusion of a question on the U.S. population census forms as to whether a person is a U.S. citizen.

324-PA – Tax Preparers Held Accountable

WHEREAS personal information is used in preparing tax returns; and

WHEREAS federal and state laws protect information, such as Social Security numbers and financial information, from being accessible to others who should not be entitled to this information; and

WHEREAS unauthorized access can lead to personal harm for the individual, family, and business owner; and

WHEREAS, there is anecdotal evidence that some tax preparers may not be taking adequate safeguards to protect confidential information in their custody; therefore be it

RESOLVED that tax preparers should be vigilant of their obligation to comply with privacy standards of Gamm-Leach-Blilly Act of 1999, privacy rules of the Federal Trade Commission Act and IRS Code Section 7216.

327-CA – Updating the Department of Energy Weatherization Program

WHEREAS the Department of Energy funds the Weatherization Program whereby low-income families may receive free assistance through local Community Action Agencies and other community-based organizations to weatherize homes; and

WHEREAS one main requirement of the Weatherization Program is that the measures installed must have a savings to investment ratio (SIR) of 1 or greater over a period of 10 (ten) years; and

WHEREAS the current requirement for re-weatherizing a home is that the home could not have received federal weatherization assistance since September 30, 1994; and

WHEREAS many measures installed by weatherization contractors only have a lifespan of 10 years or less years in regions with extreme weather situations; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange requests the United States Congress review the Code of Federal Regulations and update the statute that governs the Department of Energy's Energy Weatherization Program (10 CFR 440.18(f)(2)(iii)).

328-OR – U.S. Postage Stamp for 400th Anniversary of Plymouth Colony

WHEREAS The United States Postal Service issues approximately 150 different commemorative postage stamps each year showcasing around 20 different topics and subjects; and

WHEREAS the Plymouth Rock Stamp Club is campaigning to have the US Postal Service to issue one or more stamps commemorating the 400th anniversary of Plymouth Colony, just as it did for Plymouth's 300th and 350th anniversaries; and

WHEREAS the stamp designs are chosen by the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee (CSAC), which evaluates the public's suggestions and recommends to the Postmaster General those that would be the best fit for a national stamp; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange encourages the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee to issue a 400th Anniversary of Plymouth Colony Stamp.

PRESENT POLICY

CITIZENSHIP

Broadcasting

1. The National Grange supports the concept of public broadcasting and urges improved service for our rural communities. The National Grange supports continuing the present level of federal funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting through self-supporting sources of financing.
2. The National Grange supports the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association in its efforts to help rural areas receive satellite TV reception. The National Grange supports legislation to ensure that satellite dish owners in rural areas pay no more for their service than cable TV subscribers in the cities do. The Grange supports regulations requiring satellite television companies to provide rural customers access to more than one predetermined set of local channels including local public access channels in the customer's region.
3. The National Grange supports the continuation of religious broadcasts on radio and television.
4. The National Grange urges Congress to maintain the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as a watchdog agency to protect the public from unfair practices and monopolies. We oppose media mergers where one company can control all forms of media. We encourage the FCC to provide ample opportunity for new media companies and medium-sized media companies to be able to compete.
5. The National Grange supports elimination of the foul language, obscenities, and vulgar images used on TV, radio, or public places and fully supports the increased penalties for violations imposed by the FCC. The National Grange supports legislation to prohibit advertising the use of the "900" number during children's shows.
6. The National Grange lobbies the FCC to ban the use of emergency vehicle sirens in all radio advertisements to prevent

hazards and confusion on the roadway.

7. The National Grange urges Congress and the Federal Communications Commission to require broadcast media to maintain a constant volume level during an entire broadcast, including commercials.
8. The National Grange supports the current financial assistance to support quality, commercial-free educational children's programs.

Elected Officials

1. The Grange favors changing the term of office of Congressional Representatives from two to four years. We also favor a maximum of 12 years consecutive service for Senators and Representatives.
2. The National Grange supports a ban on automatic salary increases for elected officials and Members of Congress, separate from those of judges and other federal government employees. All Congressional pay raises should be considered by Congress during normal business hours and on their own merits as a separate entity to be discussed in open committee hearings and voted on by roll call with a three-fourths majority voting in the affirmative as opposed to being attached to an unrelated piece of legislation. Any approved Congressional pay increases should take effect at the next session of Congress. The National Grange further favors strengthening the law limiting the amount of gifts and money that members of Congress can accept.
3. The National Grange urges members of Congress to participate in both Social Security and the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS). We further recommend that all laws, including employment laws, apply to Congressional members.
4. The National Grange opposes rules that permit members of the United States Senate to block other members' bills from being placed on the floor. However, should this practice be permitted, the dissenter should be required to disclose his/her identity and reason for dissent.
5. The National Grange supports an amendment to the United States Constitution that should read: "Congress shall make no law that applies to the citizens of the United States that does not apply equally to Senators and/or Representatives, just as Congress shall make no law that applies to the Senators and/or Representatives that does not apply equally to the citizens of the United States, including health care insurance programs and rates." Further, when the federal government is shut down because Congress has failed to pass proper funding, Congress should not be paid for the period of the shut-down.

Elections

1. We believe that projections and/or final results of national elections should not be reported or broadcast by the news media until the polls have closed in all western states.
2. The National Grange urges all of its members to exercise their right to vote. We further recommend that all ballots and pertinent instructions for all elections be printed in the English language only. Proof of citizenship be required at the time of voter registration with federally approved photo identification when voting. We oppose same day registration voting laws.
3. The National Grange supports the current Electoral College system for presidential and vice-presidential elections.
4. The National Grange supports a change in the qualifications for appointment as a United States Supreme Court Justice requiring the candidate to be a citizen of the United States of America.
5. The National Grange supports the federal campaign law that requires public disclosure of the names of persons who contribute \$1,000 or more and anyone who contributes \$100,000 or more to be posted on the Super PAC website within 24 hours and must stay on the website until the completion of the campaign.
6. The National Grange opposes United Nation representatives at any U.S. polling location.
7. The National Grange supports laws requiring individuals to show appropriate/proper identification at the polls and/or anyone requesting an absentee ballot, to verify they are a legal voter within this country and proper state.

Government and Legislative Affairs

1. The National Grange believes:
 - a) that all government-mandated programs and agencies must contain "sunset" provisions, including a target termination date;
 - b) that systematic and continuous reviews of all mandated programs be made periodically by an appropriate board of review;
 - c) that all mandated programs must be funded and financed by the government of origin;
 - d) and that at any point funding is not provided, the mandate will be removed.
2. The National Grange strongly opposes the use of any commission, council, or other consortium of non-elected appointees to create legislative mandates that Congress must adhere to, that are not subject to judicial review or the American system of checks and balances.
3. The National Grange supports the present status of Washington, D.C. as both a "federal city" and the nation's capital, which is not affiliated with any state government and not a separate state in and of itself. We further favor restricting the Congressional delegates from non-tax paying territories of Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico to being non-voting members of Congressional committees.
4. The National Grange supports legislation that would specifically make protection of private property rights and compensating private property owners for property that is taken for public use as a part of the federal statutes. The National Grange supports strengthening the Constitution's guarantee that a person owning property has the right to control such property, including restricting trespassers, and excluding liability for injuries to a trespasser.

5. The National Grange supports a constitutional amendment that allows the President to exercise a line item veto for budget appropriations and authorization bills.
6. The National Grange opposes all legislation limiting the individual's ability to lobby and communicate with our elected officials either directly or through organizations such as the Grange.
7. The National Grange supports the continuation of public tours of the White House.
8. The National Grange supports allowing military recruiters to bear arms inside recruiting centers.
9. The National Grange supports the inclusion of a question on census forms as to whether a person is a U.S. citizen.

Government Service

1. The National Grange supports efforts to improve the collection and dissemination of accurate and timely statistical data by all federal agencies. The National Grange encourages legislation to require the Commerce Census Bureau to return to inclusion of a separate category for farm families.
2. The National Grange supports legislation that would make compliance with regulatory requirements regarding equipment and services for volunteer fire departments contingent upon providing financial assistance to those volunteer fire departments.
3. The National Grange encourages the federal government to provide assistance immediately following the successful request by a State Governor for a declaration of a national disaster in the United States.
4. The National Grange supports legislation to reclassify public safety telecommunicators and dispatchers to the same protective first-responder classification as police and firefighters.

Government Spending

1. The National Grange strongly advocates for Congress to put aside partisan politics to pass a balanced budget, prevent federal government shutdowns and ensure a permanent solution to our deficit problems. The National Grange believes the issuance of Social Security, other critical social service monetary supplements, military salaries, benefits, or expenses should not be affected, delayed or reduced, should a federal government shutdown occur.
2. We support efforts at all levels of government to reduce costs and excessive paperwork, to review regulations, and to generally reduce any undue influence of government on the private sector. We favor the review of all tax supported federal incentive programs for possible reduction or elimination. We encourage all levels of government to downsize and/or eliminate government jobs where possible.
3. The National Grange supports the enforcement of regulations to assure that government programs abide by the bidding process, when appropriate.
4. The National Grange encourages Congress to eliminate the United States Postal Service requirement to pre-fund retiree health insurance benefits.

Native Americans

1. The National Grange supports Native Americans in their reservation treaty rights to retain their mineral deposits and rights.
2. The National Grange supports the continuation of all rights and privileges enjoyed by Native Americans as U.S. citizens, including fulfilling all responsibilities associated with such citizenship, which includes being subject to the same laws as other citizens.
3. The National Grange supports laws to prevent the robbery or desecration of Native American graves and burial sites and to require newly discovered human remains, grave artifacts and/or sacred items of Native American origin to be returned to the tribes or areas of their origin.

Patriotism, Prayer, and Religious Observances

1. The National Grange strongly supports maintaining The Star-Spangled Banner as our National Anthem. The National Grange supports legislation to maintain the wording of the current Pledge of Allegiance including the words "Liberty," and "under God." The National Grange believes that the Pledge of Allegiance should be recited in every U.S. school classroom and by members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives during their opening sessions each day.
2. The National Grange favors making new National Veterans Cemetery facilities available.
3. The National Grange believes the American flag be treated with all due respect in accordance with recognized flag etiquette and protocol. We support the purchase of American flags made in the USA and made from domestically produced materials.
4. The National Grange opposes any attempts by any federal, state or local government agency to dictate membership qualifications for any social or fraternal organizations.
5. The National Grange joins with the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and other Veteran Service organizations along with churches and individuals to protect our religious freedoms and the First Amendment. We support the words "In God We Trust" remaining on our currency and as our national motto.
6. The National Grange supports maintaining November 11th as Veterans Day.

Social Security

1. The National Grange encourages Congress to positively reform the Social Security System to ensure its future solvency. The National Grange urges the continuing investigation of all Social Security programs ensuring that only those who are eligible are receiving benefits. The National Grange supports using Social Security funds for Social Security programs only. We oppose the utilization of any funds from the Social Security Trust Fund to achieve a balanced federal budget or for any purpose other than Social Security benefits.

2. We ask Congress to proceed with caution when proposing changes to Social Security and we request that the public be provided with explicit and concise information concerning any major changes in the Social Security system.
3. The National Grange urges Congress to revise Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and other programs for the elderly and handicapped so that an individual's benefits will not decrease if they decide to marry.
4. The National Grange favors making Social Security benefits completely exempt from personal income taxes. The National Grange supports legislation that would remove all Social Security "Earning Limits" for individuals.
5. The National Grange supports any and all federal bills that would eliminate the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provisions, therefore restoring full Social Security benefits to public employees and surviving spouses.
6. The National Grange supports reform that would expedite the application for, and processing of, Social Security Disability benefits for all clients. We further urge that terminally ill persons be permitted to apply for Social Security Disability benefits upon diagnosis of the terminal illness and the application process be completed within four months of the initial application.
7. The National Grange lobbies to amend the Social Security Act to assure that a beneficiary is paid for the month of his or her death. However, the Grange encourages the Social Security Administration to remove deceased persons from the rolls of social security and terminate all benefits to that person; this includes being more diligent in updating its Death Master File.
8. The National Grange encourages legislators to raise the Social Security Death Benefit to at least \$500.

Social Welfare Programs

1. The National Grange urges enforcement of current Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations and encourages related social agencies to assist SNAP recipients with information about foods that meet their nutritional needs. The National Grange asks the SNAP program to allow essential non-food personal articles, such as laundry soap and toilet paper, to be purchased using SNAP and opposes replacing SNAP with cash distributions. The National Grange further urges Congress to reduce current welfare rolls and take steps to reduce fraud.
2. The National Grange supports requiring additional means to facilitate the identification and location of each child's parent for purposes of welfare recovery.
3. The National Grange supports the continuation of the WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) Program.
4. The National Grange supports legislation that would require drug testing to be included in the eligibility requirements for welfare recipients.
5. The National Grange supports having well-advertised places in our communities/counties where residents can safely dispose of outdated or unused medicines, vitamins and/or supplements, etc.
6. The National Grange urges Congress to update the Department of Energy code that governs the Energy Weatherization Program for low income families.

Telecommunications

1. The National Grange supports legislation to promote an integrated telecommunications network to assure widely available, high quality telecommunications to all of the nation's users at a reasonable cost as was originally intended by the Communications Acts of 1934 and 1996. We further believe that access to affordable and reliable broadband Internet service is vital to preserving the quality of life in rural America. The National Grange supports the modernization of the Universal Service Fund (USF) to secure last mile (wireline or wireless) connectivity for rural Americans to broadband, thereby creating jobs, enhancing the economy, and boosting local businesses. The National Grange supports a national broadband policy that will:
 - a. provide federal government funding for rural broadband infrastructure improvement;
 - b. remove the regulatory uncertainty that has deterred broadband investment in rural America;
 - c. provide the incentive for private businesses, government agencies, and private citizens to invest in rural broadband deployment, stimulate broadband competition and impose reasonable taxation for private investment in rural broadband infrastructure improvement;
 - d. spark the creation of new service providers and new innovations that will assist a host of new technologies becoming more affordable, including cutting-edge wireless technologies that promise to deliver broadband to even the most remote parts of our country;
 - e. reallocate unused government agency spectrum (broadband connectivity) for commercial and rural broadband connectivity; and
 - f. allow Public Utility Districts (PUDs), or other public utilities to get involved in establishing the wireless communication systems.
2. The National Grange supports continued strict enforcement of the Federal Communications Commission's national "Do Not Call List." The National Grange supports expansion of the Do-Not-Call list to include computer dialed political telemarketing, including, but not limited to, charities and political groups. No one calling a household for commercial or charitable request reasons may use a restricted number or call a phone with a restricted number. Telemarketers, as well as computer-generated or robocalls, should be prohibited from calling cell phones. The National Grange supports the Robocall Enforcement Improvement Act.
3. The National Grange recognizes the importance of the Universal Service Fund (USF) to the American public, especially in rural communities. The National Grange urges the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to approve any petitions by wireless telephone companies that demonstrate their ability to meet the obligations of Lifeline service, especially in rural areas, so they can serve low-income consumers with wireless Lifeline telephone service through the federal Universal Service Fund. Further,

the National Grange opposes measures that would limit or reduce the Federal Communications Commission Lifeline Program.

4. The National Grange will work with telecommunications coalitions to encourage an increase in the number of cellular towers and new technologies where needed in rural America.
5. The National Grange urges U.S. Congress to expedite funding for a resilient, mobile, wireless, data network between local and state first responders and emergency personnel with federal emergency agencies, such as FEMA, Homeland Security and the National Guard.
6. The National Grange urges Congress to appropriate the necessary funding to combat the continuing cyberspace warfare threats to the United States in the 21st century.
7. The National Grange opposes any relinquishing of control of the American internet access to the UN or any foreign entity.

Veterans Affairs

1. The National Grange supports the continued operation of all Veterans' Hospitals and veterans' eligibility for medical care and benefits. We further support continuation of the current Disabled Veterans' Compensation Schedule, maintaining the current benefits and the criteria for qualifying. The National Grange encourages additional federal funds to be appropriated for the Veterans' Administration for the purpose of improving the service and care of servicemen in the Veterans' Administration hospitals.
2. The National Grange believes disabled veterans should remain eligible to receive all their service-related retirements benefits and any other benefits to which they are entitled without offsets or reductions. Also, the National Grange supports legislation requiring the U.S. Veterans Administration to pay all benefits to veterans, effective the first day of the month that the veteran was diagnosed with the service-connected presumptive condition. Further, the Grange calls upon Congress to support the inclusion of 100% service-disabled veterans in the Space Available Program operated by the Air Mobility Command.
3. The National Grange urges all levels of government to protect the parental rights of military personnel, such as custody or visitation rights, while serving in combat on active duty.
4. The National Grange supports allowing all veterans registered in the Veterans Administration health care system and residing in nursing facilities, both private and state owned, to receive their drugs through the VA pharmacies at the patient's co-pay price prior to admission.
5. The National Grange urges the Department of Veterans Affairs to continue the use of Veterans Administration Medical Centers and allow Veterans to seek community based medical attention. All veterans' medical services be paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs Services.
6. The National Grange supports legislation allowing for a separate 10% disability rating by the Veterans Administration for each ear when veterans suffer from Tinnitus as a result of military service.
7. The National Grange urges the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to efficiently use their resources to resolve the serious backlog of veteran's benefit claims.
8. The National Grange supports the extension of the Veterans Administration Mortgage Protection Life Insurance to all service-connected veterans who are rated as permanently and totally disabled.
9. The National Grange supports legislation to increase to \$50,000 the maximum coverage a service-connected disabled veteran can purchase under the Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance Program.
10. The National Grange supports legislation that would direct the VA to select a VA medical facility to serve as the national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of biological children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of service members exposed in combat to toxic substances.
11. The National Grange supports legislation to increase active duty service members' payroll deduction to one dollar per month for the Armed Services Retirement Home.
12. The National Grange supports legislation to extend "Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers" to caregivers of all war era veterans.
13. National Grange supports legislation that would direct Veterans Affairs to assist female veterans to reintegrate with their communities after discharge from the Armed Forces.

Miscellaneous

1. The National Grange supports programs that strengthen families and advocates for educational programs that emphasize the importance of families and the prevention of family dysfunction. The consequences of policies and laws should be carefully examined as to their impact on the family unit.
2. The National Grange supports all rights that are granted in the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights and urges Congress not to consider legislation eliminating or repealing these rights.
3. The National Grange favors a Constitutional amendment to make English the official national language. The National Grange supports legislation to require that English be used on all government forms throughout the United States.
4. The National Grange favors the establishment of a new branch of the Smithsonian dedicated to the nation's food and farm heritage.
5. The National Grange opposes government regulations that infringe upon personal nutritional choices within our homes and diets.
6. The Grange supports the National Council on Disabilities efforts to ensure rights of parents with disabilities to raise children.
7. The National Grange urges Congress to reject the United Nations "Small Arms Treaty".
8. The National Grange urges elected officials to address ongoing problems facing homeless youth and to make more resources available day and night until they can become self-sufficient.

9. The National Grange supports legislation that would allow distribution from Individual retirement accounts as needed without required minimum distributions based on age.
10. The National Grange encourages the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee to issue a 400th Anniversary of Plymouth Colony stamp.
11. The National Grange supports the National Weather Service and other alert systems that relay important life-saving storm warnings over streaming services.

TAXATION

Business, Investment, Capital Gains, and Inheritance Taxation

1. The National Grange supports legislation to permit farmers to use the method of depreciation that is most suitable to the uncertainties of their businesses. We support depreciation schedules for agricultural capital assets that accurately reflect the useful life of those assets. In particular, we support a depreciation schedule of 15 years for single purpose farm structures. The National Grange supports legislation to eliminate the reporting of government funded environmental and conservation cost-share monies as income to the recipients. We oppose the use of income tax write-offs from farming to reduce the amount of taxes that are owed on the earnings of non-farm businesses or professions.
2. The National Grange supports an Investment Tax Credit or accelerated depreciation with a \$100,000 value eligibility limit.
3. The National Grange supports preferential treatment for capital gains income. We support the abolishment of the capital gains tax. Until then, we support indexing the basic value of an asset, so that only the real gain, and not the inflation value, is subject to the capital gains tax. We support excluding capital gains up to \$500,000 from sale of agricultural lands from taxable income. We further support excluding all of the proceeds on the sale or exchange of qualified farmland development rights to a tax-exempt conservation organization from all capital gain taxes. We further support allowing farmers to invest any un-excluded capital gains from the sale of real and personal property into tax-deferred accounts, such as IRAs.
4. The National Grange believes that employees should not be liable for un-remitted income or FICA taxes if the employer properly withheld those taxes from the employee's pay but then failed to make the proper payments to the IRS or the state.
5. The National Grange opposes the enactment of any federal tax on securities transactions.
6. The National Grange supports the uniform application of all timber depletion allowances in the tax code to all timberland owners regardless of the size of their timberland holdings.
7. The National Grange supports legislation abolishing the federal estate tax, especially for small business and agriculture as long as their ownership stays in the family and the farm stays in productive agriculture. We support retaining current provisions for a full stepped up basis on inheritances. We favor using the current use value as the basis for the property for estate tax purposes. The National Grange further supports a personal exemption from federal estate taxes of ten million dollars.
8. The National Grange supports federal tax credits or tax deductions to growers or grower co-operatives that build or own ethanol production facilities.
9. The National Grange supports legislation prohibiting employers from borrowing from an employee's pension fund. The National supports legislation that would place employees or former employees, who had invested in their employers' stock as part of their retirement plan, ahead of payments to other creditors during bankruptcy.
10. The National Grange supports prosecution of cooperative executives and others suspected of illegal actions resulting in a cooperative declaring bankruptcy.
11. The National Grange urges Congress to oppose any future legislation allowing the IRS to implement percentage fees on banking transactions.

Personal Income Tax

1. The National Grange supports developing a simpler and fairer federal income tax code, written in precise, plain and understandable language. We further support simplifying the language that is used in the government's instruction pamphlets for filing individual income taxes.
2. The National Grange favors continuing 5- and 10-year averaging of lump sum distributions of pension funds for income tax purposes.
3. The National Grange favors indexing all federal income tax brackets for inflation.
4. The National Grange supports income tax deductions for two-wage earner families. The National Grange supports deducting state sales tax from federal income tax returns.
5. The National Grange supports a 100% tax deduction for all qualified charitable contributions for all federal taxpayers.
6. The National Grange supports equalizing the mileage rates for volunteer services and medical transportation with mileage rates permitted for businesses for tax purposes.
7. The National Grange favors income tax credits for those families who care for their elderly or handicapped relatives, who otherwise would become residents of a nursing home. We support legislation to allow a federal tax deduction for all Long-Term Care Insurance premiums. We further support exempting all benefits paid under Long Term Care insurance from all income taxes.
8. The National Grange supports the continuation of all current tax deductions allowed on real-estate mortgages and on state and local taxes.
9. The National Grange supports legislation to allow voluntary contributions of \$1 to be solicited on all federal income tax forms to fund our national parks. The Grange supports permitting an individual to designate \$1 on his/her federal income tax return for the USA Olympic Program.

10. The National Grange supports a 100% federal income tax credit to law enforcement officers for purchasing their own bulletproof vests.
11. The National Grange supports expanding medical flexible spending accounts to allow employees or retirees to set aside part of their pre-tax pay or pension. We further recommend that any unspent medical flexible spending account balance be rolled into the next year's account or refunded to the employee or retiree as taxable income.
12. The National Grange supports a 100% federal income tax deduction for all medical insurance.
13. The National Grange supports legislation to allow parents or students to utilize all student loan interest as an adjustment of income on their federal tax return.
14. The National Grange supports legislation to prevent illegal aliens from receiving earned income tax credit or any other financial benefit from the United States government.
15. The National Grange urges Congress to give farmers and ranchers flexibility in the tax code to adjust quickly to estate planning challenges.

Sales, Excise Taxes, and Internet

1. The National Grange opposes the enactment of any national sales tax or any form of value added tax.
2. The National Grange supports federal law prohibiting any charges or taxes on e-mail or the use of the Internet. The National Grange opposes any new or increased excise tax on telecommunication. The National Grange supports legislation that would prohibit mail order houses or Internet retailers from collecting state or federal sales or use taxes on mail order or Internet purchases.
3. The National Grange supports increasing levels of taxation of for all tobacco products, medical and recreational marijuana, and alcohol at the federal, state and local level.

Taxes - General

1. We support the present tax treatment of agricultural cooperatives as non-profit entities.
2. The National Grange supports a federal prohibition on the imposition of any tax or fee on water that is drawn from private wells, lakes, and irrigation ponds.
3. The National Grange supports tax policies that will preserve the ability of this nation to find and produce domestic oil and gas resources. We support the current oil import fee and the domestic crude oil fee.
4. The National Grange supports tax exemption for income that is raised by non-profit organizations such as the Grange.
5. We support a further strengthening of the "Taxpayers' Bill of Rights." We support placing the burden of proof on the IRS - not the taxpayer - under due process of law and providing a course of action in which the taxpayer could defend himself and recover his costs and attorney fees should the IRS fail to prove its case. We support giving the taxpayer the right to record all interviews with IRS representatives and to set a reasonable time and place for meetings. We support prohibiting the IRS from sending out bills that are in excess of owed taxes, except for interest and penalties.
6. The National Grange supports the rights of local governments to use tax-exempt municipal financing without further limitations being imposed by Congress.
7. The National Grange supports requiring a two-thirds vote of each House of Congress to increase taxes. We further support federal legislation to explicitly limit the authority of all courts in the United States to order a state or political subdivision to levy or increase taxes as a remedy for any civil litigation.
8. The National Grange opposes any sale of information from individual tax returns to any agency or individual.
9. The National Grange believes that tax preparers should be vigilant in their obligation to comply with the privacy standards of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act and the privacy rules of the Federal Communications Commission.

The Citizenship and Taxation committee thanks National Master Betsy Huber and Legislative Director Burton Eller for your advice, assistance and information.

Thanks also to Lillian Booth, California, for the information and input over the phone with the committee.

Thank you to Stephanie Wilkins, Stephanie Tiller, and Deborah Ploof for the assistance with technical issues!

Many thanks to our outstanding secretary for her organizational skills and for keeping us on track and to our whole committee for their, research, hard work, dedication and especially the good humor.

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Christine Hamp, WA

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Barbara Narvel, DE
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Buddy Overstreet, TX
Michael Lynch, DE

Fraternally submitted,
Harry Greer
Citizenship and Taxation Committee Chair

POLICY STATEMENT

We encourage the responsible stewardship of our natural resources from all who own or use them. We define responsible Stewardship as a balance between use, preservation, and the environmental standards appropriate to the regional needs.

Our organization has been a strong advocate for land stewardship. We believe that protection of the environment and the conservation of natural resources are vital. We further believe that education of the public regarding the importance of our natural resources is an absolute necessity.

The National Grange should continue to advocate for conservation programs. These programs should encourage farmers to operate in an environmentally sound manner, focusing on technical assistance, research, education, loans, and cost-share programs.

We recognize that plastic is a significant environmental nuisance. The National Grange should support legislation that will promote the use of shorter life plastic and other biologically degradable materials.

The National Grange recognizes the unique role agriculture plays in land and environmental management. We advocate for greater flexibility in the interpretation of environmental laws to allow for traditional land uses taking into consideration varying environmental situations across the country.

The National Grange supports coordination among Federal, State and Local Governments when developing land use management plans. We urge Congress to include voluntary incentive-based assistance for conservation practices by farmers, ranchers, foresters, developers, and landowners in future Farm Bills, which will maintain a commitment to conservation. In that light, we also urge USDA to ensure that they use only scientifically based research when crafting regulations to implement the conservation portions of the Farm Bill. The optimum result should be that the environment be protected with the least amount of prime, productive farmland taken out of production.

This covers 401-TX, 404-PA, 407-IN, 408-OR, and portions of the Master's Address.

INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS

RES. #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
121	OR	Regenerative Agriculture Standards	Transferred from Ag; Adopted
402	MI	Discarded Plastics	Adopted
405	ID	Northwest Hydro Power	Adopted

ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS

121-OR-Regenerative Agriculture Standards

WHEREAS the National Grange recognizes and acknowledges our agricultural history and heritage and the critical importance of being good stewards of the land and the creatures upon it; and

WHEREAS historic records reflect how farmers and ranchers have battled storms and droughts for decades, though the scientific community now reports that climate change poses an even greater threat to agriculture, rural economies, and the nation's food supply; and

WHEREAS soil is a climate ally, holding more carbon than the atmosphere and all vegetation combined; and

WHEREAS regenerative agriculture recognizes pollinator health is critical for the success of every farm operation and encourages the planting of pollinator hedgerows, diversification of bee forage and the reduction or elimination of on-farm pesticide use; and

WHEREAS research conducted by the Marin Carbon Project found that applying half of an inch of compost to grazed rangeland yields a 40-70% gain in forage production while improving water holding capacity and sequestering one ton of carbon per hectare per year; and

WHEREAS regenerative agriculture promotes practices that increase soil carbon which feeds a diversity of soil life, which in turn feeds us all; and

WHEREAS soil carbon is the key driver for nutritional status of plants and stabilizes soil moisture holding capacity, frequently the most limiting factor for production and profit; and

WHEREAS regenerative agriculture practices such as planting a variety of cover crops, livestock management and reducing tillage without herbicide applications will increase soil carbon and improve the biological activity of the soil and therefore the capacity of a farm to produce greater yields with less inputs; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange will raise awareness about the benefits of regenerative agriculture and encourage implementation of practices to minimize on-farm inputs while building capacity for a farm operation's future productivity; and be it further

RESOLVED that regenerative agriculture be recognized as a renewable method of farming that builds a farm's capacity each successive year.

402-MI-Discarded Plastics

WHEREAS discarded plastics are filling our landfills and dumps, as well as our roadsides; and

WHEREAS plastics degrade very slowly; and

WHEREAS Grangers have long been known as "Stewards of the Soil"; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange urges our Granges and Grangers to try to avoid using plastic tableware at functions, or at least consider traditional tableware or paper products, which are easier to recycle and are more biodegradable.

405-ID-Northwest Hydro Power

WHEREAS for decades, the Pacific Northwest has relied on clean, renewable, carbon free, hydropower for the vast majority of its energy needs; and

WHEREAS the Pacific Northwest has a carbon footprint that is half that of other regions of the country; and

WHEREAS the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) already spends millions of dollars to improve access for salmon with great success, and every mainstream federal dam in our region now has fish slides and other technologies to help young salmon migrate downstream; and

WHEREAS even with these notable improvements, the courts are forcing dams to spill water in the spring in an unproven effort to help salmon at a cost of \$40 million to consumers; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange supports being good stewards of our environment; we oppose forcing dams to spill spring waters, costing consumers millions of dollars annually in unproven efforts to help salmon; and be it further

RESOLVED that the National Grange lobby our Congressional persons and other appropriate entities accordingly.

PRESENT POLICY

Clean Air Act

1. The National Grange supports a clean air policy that will best protect agricultural interests, relieve automotive passengers, freight users and carriers of costly and unnecessary restrictions, and will protect the physical and economic health of industry and the general public.
2. The National Grange proposes that Congress determine state compliance to the Clean Air Act by statute and not by administrative regulations. Until then, we urge state and national administrative flexibility in deadlines for meeting Ambient Air Quality Standards. The National Grange strongly urges the EPA to retain the existing National Ambient Air Quality Standard for ground-level ozone.
3. The National Grange opposes any national mandatory motor vehicle emission inspection and maintenance programs. We oppose any national law or regulation that would require the use of "stand alone" vehicle emission testing facilities. The National Grange supports exempting agricultural equipment and machinery manufactured prior to January 1, 1993 from the current Clean Air Act.
4. The National Grange favors the repeal of the ozone provisions contained in the Clean Air Act to allow the use of Freon for refrigerators, freezers and air conditioners. The Grange opposes the Environmental Protection Agency's regulations further curtailing the presence of ground level ozone in the atmosphere below the current 0,075 parts per million levels.
5. The National Grange favors reducing sulfur and nitrogen oxide emissions from coal-burning plants. The National Grange encourages more research into clean technology and revision of EPA standards for use of coal and gas in building new generating plants. The National Grange opposes any "Cap and Trade" bill or related legislation concerning climate changes that would restrict greenhouse gas emissions.
6. The National Grange opposes adoption of the United Nations Climate Change Treaty or the Kyoto Protocol agreement on greenhouse gas emissions by the United States until uniform standards for greenhouse gas emissions are applied to all major countries, regardless of their economic development. In the meantime, we support the following measures: expansion of voluntary efforts to limit greenhouse gas emissions; scientific research and educational programs on climate; investing in the development and deployment of new technologies and urging utilities to update their older plants bringing them into compliance with the current Clean Air Act.
7. The National Grange supports a program of government incentives that will reduce commuting by private vehicle, increase subsidies for mass transportation or carpooling, and sponsor more research to make alternative energy cars viable.

Clean Water Act and Wetland Management

1. The National Grange supports federal clean water laws and regulations that are based upon realistic and obtainable goals and are enforced uniformly between the states. We regard a zero-pollution standard as being totally unrealistic and unobtainable.
2. The National Grange recommends that adequate State and Federal funds be provided for any soil or water conservation program required by the Clean Water Act, including at least 75 percent of the federal cost share on agricultural best management practices (BMPs) for non-point source pollution abatement administered through local conservation districts. The National Grange urges Congress and the President to clarify Clean Water Act Section 303 (d) so that the Total Maximum

Daily Load (TMDL) will be reasonable and attainable without extreme hardships placed on agriculture and other industries. Furthermore, the National Grange urges State and Federal Governments to fund conservation programs that will help farmers and municipalities to meet the goals of TMDL, and Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) with regard to the Chesapeake Bay cleanup.

3. The National Grange supports legislation to provide funds to study water quality regarding groundwater contamination. We further support the creation of groundwater protection and management plans that will limit the amount of toxic chemicals in groundwater realizing that a policy of no degradation is unobtainable. We support local control of groundwater management and management plans and support the enforcement of penalties to cities and towns that improperly dump waste in our streams and waterways.
4. The National Grange opposes efforts to require states to designate any watersheds with populations of threatened or endangered species as an Outstanding Resource Water that would further impede use of that water by traditional agricultural users.
5. The National Grange supports the US Supreme Court's holdings regarding the Congressional intent of the phrase "navigable waters" as used in the Clean Water Act that limit the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the US Environmental Protection Agency to regulate inland waters and wetlands. We oppose legislative efforts to remove or amend the definition of "navigable waters" in the Clean Water Act.
6. The National Grange supports legislation to improve the wetland regulatory programs by Federal, State and/or Local Governments to streamline the permitting process; delineate wetlands by categories based on readily identifiable natural characteristics, environmental value, function, and abundance; refine the wetland mitigation system; improve the system of compensation for private landowners; and increase the role of the states in the wetland permitting process. We further support exempting wetland designations from areas that are artificially created by irrigation, stock water ponds, fire protection ponds, or have been cropped for one of the last five years.

Conservation Reserve and Agriculture Conservation Programs

1. The National Grange supports a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) that will provide long-term solutions to natural resource concerns on our nation's farms. We believe that CRP programs should be integrated with other environmental protection programs and should have a high environmental benefit to the cost-ratio by accepting only highly erodible land for 10 years at a rental rate that is in relationship to its productive value. We believe that the commodity base acres in CRP land should remain as a production reserve and only be transferred to other production acres to meet increased export demand. However, we favor eliminating the offsetting and cross compliance provisions as they relate to the Conservation Reserve Program.
2. The National Grange recommends that the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) enforce the inspection of CRP land for noxious weed control. CRP payments should be withheld from the owners of the CRP tracts that are infested with noxious weeds until the (FSA) or NRCS certifies that the noxious weed control program is being carried out by the landowner. To assist landowners in their responsibility to control noxious weeds, we further urge the USDA (subject to state FSA Committee rules) to change the date when mowing to control noxious weeds is allowed on CRP lands from July 15 to at least as early as June.
3. The National Grange supports federal funding for soil conservation, including sufficient funding to retain technical assistance for conservation. Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program) appropriations should be maintained at a level that will significantly help meet the conservation needs of America's farmland-- EQIP to complete needed conservation practices and CSP to maintain those practices. Conservation contracts should follow land ownership with penalties assessed for destruction of said practices before the final contract date. In the event any federal conservation cost-share funds are granted to states, all such funds should be made available to farmers for cost-share payments. EQIP and CSP funds should be used for the cost-sharing program for which they have been appropriated and none of these funds should be diverted for administrative costs of the states' delivery systems.
4. The National Grange urges each State Grange work with their respective Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) agencies to implement Nutrient Management Plans (NMP's).

Energy Conservation

1. The National Grange supports voluntary and economically viable energy conservation for agriculture, industry, commerce, and the home.
2. The National Grange encourages the voluntary "energy efficient" construction of new structures without mandating retrofitting existing structures.
3. The National Grange supports economic assistance to low-income persons and those who are on small, fixed incomes to assist them in paying for the high cost of energy.
4. The National Grange endorses the continuation of state and federal subsidies for home and business generation of solar energy.
5. The National Grange supports all oil and gas price decontrol as a positive step in reducing our need for foreign oil and gas. We oppose any increase in taxes and/or any decrease in tax credits (i.e. depletion allowance) on natural gas and oil production. The National Grange believes that all companies, including farm cooperatives, should be allowed to sell gasoline

at both the wholesale and retail levels without divesting. The National Grange supports the following practices to guard against supply uncertainty and unreasonably high prices: 1) retain one billion barrels of U.S. oil reserve while supplies are adequate; and 2) encourage greater use of natural resources, especially those that are renewable and non-polluting. The National Grange only supports further releases from the U.S. Strategic Oil Reserve in the event of war or interruption of delivery of foreign supplies of petroleum into the U.S.

6. The National Grange supports legislation to direct the U.S. Secretary of Transportation to set fuel economy standards at their maximum feasible level, taking into account technical feasibility, safety, and the economic impact to the public. The National Grange urges increased research and development of more fuel efficient, internal combustion engines.

Energy Development

1. The National Grange urges the repeal of laws and regulations that have discouraged United States' energy production by private enterprise. We support a national energy policy that will encourage the development of all forms of domestic energy, traditional and alternative, including solar, wind, geothermal, ethanol, livestock methane, surf/tidal, shale, tar sands, hydroelectric, agricultural products, urban solid wastes, peat, wood, coal, coal gasification, oil, natural gas, compressed natural gas, nuclear, hydrogen, bio diesel and methanol in an environmentally sound manner without exploiting our parks and wildernesses in order to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. The National Grange believes all domestically produced hydroelectric power should be classified as renewable energy under all applicable Federal and State statutes.
2. The National Grange favors the complete utilization of petroleum and the other mineral resources, including the exploration and production of oil reserves on the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and from any outer continental shelf lease sales in accordance with the terms of an environmentally sound development plan.
3. The National Grange supports the building of the Keystone Pipeline system as long as it is built to acceptable appropriate engineering and environmental standards.
4. The National Grange supports legislation requiring the nation's motor fuels to contain a renewable component (Biodiesel and/or Ethanol). We support increased development and use of ethanol and ethyl tertiary butyl ether (ETBE) in gasoline blends with adequate income tax incentives to make the production and use of ethanol and ETBE economically feasible.
5. The National Grange supports the use of hydraulic fracturing for natural gas production in all hydrocarbon-producing strata.
6. The National Grange supports regulated oil and gas production in the United States that protects landowners and allows adequate compensation while allowing production to continue.
7. The National Grange supports an examination and reform of environmental laws so that new oil refineries can be built to supply our fuel needs. We further support a study of the need for different mandated formulations for gasoline, and if possible, a reduction in the number of gasoline blends to make it easier and less expensive to refine and transport the finished product.
8. The National Grange endorses the goal of generating at least 25% of domestic energy needs from domestic renewable resources while continuing to produce safe, abundant and affordable food, feed, and fiber by January 1, 2025.
9. The National Grange urges the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, U.S. Coast Guard, and any other pertinent Federal agencies to develop and strengthen regulations regarding the siting of liquefied natural gas terminals, and consideration should be given to the overall economic impact on the region before any site is approved.

Environmental Regulations and Controls -

1. The National Grange supports requiring all appeals or court actions against properly approved and financed federal state or municipal construction projects to post a security bond equal to the projected cost of the project before the appeal or lawsuit may be adjudicated that will, in turn be forfeited if the appeal or lawsuit subsequently fails.
2. The National Grange supports legislation to require that all environmental impact statements under the National Environmental Policy Act must equitably balance and weigh economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts of proposed Federal actions to reduce unnecessary delays on worthwhile and vital projects.
3. The National Grange supports the EPA's standards on the use of dangerous trace metals. We further support continued EPA programs to monitor the industrial and farm uses of materials that contain dangerous trace metals.
4. The National Grange supports new "Right to Farm" laws at the local, state and federal levels to further protect them against charges of civil or criminal violation of environmental regulations when those charges apply to normal activities that are essential to a farm operation.
5. The National Grange urges Congress to keep the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at its current status as an independent federal agency, and not elevate the agency to a Cabinet level.
6. The National Grange urges USDA to use only scientifically-based research when crafting regulations to implement the conservation title of the Farm Bill.

Federal Grazing

1. The National Grange supports basing all decisions on Federal Grazing regulations, including grazing fee pricing formulas, upon solid economic principals, current livestock market prices, good conservation practices and extensive public input from existing grazing permittees. We favor legislation that would further limit any overall reduction in grazing to 10 percent or less on any given allotment except in the case of emergencies such as drought.

2. The National Grange strongly supports considering the economic impact that restrictions on grazing in riparian areas may have on farmers before legislation is passed.
3. The National Grange encourages the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service to carry out an aggressive program to fill all grazing allotments on Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service lands. However, we support restricting the selling of Federal grazing permits to anyone other than someone using the permit for grazing purposes.

Land Withdrawals and Wilderness

1. The National Grange supports releasing all public lands not currently designated as Wilderness or Wilderness Study Areas to multiple uses. We oppose any further designations of National Forest lands as wilderness, especially in Alaska. We believe that all public lands suitable for producing commercial timber, farm or grazing resources, commercially valuable minerals, or public recreational facilities (including motorized sports activities) should be precluded from future consideration for wilderness designation and, instead, actively managed to achieve sustainable multiple use goals.
2. The National Grange believes that regulations governing the management of Federal Wilderness areas should allow for controlled access by motorized vehicles in cases of emergency, especially when lives or private property are at stake. We further support the harvest of timber resources from Federal Wilderness areas following natural disasters. We oppose the destruction or obliteration of any Forest Service roads and further oppose designating any roadless areas of the National Forest System as permanently off limits to logging, mining or other development.
3. The National Grange strongly opposes the use of eminent domain or any regulatory property taking via administration designation by any Federal agency to include any private property in any Federal Wilderness area, any part of the Federal Wild and Scenic River System, any part of the American Heritage Rivers Initiative, any land conservation program authorized by an international agreement or treaty or any habitat management area under the Endangered Species Act.
4. The National Grange supports legislation directing mitigation of identified losses of public and private lands from the state tax base due to federal acquisition through transfer of an equivalent acreage from federal land to public or private ownership, or by providing an annual payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILT), based on an independent economic impact analysis to be adjusted annually for inflation.

Mining

1. The National Grange urges Federal agencies to work with the states to develop surface mining guidelines, giving the states the flexibility to control and supervise the surface mining of coal, gravel, and similar materials. To ensure against the destruction of surface mined areas, a performance and a completion bond should be required of the mining companies that would assure the completion of reclamation plans as they are developed. Such plans should require the return of the land where strip mine operations occur to a reasonable topography and fertility level and should be enforced by law. The deposits that are required under Section 402(a) of the Surface Mine Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 should be returned to the states for strip mine reclamation. The National Grange further supports any regulation or law that holds the coal company liable for subsidence damage to structures caused by underground mining.
2. The National Grange supports changes in the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act that recognize the special conditions of small independent mine operations and provides for greater forbearance in correcting violations.

Preservation of Fisheries Resources

1. The National Grange urges the Pacific Marine Fisheries Commission to support the designation of only those marine sanctuaries that guarantee fishery usage and recognize the fishery management authority of the current sanctuary boundaries.
2. The National Grange supports legislation to reauthorize the Magnuson Fisheries Conservation Management Act. We urge all appropriate federal agencies to work closely with all state wildlife agencies to maintain sustained fishing yields by regulating sport and subsistence fisheries in order to allow for the adequate recovery of fish and aquatic species in areas where they have declined. We support the United States working with all countries to regulate commercial fishing to allow for the adequate return of fish into many areas where fish yields have declined. We further support an extension of the U.S. territorial sea to not less than 50 miles where foreign commercial fishing may not be performed. The National Grange favors all reasonable measures to save the Pacific Salmon in the Columbia and Snake Rivers as long as the priority for these river systems is power generation, water use, and navigation. We support securing the passage of a treaty between Canada and the United States to govern the operation of the salmon industries in each respective nation. We support uniform regulation of all net fishing in the Columbia River, Puget Sound, and the Pacific Ocean before drastic economic measures to reestablish wild runs of Pacific Salmon are enacted. The National Grange recommends that fish ladders be included in the planning of any future dam construction on streams or rivers where fish that migration may be affected. We favor the transport of juvenile fish, the hatchery propagation of salmon stocks, flow control, and control of the salmon harvest until a final Pacific Salmon recovery plan is in place. We support the establishment of a program to audit the harvest of salmon on the lower Columbia River. We further believe that all salmon fishing on the Columbia and Snake Rivers should be restricted to hook and line methods only. We recommend to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service that spawned out salmon carcasses be planted near remote site incubators for smolt releases as a food source for the young fish.
3. The National Grange urges the federal government to continue funding the National Marine Fisheries Service at a sufficient level to enable them to continue the biological studies that will lead to the elimination of drift net fishing by all nations.

4. The National Grange supports adequate funding of the Marine Mammal Protection Act for use by the various states in developing appropriate marine mammal management plans and policies. In addition, we urge Congress to exclude Harbor Seals and California Sea Lions from the Marine Mammal Protection Act and place them under the control and protection of the states, including a controlled harvest season for Harbor Seals and California Sea Lions, until the yearly run of the Pacific Salmon increases to the point where the salmon will no longer be considered for protection under the Endangered Species Act.
5. The National Grange supports research and long-term solutions to prevent the introduction and the spread of invasive and/or destructive aquatic organisms as well as the necessary destruction of established populations of these species such as, but not limited to, Asian Carp and Pfiesteria. We support legislation requiring all shipping lines to change their ballast water in the open ocean to curtail the further introduction of foreign species, such as the Zebra Mussel, into our domestic waterways.
6. The National Grange favors the regulated harvesting of fresh water clams and mussels.
7. The National Grange supports legislative and regulatory measures to prohibit the National Marine Fisheries Service from taking control of private lands, breaching of dams, and killing of hatchery salmon under the authority of its 4 (d) Rules. The National Grange urges Congress to order the National Marine Fisheries Service to reconsider the proposed setbacks on private property along all bodies of water or to pay for the taking of the property. We urge Congress to intervene and formulate a true scientific basis for establishment of buffers/setbacks and buffer/setback restrictions along all bodies of water. We encourage the National Marine Fisheries Service do more to start identifying corrective measures beyond licensing and regulation to save the fish off our nation's coasts that include avoiding by catch, single-species management, ocean sanctuaries, eco-friendly gear, and consumer alertness. We further believe that alternative sources of fish production i.e. aquaculture, should be encouraged where appropriate.

Private Land Use, Planning, Zoning, and Eminent Domain

1. The National Grange urges the USDA, in conjunction with land grant universities, to provide assistance to local governments and citizen groups in educating the public on the importance of keeping land in agricultural production and in developing farmland retention programs which protect the rights of landowners and the prerogatives of local governments. The National Grange supports land use planning and zoning remaining a function of local and state governments.
2. The National Grange urges that the transfer of development rights be used to protect family farms. Whenever land is designated for permanent agricultural use, farmers should receive adequate compensation for the loss in land value.
3. The National Grange urges the Farm Service Agency or any other agency not to relinquish the use of any farmlands, wetlands, or other lands to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or any other government agency.
4. The National Grange supports efforts to improve locally controlled site-specific resource and environmental management in the Columbia Basin.
5. The National Grange supports legislation reaffirming congressional power over international agreements concerning disposal, management and use of lands owned by the United States and also protects state powers, from federal actions designating lands to international agreements.
6. The National Grange supports legislation to mandate that when private property is acquired for a specific purpose by any federal agency through eminent domain, condemnation, foreclosure or negotiated price, and the property is subsequently not needed or used for the specific purpose it was acquired for, the original owner shall have first right of repurchase at either the original price or the current market price, whichever is less.
7. We support legislation that eminent domain be used only for public purposes, such as rights of way for transportation and utilities.
8. The National Grange urges the federal government to replace, whenever possible, condemned private land with public land of equal value/productivity, and to maintain a balance between public and private lands throughout the nation.
9. The National Grange supports changing laws so that, in points of controversy, private property rights take precedence over environmental regulations.
10. The National Grange supports legislation to prohibit the Federal Government or any agency or authority of the Federal Government from exercising its power of eminent domain to be used for private economic development unless there is an immediate danger to the health and/or safety of citizens. Furthermore, the National Grange supports federal legislation to require that no state, political subdivision of a state or any person or entity to which such power has been delegated shall exercise its power of eminent domain, for the purpose of private economic development or over property that is subsequently used for economic development unless there are situations of immediate danger to the health and/or safety of citizens. Any state or political subdivision that exercises the power of eminent domain for private economic development shall be ineligible for any federal economic development funds for any purpose for a period of at least two years.

Private Timber Land Management

1. The National Grange supports the use of best management practices (BMPs) and sustained yield management practices on private forestlands. The National Grange believes that in return for public benefits resulting from improved forest management on individually owned forest lands, any forest management assistance programs should recognize the multiple use aspects of private

forest lands, including timber production, watershed protection, wildlife habitat, recreation, and scenic values.

2. The National Grange requests Congress to control arbitrary appeals of U.S. Forest Service timber sales assessing penalties to the appellant to cover the costs of failed appeals. We further support legislation to require each appeal of a timber sale to post a security bond equal to the value of the timber sale before the appeal may be adjudicated that will, in turn, be forfeited if the appeal subsequently fails.

Public Lands Management Practices

1. The National Grange believes that multiple use of non-reserved land should be the cornerstone of the United States' public land policy in order to achieve the following objectives: energy exploration and development; sustained yield management for food and forest production; recreational uses for all citizens; responsible wildlife management; soil conservation and watershed protection.
2. The National Grange supports the maintenance of appropriate conservation practices on all public lands leased to private individuals yet will continue to support placing a moratorium on the acquisition of private land by the U.S. Forest Service. The National Grange recommends that a user fee be implemented for all commercial and recreational use of federal land requiring a permit.
3. The National Grange supports prescribed burning on public forestlands as a forest management technique to reduce uncontrolled fires on public lands. We oppose public forest management plans that include the use of natural, uncontrolled forest fires as a forest management technique. After a major natural forest fire, we support a maximum two-year administrative deadline for applicable Federal State and Local forest management agencies to formulate a forest recovery plan and complete all appeals. We support expedited restorative actions, such as reforestation and harvest of dead or dying timber resources as part of every forest recovery plan.
4. The National Grange supports appropriations for the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service to adequately carry out an expanded silviculture program, wildlife management, water and soil protection, weed control, recreational needs, protection of natural, historic and cultural resources, to develop additional forest campgrounds and increase the available spaces in existing campgrounds to keep them open year-round where economically feasible. We also urge that U.S. Forest Service campground fees be raised to more nearly cover the costs of operating these campgrounds.
5. The National Grange favors the increased planting of lumber-producing trees on both national and state forest lands, including increased funding for Federal and State tree nurseries, to produce additional seedlings for timber. We urge the U.S. Forest Service to permit selected timber stands to reach old growth and be harvested on a sustained yield basis. Furthermore, we support prohibiting states from exercising authority to restrict the sale or export of logs that are harvested from State-owned land.
6. The National Grange recognizes the states' rights to own and/or manage Bureau of Land Management (BLM) unreserved lands, not including National Forest lands. Revenues that are received by counties should be protected when control of any Federal land is assigned to State Governments.
7. The National Grange supports legislation to require Federal and State Governments to pay a proportionate share of monies, in lieu of taxes, to those counties, cities, and communities that provide public services to the parks and recreational areas within their boundaries. In addition, the Grange supports Federal legislation allowing National Parks to keep a major portion of entrance fees to be used for the development and maintenance of recreational facilities.
8. The National Grange calls on Federal, State, and Local Law Enforcement Agencies to investigate and prosecute incidents of tree and trail spiking and the destruction of logging equipment on Federal and State Lands.
9. The National Grange supports amending the National Antiquities Act to include public comment before any regulation or Executive Order designating any additional public land as a National Antiquity becomes effective.
10. The National Grange supports a policy that any responding agency to a fire, whether it is local, state or federal, be required to notify adjacent landowners and other authorities with jurisdiction, for their own safety, of all wild and grass fires in the area.
11. The National Grange supports the use of state and/or federal funds to reimburse small landowners for the mitigation of loss of land values due to any state or federal logging restrictions on private lands.
12. The National Grange opposes the creation of the Owyhee Canyonlands Monument in Oregon and Idaho.

Recycling

1. The National Grange supports legislation that would require a deposit on non-biodegradable beverage containers and urges manufacturers to use recycled materials.
2. The National Grange supports requiring all government agencies to initiate a recycling program for paper, metal, glass, etc. Government agencies should also be required to use recycled paper whenever feasible. The National Grange supports a review of recycling agricultural plastic wastes, such as Cornell University's Recycling Agricultural Plastics Project (RAPP), and encourages funding from the USDA for this type of research in order to help all American farmers with this concern.
3. The National Grange supports legislation requiring the use of biodegradable feedstocks in all appropriate consumer-based products such as retail plastic bags, product packaging, diapers and packing materials. We support legislation to require single-use and short-life plastic products and packaging to be manufactured with biodegradable ingredients that will

completely degrade within three years when exposed in a biologically active environment. The National Grange encourages the use of alternative bags such as canvas, cotton, mesh, biodegradable paper, or other biodegradable products. We urge all manufacturers to reduce their use of packing materials in their consumer products.

4. The National Grange supports efforts to restrict the disposal of tires in landfills. We support additional efforts to recycle used tires to recover valuable petrochemical feedstocks and to utilize recycled tires in road and other construction projects.

Rural Electric Cooperatives, Public Power and Rural Electricity Consumers

1. The National Grange supports the continued application of the existing preference concept of the Federal Power Act being granted to public power utilities in the licensing and re-licensing of Federal hydroelectric facilities. We further support granting co-preference in the licensing and re-licensing of federal hydroelectric facilities to rural electric cooperatives.
2. In order to assure adequate electric, telephone and broadband service to rural areas, the National Grange supports continuation and expansion of the existing USDA Rural Utility Service low interest revolving loan fund to assure the financial stability of rural electric and telephone cooperatives.
3. The National Grange supports continuing electric service to urban areas that are within a rural electric cooperative's service area. However, rural electric cooperatives that provide electric service to predominantly rural areas should continue to have first priority for low interest federal financing. In addition, we urge the electricity industry to charge rates for farmers and small businessmen that are competitive with their large wholesale customers.
4. We support maintaining the current structure of rural electric systems without forced deregulation of publicly owned plants or any other action that would be detrimental to rural electric consumers. The National Grange supports reform to the Public Utilities Regulatory Policies Act, so that non-utility generating stations operate to sell their output at competitive market rates. The National Grange supports requirements for increased accountability and responsibility on the part of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and power companies in the operation of any nuclear power plant. The National Grange supports the careful selection by the Department of Energy of sites for the disposal of low-level nuclear wastes, excluding prime agricultural, forest, and parkland. The National Grange supports efforts to open the Yucca Mountain site in 2020 for the storage of nuclear waste and opposes actions to delay the project. We urge that the public be involved in the decision to conduct additional research on the long-term consequences to the environment of the disposal of nuclear wastes. The National Grange further urges the Department of Energy to conduct an extensive educational program to inform citizens of the safeguards and hazards that are involved in the disposal of these wastes.
5. The National Grange opposes the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's imposition of a Regional Transmission Organization (RTO) and Standard Market Design (SMD) on the Northwest Region of the U.S. We support the present cost-based rate system, as determined in the 1937 Congressional Bonneville Power Administration repayment agreement; requiring Bonneville Power Administration to adopt for pricing electricity, instead of a market-based repayment pricing system. We support the present Federal Power Marketing Administrations. We further recommend the establishment of Power Marketing Administrations in areas of the United States where desired and feasible. We vigorously oppose selling the Western Area Power Administration and Bonneville Power Administration to private power companies. The National Grange also supports the allowance of the Northwest Region to develop an alternate approach to strengthening the transmission system.
6. The National Grange urges the U.S. Government to engage in diplomatic negotiations on the environmental impacts that contribute to air and water pollution before permitting the transfer of electricity across the borders into the United States.

Soil Conservation and Non-Point Source Pollution

1. The National Grange supports voluntary programs to control specific known point sources of pollution, as well as non-point sources of agricultural pollution. We support the concept of conservation tillage practices and other types of sediment control. We believe that irrigation and agricultural drainage practices should be recognized as soil and water conservation practices. We encourage broad participation in the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act studies in order to assure that quality, locally designed and controlled conservation programs are developed in order to meet the needs of family farmers. We support programs offering at least 50% cost share assistance for establishing grass strip boundaries and other soil conservation best practices, as well as technical assistance, as the primary means of correcting agricultural non-point source pollution problems. We also support programs offering at least 50 percent cost-share assistance to correct agricultural pollution and free technical assistance prior to non-income producing practices that require major expenditures. The National Grange will raise awareness about regenerative agriculture and encourage practices to minimize on-farm inputs while building capacity for future production.
2. The National Grange opposes the sole use of uniform federal government farm pollution policies and supports that each state, or region, continue to maintain their own farm pollution policies that are unique to their industry and geography.
3. The National Grange supports the privately financed National Endowment for Soil and Water Conservation, the American Conservation Corps, as well as vocational programs to educate and train youths to help in the conservation of our woodlands with sustainable forests and arboreal practices and other natural resources, using presently established facilities. We believe that all citizens should share in soil conservation costs through tax dollars that support State and Federal programs focusing on technical assistance, research, education, loans and cost sharing programs.

4. The National Grange supports locally developed storm water management programs administered through local conservation districts.

Toxic and Hazardous Wastes

1. The National Grange supports a program to educate consumers on the proper handling and disposal of hazardous household waste, such as energy saver light bulbs and any other items containing mercury.
2. The National Grange supports realistic insurance coverage plans being made available by the Federal Government at a reasonable cost for existing and future storage tanks and other potential sources of toxic and hazardous waste pollution.
3. The National Grange supports legislation that would require urban sewer sludge disposal to be strictly regulated, i.e. knifing or ground injection as used in agriculture. We only support burning if such burning meets EPA air quality standards.
4. National Grange supports federal legislation prohibiting the dumping of waste material or raw sewage from foreign countries in landfills located in the United States.
5. The National Grange supports continued research on non-toxic materials in preparing pressure-treated wood for building materials.
6. The National Grange supports public education of the dangers of sodium azide and legislation to set guidelines for the proper storage or disposal of all unused airbags.
7. The National Grange supports the current exemptions for family farmers from the EPA's Toxic Spill Prevention Containment and Control regulations.

Water Projects, Irrigation and Reclamation Reform Act, State Authority for Water Rights

1. The National Grange recommends that federal, state, and local governments work closely with each other and local landowners in the development and construction of watershed projects, dams, and reservoirs for multiple uses, such as flood control, storing and releasing surplus flood water, replenishing underground water, hydroelectric power generation, irrigation, industrial and municipal use, and recreation. We urge both Congress and the President to make the necessary funds available in order to complete all planned and feasible federal water development projects and provide cost-share assistance for the rehabilitation of dams and other flood control structures that were previously constructed with Federal Assistance. The National Grange supports efforts to provide State and Federal funds to pay the recreational share of impoundment facilities on small water development projects.
2. The National Grange believes that the Federal Government should compensate any loss or diminution of water rights resulting from the exercise of a federally reserved right.
3. The National Grange supports legislation to consolidate the activities of the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior to eliminate duplication.
4. The National Grange supports local control over State Water Projects.
5. The National Grange supports a national water policy requiring all alternate sources of water, including full development of desalination plants for urban uses, must be considered before approval of any water diversion project.
6. The National Grange supports the use of existing multi-purpose dams, creating possible draw-downs or transfers of water from productive agricultural lands to waters that could possibly assist in flushing young salmon to the ocean, and urge the development of alternative methods of enhancing fish populations including salmon.
7. The National Grange requests the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and all environmental agencies to facilitate restorative dredging of rivers prone to flooding.
8. The National Grange supports maintaining minimum water levels along the Great Lakes in order to support commerce, hydroelectric production and tourism in the region. We support accurate monitoring of water drawn from the Great Lakes Water Basin for agricultural, industrial and residential uses. We support only allowing those states and provinces that belong to the International Joint Commission on the Great Lakes to be authorized to allow permitting to remove and use waters of the Great Lakes. However, we also believe that agriculture entities should be exempt from any permits or fees for removing water from the Great Lakes.
9. The National Grange supports irrigation rules and regulations that prohibit abuse of the Reclamation Reform Act and assure the fullest measure of benefits from Federal Irrigation Projects for family farmers. The National Grange supports the continued development and widespread utilization of more efficient irrigation systems in addition to legislation outlawing the practice of using trusts, partnerships, corporations, and estates to circumvent the 960-acre irrigation subsidy qualification that favors small farmers.
10. The National Grange will actively work to preserve the way of life of the Klamath Basin farming community of Oregon and California. We support reversing the decisions of the Ninth Federal Circuit and permanently restoring the flow of irrigation water from Klamath Lake to the farmers and farm communities served by the irrigation system. We further oppose any efforts to remove water storage and electrical generation capacity from the Klamath River Basin system. We call on Congress to convene a local working group to draft a viable Klamath Basin Restoration Plan and then fund that plan for the benefit of the entire Klamath Basin community.
11. The National Grange vigorously supports state control of water rights. We oppose any federal plan that infringes on states' water rights. In particular, any water resource planning that is conducted by State or Federal Agencies must respect both the states' sovereignties and the agricultural sector in establishing priorities for water allocations. The National Grange firmly opposes the

inter-basin transfer of water that would alter the flow of water into downstream states unless such transfer is dictated in an approved river basin compact.

Wildlife Management

1. The National Grange encourages Congress to amend the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to restore proper perspective by requiring public hearings and economic impact statements on the impacts to the affected areas before a species may be listed. We support changes to the ESA to require that only a pure biological and numerical definition of an endangered species be used without being based on subspecies, distinct populations, or hybridization. We believe that only those species actually threatened with extinction should be listed in the ESA, taking into consideration total populations, available habitats, and recovery areas on the North American continent. We further support a review of the ESA with the following guidelines: focus on keystone species (organisms critical to the stable functions of entire habitats and ecosystems), not minor or reduced species; rely on public lands for preservation; encourage voluntary protection by individuals and corporations; curtail taking of private lands for ESA; balance human costs with ecological benefits; compensation for private property owners for loss of usage of their property due to the ESA.
2. The National Grange supports legislation legally allowing people to defend themselves or their property from an attack by any animal listed as an endangered species without concern of retribution from government authorities.
3. The National Grange supports legislative and regulatory measures to prohibit further implementation of any Wolf Recovery Plan. We further support the passage of legislation to outlaw the propagation of wolves or wolf hybrids.
4. The National Grange supports the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as the chief administrator of the National Bison Range.
5. The National Grange believes it is the responsibility of the Federal Government to control the expanding populations of legally protected plants and animals where those plants or animals pose a threat to human life or health, or where those plants or animals pose a threat to established economic activity. We encourage State and Federal Wildlife Conservation Agencies to assist farmers in all cases of crop and property damage by wild game.
6. The National Grange is opposed to any Grizzly Bear recovery plan. We support legislation requiring government agencies to notify property owners when they relocate park bears or other potentially dangerous animals.
7. The National Grange strongly supports the continuation of licensed hunting and trapping of game animals, waterfowl, and game birds. However, we favor the levying of stiff penalties for poaching of wildlife. We further support the continued usage of steel jaw traps.
8. The National Grange believes that wildlife management areas should not be used for recreation or any other development that diminishes the value of the lands for wildlife management purposes.
9. The National Grange supports legislation to expand the hunting season of Canada and Snow geese from November 1st - April 1st. We also support increasing the daily bag limit for Canada and Snow geese.
10. The National Grange supports any prairie dog management plan that allows people to control the prairie dog population through shooting and toxicants, without the need for a special license.
11. The National Grange opposes the listing of the Eastern Oyster on the endangered species list.
12. The National Grange opposes forcing dams to spill spring waters in an unproven effort to help salmon.

Miscellaneous

1. The National Grange will raise awareness about the benefits of regenerative agriculture and encourage practices to minimize on-farm inputs while building capacity for future productivity.

The Conservation Committee would like to thank the National Master, Legislative Director and staff (especially Stephanie) for their help and assistance with our Committee.

I would like to thank all Committee members for sharing and discussing opinions, policy statement and present policy during our hours of meetings.

The Committee would like to thank our Chair for conserving time, energy and efforts in streamlining our committee meetings and completing the work (Conservation being quick). Eat your heart out, Ag Committee

Jimmy Gentry, NC - Chr.
Richard Javaux, ID
Jim Foster, WV

Marilyn Johnson, MT - Sec.
Don Schaeffer, IL
Richard Harriman, ME

Kay Stiles, MD - Acting Sec.
Tom Gwin, WA
George Russell, CT

Fraternally submitted,
Jimmy Gentry
Conservation Committee Chair

POLICY STATEMENT

Education

The purpose of education is to open the minds of young people to the world around them, to the lessons of the past, and the possibilities of the future. An understanding of the past is a part of education that is too often neglected. These important facts are even more powerful and useful when an understanding of their context and background are taught.

Technical education was underfunded or ignored for years and as a result, employers are now experiencing a shortage of skilled workers. We welcome the recent emphasis by high schools and community colleges on STEM, curricula emphasizing Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (sometimes written as STEAM, including Arts). We need to encourage those who fall outside the term “traditional student” to look at the educational opportunities offered by vocational, trade and technical schools or other nontraditional degree programs.

Many teachers and mental health counselors undertook their career education under the auspices of federal programs that offered student loan forgiveness if specific conditions were met. However, these programs have sometimes been administered in a capricious and uneven manner, leaving many who followed the rules in good faith with unexpected significant debt. We believe this is a situation that calls for reason and compassion on the part of the program administrators.

Since the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 and the 1946 George-Barden Act focused federal aid for agricultural, industrial, and home economics training for high school students, our federal government has to some degree had a hand in funding public education. Thus, the funding of public education has become a partnership between federal and state/local, but we reaffirm the importance of state and local control.

Private providers of higher education are major recipients of federal financial aid and should be held accountable for their academic standards and advertised employment outcomes. We are opposed to any weakening of regulation of private education providers.

Many social problems in schools arise from bullying, feelings of disenfranchisement and isolation among at-risk students. We urge schools to find ways to increase the availability of counseling for all students, and proactively engage with marginalized and at-risk young people. We strongly encourage Grange members nationwide to play an active role in their local school systems and communities. It is essential for our members to invest in our children’s education through volunteering.

Health

The opioid crisis continues to plague our country. A multi-pronged approach is needed and must include continued study of the benefits of opioid painkillers as compared to alternative pain management strategies; improved prescription strategies such as limiting the number of pills issued per renewal; proper security of our prescription drugs in our homes; and proper disposal of unused or outdated prescription medications through recognized drug take-back programs or disposal programs. These are all efforts that local Granges can and should promote in their communities. The Rx Abuse Leadership Initiative (RALI) has formed partnerships with various state Granges to address these issues and we strongly urge others to develop RALI programs in their states.

Biological therapies are significant new developments in the treatment of disease. We believe price competition and innovation in the development of biosimilars, the generic equivalent to biological therapies, should be encouraged.

Transglutaminases are additives that serve as food binders or glue and are used in many aspects of food production and preparation. These additives are a form of gluten and may trigger responses in the gluten-intolerant. Whenever used in foods intended for human consumption, transglutaminases should be clearly listed as an ingredient.

We support paid parental leave and working with businesses to build a comprehensive policy that benefits both the employee and employer.

Ambulance services can be in-network just as doctors or pharmacies, but when an ambulance is needed, one rarely has the time to find one in your network. We believe that all certified or licensed ambulance services should be treated as in-network by insurers.

We encourage bipartisan efforts by Congress to reform healthcare, identifying solutions that provide reasonable affordable healthcare for all Americans.

This covers Resolutions 523-MI, 507-FL, 517-MD, 518-MI, 527-NY, 519-OR, 503-NY, and portions of the Master’s Address.

INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS

RES. #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
505	MD	Dairy	Adopted
514	CT	Medicare Coverage in Convalescent Homes	Adopted
515	NY	Mental Health Accessibility	Adopted
521	WA	Prescription Drugs	Adopted as Amended
525	NY	Regulatory Burden on Health Care Providers	Adopted
526	CA	Rural Hospitals and Healthcare Facilities	Adopted
831	NY	Synthetic Marijuana	Transferred from LJ&T; Adopted

ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS

505-MD-Dairy

WHEREAS the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has developed the Food Pyramid to recommend healthy eating patterns; and

WHEREAS the USDA Food Pyramid recommends restricting the consumption of foods containing dietary Saturated Fatty Acids (SFA) because higher levels of SFA in blood serum have shown to increase the risk of metabolic disorders such as diabetes, heart attack, and heart failure; and

WHEREAS multiple studies, including the \$500 million Women's Health Initiative, have shown no effect on reducing dietary SFA on the risk of cardio-vascular disease (CVD), diabetes, or stroke. The current epidemic of obesity and diabetes have occurred during a time when the population has decreased the consumption of food containing SFA and increased carbohydrate consumption; and

WHEREAS it has been found that the over-consumption of carbohydrates leads to carbohydrate intolerance and through a process called de novo Lipogenesis the liver converts excess carbohydrates into serum SFA; and

WHEREAS a study by Volek, Volk, and Phinney found a paradox where there was no correlation between dietary intake of SFA and the levels of SFA in the bloodstream but an increased intake of carbohydrates is associated with higher levels of circulating SFA; and

WHEREAS foods containing naturally occurring fats are usually accompanied by excellent amounts of vitamins, minerals, and other micro-nutrients while starchy and sugary substitutes lack these essential nutrients; therefore be it

RESOLVED the National Grange urges that the 2020–2025 USDA Dietary Guidelines promote a more balanced diet that more accurately reflects the results of studies that show that there is no correlation between dietary consumption of Saturated Fatty Acids (SFA) and the level of SFA in the blood serum while consuming carbohydrates at levels that exceed an individual's ability to oxidize them contributes to higher levels of unhealthy SFA.

514-CT-Medicare Coverage in Convalescent Homes

WHEREAS the hospitalization of Medicare patients, mostly elderly, occurs on a daily basis; and

WHEREAS in many of these hospital visits the doctors require these patients to stay in the hospital for a period of time; and

WHEREAS at the end of this in-hospital time many need to be transferred to a facility for extended care; and

WHEREAS when the patient is transferred to these convalescent care facilities many are discovering that Medicare is denying payment for these facilities due to the patient never being 'admitted' to the hospital even though they had been in the hospital for multiple days and receiving the same care as admitted patients, thus creating financial hardships for the patients who are primarily seniors and their families; and

WHEREAS the denial of Medicare payments is a result of the hospital never officially admitting the patient but listing them as in 'observation status'; and

WHEREAS this Medicare loophole has been brought forward to multiple national legislatures and as a result a bill, HR 1421- Improving Access to Medicare Coverage Act of 2017, has been presented in Congress and has bi-partisan support but has not been moved by the leadership to the floor of the House or Senate for a vote; therefore be it

RESOLVED that National Grange urges that HR 1421 - Improving Access to Medicare Coverage Act of 2017 or similar legislation be brought forward for a vote so as to ease the financial burdens on Medicare patients, primarily seniors.

515-NY-Mental Health Accessibility

WHEREAS treatment for mental health conditions has been extremely difficult to obtain for patients due to many factors, including the lack of providers available within a patient's insurance network; and

WHEREAS a report by Millman and a coalition of mental health and addiction advocacy organizations revealed that there were payment disparities to providers in 46 of 50 states, and costly "out of network" benefits were used at much higher rates for mental health services at both inpatient and outpatient facilities as compared to physical health services; and

WHEREAS these rates were about 800% higher in California, New York, and Rhode Island, and over 1,000% higher in Connecticut, Florida, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, and New Jersey, representing approximately 30% of the US population; and

WHEREAS these disparities would be potential violations of state and federal parity laws requiring insurance companies to treat diseases of the brain, such as depression and substance addiction, the same way they treat illnesses of the body; therefore be it

RESOLVED that National Grange calls upon Federal Regulators to ensure that insurance companies are abiding by mental health parity laws already on the books to correct what remains an unequal health care system for patients with behavioral health conditions.

521-WA-Prescription Drugs

RESOLVED that the National Grange supports the ability of Medicare and Medicaid to negotiate with drug companies for the best reimbursement price for consumers of prescription drugs.

525-NY-Regulatory Burden on Health Care Providers

WHEREAS it is a goal of the Affordable Care Act to have more health care dollars spent on treating patients instead of administrative costs; and

WHEREAS a report by the American Hospital Association revealed that health systems, hospitals, and post-acute providers in the United States must comply with 629 discrete regulatory requirements, spending nearly \$39 billion yearly related to compliance with these regulations; and

WHEREAS the average size hospital dedicates 59 full time employees to regulatory compliance over 25% of which are physicians and nurses; and

WHEREAS many of these regulations in information technology, quality initiatives, and fraud and abuse prevention are duplicative or are outdated due to advances in medicine and technology; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange calls upon Congress and the Presidential Administration to take immediate actions to reduce regulatory burdens and duplication and enhance care coordination by allowing healthcare providers to focus on patients instead of paperwork.

526-CA-Rural Hospitals and Healthcare Facilities

WHEREAS rural hospitals are an integral part of the rural healthcare system. Because of their significant contributions to overall community well-being, they are a critical component of communities across rural America. Rural hospitals provide services across the continuum of care from primary care to long-term care. Many rural hospitals and healthcare facilities have been closing over the past several years; and

WHEREAS recent years have presented challenges for rural hospitals. Factors such as low reimbursement rates, increased regulation, reduced patient volumes, and uncompensated care have caused many rural hospitals to struggle financially. Since 2010, 83 rural hospitals have closed. 674 additional facilities are vulnerable and could close—this represents over 1/3 of rural hospitals in the U.S. The rate of closures is steadily increasing, and on this trajectory, 25% of all rural hospitals will close in less than 10 years if nothing is done to stop this trend. If 674 rural hospitals shut their doors, 11.7 million patients nationwide will lose access to their nearest hospital and its emergency room, 236,000 rural jobs will vanish, and \$277 billion in GDP will be lost over 10 years. Rural communities across the nation will erode – because when a rural hospital closes, the economy of a rural community collapses; and

WHEREAS healthcare spending in a community has a significant impact on the local economy. Rural hospitals impact communities through their capacity to attract new businesses and through wages generated by employment. Rural hospitals impact their local communities in the following ways:

- Quality rural health services, including emergency services,
- On average, the health sector constitutes 14% of total employment in rural communities, with rural hospitals typically being one of the largest employers in the area.
- On average, a Critical Access Hospital maintains a payroll of \$6.8 million, employing 141 people. Rural hospitals and healthcare facilities are a driving force for the economies of local communities; and

WHEREAS technological advancements are increasing access to, and quality of, healthcare services in rural communities. These include two prominent examples:

- Telehealth services – Telehealth services allow for the remote delivery of healthcare and information via telecommunications technology. Telehealth helps improve access, allow patients to stay in the community, and helps the hospitals meet their mission and stay competitive.
- Health Information Technology (HIT) – HIT is the use of computers to store, protect, retrieve and transfer healthcare information, enabling healthcare professionals to better provide care due to improved contextual awareness of the patient's health status. Technologies such as these have advanced communication between physicians and patients and offer innovative methods of overcoming challenges providing healthcare services to rural communities; and

WHEREAS there are many alternative hospital models that have been proposed to serve rural communities which can help maintain emergency services in a rural community. These include Rural Freestanding Emergency Departments (RFEDs), Community Outpatient Hospital (COH), Rural Emergency Acute Care Hospital (REACH), and Rural Emergency Medical Center (REMC); therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange support the Rural Emergency Medical Center (REMC) Act, the Save Rural Hospitals Act, and the Rural Emergency Acute Care Hospital Act, or similar legislation which would improve funding and change regulations to help keep rural hospitals and health care facilities open.

831-NY-Synthetic Marijuana

WHEREAS synthetic marijuana, also known as "Spice" or "K2," was a mixture of harmless herbs that had a similar effect to marijuana and was sold legally all over the world. The product itself looks like herbal tobacco or potpourri; and

WHEREAS "Spice" manufacturers do not follow high manufacturing standards. Chemicals involved and the sloppy manufacturing causes the health risk of one batch to be different from another; and

WHEREAS in May 2013, the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) took action and formally banned synthetic marijuana as a Class 1 drug, making distribution a federal crime in the United States. The DEA action only covered a small number of chemicals, creating legal room to add different chemicals in their place staying one step ahead of the DEA; and

WHEREAS it is estimated there are over 200 synthetic cannabinoids sold on the street, with none of these tested on human beings nor considered safe. Some side effects are vomiting, intensive cravings, extreme agitation, psychotic episodes and even heart attack; and

WHEREAS synthetic marijuana is addictive and many are overdosing using this; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange supports legislation banning the sale of synthetic marijuana or synthetic cannabinoids, also known by multiple street names such as "Spice" or "K2", regardless of what chemicals are used to produce them and what name they are sold under.

PRESENT POLICY

Education

Education for Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Special Needs Children

1. The National Grange believes that parents of deaf and hard of hearing children, deaf and hard of hearing people, teachers, and professionals who are trained in the area of educating the deaf should assist in determining the extent, content, and purpose of the educational program, and particularly consider those program options that provide the pupil with an appropriate and equal opportunity for communication access, including the state's school for the deaf, which may be the least restrictive environment for a deaf or hard of hearing child.
2. The National Grange strongly supports continuation of the Education of the Deaf Act to provide maximum benefit for deaf and hard of hearing persons, both in programs and services, including funding for Gallaudet University and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID).
3. The National Grange oppose any repeal of the provisions in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 which provides necessary accommodations for children with special needs.

Educational Funding

1. The National Grange supports the continuation of the federal guaranteed student loan, grant, and work-study programs. The National Grange recommends that Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Expected Family Contribution (EFC) regulations be adjusted to reflect family expenses, such as real estate taxes, medical expenses and other financial obligations in the determination of financial aid. We urge strict enforcement of the requirements for repayment of federally financed student loans with severe penalties for default. The National Grange suggests that the guidelines for student financial aid laws be revised so financially independent students are eligible to receive financial aid for their higher education.
2. The National Grange supports the retention of Federal Government Impact Aid for public school districts that lose traditional revenue sources due to a federal presence or activity.
3. The National Grange supports federal categorical aid to school library centers.
4. The National Grange believes that public funding should be used only in public schools. We support redirecting public funding to nonpublic or charter schools, only when the money is for special needs students where the law mandates special training not available in public schools. We oppose any legislation that establishes a voucher program which distributes block grant funds to be distributed as vouchers to children attending nonpublic schools.
5. The National Grange supports federal funding for state allocation of dollars for rural education to promote better salaries and benefits for teachers in rural education and to improve rural school conditions.
6. The National Grange urges adequate funding by the federal government for all federally mandated education programs. In particular, we support equal educational opportunities for exceptional and handicapped persons including federal funding at the 40 percent level for federally mandated individualized education programs for special needs children.
7. The National Grange supports federal legislation protecting the Upward Bound Talent Search, designed to benefit low-income students seeking college educations.
8. The National Grange supports legislation that awards grants to institutions for history teacher preparation initiatives stressing content mastery in traditional American history and the principles on which the American political system is based.

Food Safety and Labeling

1. The National Grange believes the agricultural industry should be free to advertise their products as long as the advertisement is accurate and is based on facts.
2. The National Grange favors strict enforcement of all food labeling laws by the Food & Drug Administration and supports a uniform system for labeling food and drink products, including an expiration date in a color that is readable on the background. We encourage the National Safety Working Group and Congress to enact far-reaching legislation increasing the inspection rate and level of safety of imported foreign foods, drugs, and manufactured goods. We also support legislation requiring food companies and restaurants to clearly mark food labels and items on menus that may contain ingredients such as Monosodium Glutamate (MSG). We recommend that a ban be placed on the use of all sulfites on fresh fruits and vegetables in restaurants. We further recommend that all manufacturers of food and drink who use sulfites in their products be required to specify on the

product label that a sulfite was used. However, we support each individual restaurant's right to decide whether to include calorie counts on their menu boards of calorie, fat, carbohydrates and sodium on their menus for all food and beverage items.

3. The National Grange urges the Department of Health and Human Services to review and strengthen the regulations pertaining to manufactured products used in the home canning process, including requiring a manufacturer's name and expiration date on these products.
4. The National Grange favors continued testing of cider processing but strongly urges Congress and the USDA not to require pasteurization of all commercial cider.
5. The National Grange supports easy and inexpensive access to vitamins and supplements. We urge that all herbal medicines sold in the United States be labeled with a warning to consult with a physician or pharmacist before using. We further support legislation that would require manufacturers and processors of vitamins, herbal supplements and other dietary supplements to report certain information to the Secretary of Health and Human Services annually, including a list of supplements manufactured, the labeling to include the country of origin and the major ingredients for such supplements, and be verified to contain only and all ingredients listed on the product label.
6. The National Grange supports national legislation to require clear labeling of food and medicines as well as other products that may be ingested when they contain gluten in any form, or as gluten-free when they do not contain gluten.
7. The National Grange encourages the continued efforts of the FDA and the USDA to establish a viable definition for the term "Natural on Food Labeling".
8. The National Grange urge the Food and Drug Administration to modify regulations for the Food Safety Modernization Act in order to balance the need to ensure the safety of the food supply while seeing that the farmers selling direct to the consumer are not harmed economically.

General Education Policies

1. The National Grange supports public education and supports the idea of strengthening and improving the system of public education. Parents should have a choice of schools based on the schools' performance numbers provided that those parents furnish transportation for the children. We believe that every child should be able to receive a public education, and that the state is responsible for providing said education, which shall include the following: a broad curriculum with emphasis on basic language, physical education, math, and science skills; an opportunity for students to choose either vocational or "college preparatory" training; functional buildings; frequent public reports and accountability of funds; and basic training in agriculture, including the "Ag in the Classroom" program, covering both production and consumption.
2. The National Grange supports the adoption of a comprehensive health education curriculum.
3. The National Grange supports the teaching of foreign languages, including sign language. We recommend that all other subjects be taught in the English language and that all non-English speaking students and residents in the United States be given the opportunity to receive immediate instruction in the English language through programs such as English-As-A-Second-Language. The National Grange seeks to establish a program for State Granges to advocate for American Sign Language to be offered in primary and secondary schools.
4. The National Grange supports affordable telecommunications services for rural schools and libraries.
5. The National Grange supports strong educational standards, but does not believe that the establishment of National Education Standards Testing achieves this goal.
6. The National Grange supports the retention of the Head Start program and encourages its transfer to the US Department of Education. The National Grange also suggests that the Head Start program be completely integrated into federal and state education programs and that federal level funding be supported as needed to efficiently support the program.
7. The National Grange supports the teaching of both the theory of evolution and the story of creation, allowing individual school boards and students to make their own choice.
8. The National Grange supports posting the Ten Commandments in schools, courthouses and other public facilities.
9. The National Grange encourages civics classes to be included in high school graduation requirements as suggested by the U.S. Department of Education, and supports the teaching of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States, including the Preamble and the Bill of Rights, in schools.
10. The National Grange opposes any legislation allowing illegal aliens to receive tuition discounts at American institutions of higher learning.
11. The National Grange endorses "Read Across America;" we recommit our organization to engage in programs and activities to make Americans the best readers in the world.
12. National Grange is opposed to any changes in the language of classic literature, except those necessary for translation from another language.
13. The National Grange urges the Federal Department of Education to encourage all local school systems to retain recess for elementary school children.
14. The National Grange supports legislation to establish standardized requirements for school nurses in all 50 states, as well as legislation to adequately fund school nurse programs to be able to handle the increased workload.
15. The National Grange urges the U.S. Department of Education to mandate that penmanship be a required course of study in early primary education.

16. The National Grange urges the US Congress and Administration to overhaul the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (currently known as the “Every Child Succeeds Act”), reduce the testing mandates, promote multiple forms of evidence of student learning and school quality in accountability, and not mandate any fixed role for the use of student test scores in evaluating educators.

Nutrition

1. The National Grange urges adequate funding for school breakfast and lunch programs. We support the American Dietetic Association’s current guidelines recommending two to three servings of dairy products daily in the school nutrition program. We urge the USDA to keep dairy products in their Dietary guidelines (MyPlate) and encourage all consumers to include adequate amounts of calcium in their diets. School breakfast and lunch programs should provide balanced diets to meet a child’s daily nutritional requirements. The National Grange urges school systems to promote milk in school lunches and urges USDA to promote the greater use of milk in other child nutrition programs.
2. The National Grange supports legislation that would require adjustments to child nutrition programs as necessary to promote better consumption of milk by the nation’s students and to permit schools to offer all varieties of milk consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, including low-fat flavored milk containing no more than 150 calories per 8-ounce serving, as well as provisions for meeting the needs of lactose-intolerant children.
3. The National Grange urges legislation to repeal the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act and allow local communities to make their own guidelines on school lunches to reduce child obesity. The National Grange also encourages local communities making their own guidelines to look at alternative ways to reduce child obesity, such as how school lunches are prepared (baked vs. fried), requiring physical education classes, and eliminating unhealthy snacks and soda pop from vending machines.
4. The National Grange urges the agricultural community to provide nutrition education programs for consumers and school-aged children and support continued funding for the Farmers’ Market Nutrition program.
5. The National Grange opposes any additional tax on “fat” foods for the purpose of preventing obesity. Instead, educational programs should be provided to encourage eating a variety of nutritious foods in moderation, and to teach the basic interaction of calorie intake and energy expenditure.
6. The National Grange urges the 2020-25 USDA Dietary Guidelines to promote a more balanced diet that more accurately reflects studies that show there is no correlation between dietary consumption of saturated fatty acids and SFA levels in blood serum while consuming carbohydrates at levels exceeding an individual’s ability to oxidize them contributes to high levels of unhealthy SFA.

Health

Alcohol, Tobacco, Controlled and Toxic Substances

1. The National Grange encourages the bold, accurate labeling of household products (including carpeting and furniture that have been treated with toxic chemicals), farm chemicals, and other products containing toxic ingredients.
2. The National Grange supports the continuation of the many programs presently fighting substance addiction. The National Grange urges that funding for addiction treatment be governed by medical personnel and not by non-medical administrators of reimbursement programs. The National Grange supports legislation to end insurance discrimination against Americans living with mental illness and addiction in order to provide necessary assistance and treatment programs that will allow many of these afflicted individuals to return to a productive life in mainstream society.
3. The use of steroid and other stimulants, unless prescribed for medical reasons, should be made illegal in all competitive sports and the National Grange supports having heavy penalties imposed upon the violators. We also support legislation banning the sale of synthetic marijuana and synthetic cannabinoids regardless of their chemical composition or the name they are sold under.
4. The National Grange supports aggressive enforcement of the laws to stop the import of all jewelry and any other products from foreign countries that contain highly dangerous levels of cadmium, other metals or chemicals.
5. The National Grange support legislation to prohibit the use of BPA and other similar industrial chemicals in all children’s products, human food and food packaging.

Deaf, Hard of Hearing and the Disabled

1. We strongly support legislation to protect the rights of deaf and hard of hearing persons.
2. The National Grange encourages manufacturers of machinery and stereo equipment to place warning labels, where feasible, informing consumers that permanent hearing loss could occur as a result of prolonged noise exposure above 85 decibels.
3. The National Grange supports legislation requiring emergency warning messages to be both close captioned and delivered verbally, and all television stations provide closed captioning for news, weather, sports, and other live events.
4. The National Grange encourages telephone companies to make all public telephones hearing aid compatible and install volume-controlled amplifiers. We further recommend that local, state, and national governments specify in their lease/purchase agreements with any telephone contractor that all instruments be hearing aid compatible.
5. The National Grange supports the installation and use of “induction hearing loop systems” compatible with telecoil (“T” switch) hearing aids.
6. The National Grange supports legislation that would require all health insurance companies to cover hearing screening,

testing, surgery, and hearing aids, including mandatory regular hearing screenings and hearing aids for children.

7. The National Grange supports legislation that would establish detection and intervention programs for newborns and infants with hearing loss. We further urge Congress to pass legislation to require hearing testing of newborns prior to their release from the hospital.
8. The National Grange supports legislation so that any retired military service personnel with 50 percent or more service-related disability rating be allowed to obtain and receive needed dental treatments at the Veteran's Administration Dental Clinics at no cost.
9. The National Grange urges the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Congress to extend the Support Service Provider program to all 50 states.

Family Planning

1. We oppose any amendment to the United States Constitution that denies an individual the freedom of choice for abortion. We recognize the need for readily available family planning information for those who need or desire it. However, we do oppose partial-birth abortions. Government financing should not be available for abortions, except in cases of rape, incest, endangered health of the mother, or serious defects of the fetus. We support educational efforts, which would emphasize the necessity for licensed hospitals and medical doctors when abortions are necessary. We further support requiring all abortion agencies to provide counseling by qualified professional personnel to explore all possible options before an abortion, and we favor state legislation requiring abortion and family planning clinics to notify parents or guardians of minors who are seeking drugs or abortions.
2. The National Grange supports the release of adoption records that will provide family health history.
3. The National Granges opposes the distribution of any contraceptives to middle school age students.
4. The National Grange supports legislation that requires coverage of infertility treatments.

Health Care Consumer Protection, Patients' Rights and Accessibility

1. The National Grange supports access to affordable health care and health insurance for every American regardless of age, race, income, health condition, or location with freedom of choice of medical provider and facility. We call upon federal regulators to ensure insurance companies abide with mental health parity laws already on the books to correct what remains an unequal health care system for patients with behavioral health conditions. In addition, health care cost containment strategies should maintain the highest quality of care without compromising effectiveness and efficiency. The National Grange calls upon the President to take immediate steps to reduce regulatory burdens and duplication to enhance care coordination by allowing health care providers to focus on patients rather than paperwork. The National Grange supports restrictions being placed on insurance companies, so that they can only cancel policies for nonpayment or fraud, and not because of new health issues. We favor legislation to guarantee that the attending physician's decision is the governing factor regarding appropriate medical treatment or length of hospital stay. The physician's decision should be the deciding factor for coverage whether or not treatment or hospitalization takes place in or out of the patient's home state. We believe HMOs should be required to accept the determination of the attending health care provider as evidence of the need for an emergency visitation or ambulance service. The National Grange encourages all families to carry catastrophic health insurance.
2. The National Grange will work with other organizations to develop and present a "Healthcare Bill of Rights" for Americans to Congress. We support proposals for health care reform that include the following safeguards:
 - a) allow patients to sue HMOs for medical malpractice;
 - b) place a cap on how much an individual may sue for per medical malpractice suit, including a \$250,000 cap on malpractice awards arising from non-economic claims (i.e. pain and suffering);
 - c) place a cap on malpractice awards regarding product liability;
 - d) require insurance companies to provide hospital coverage for birth as deemed necessary by the doctor;
 - e) establish an efficient grievance and appeal process for patients when medical procedures or payments are denied by insurance companies/HMO's;
 - f) require that insurance companies cover all legally mandated medical services deemed necessary by a doctor at federal, state, or hospital levels, including preventative procedures such as Well-baby check-ups and childhood immunizations;
 - g) require insurance companies to pay claims within 30 to 45 days of receiving properly completed forms and bills.
 - h) We also support a health care plan that includes the following provisions:
 - Access to affordable, portable health care, health insurance and prescription drugs for every American regardless of age, race, income, health condition or location with freedom of choice of medical provider and facility.
 - Each person should be treated with dignity, equality and respect and health information should be provided in a manner that is easily understood and comprehended.
 - Protection of Medicare or current health insurance coverage as they are presently provided with no reduction in coverage.
 - No ban on writing new policies for insurance companies.
 - Preventive care, screenings and services that include educational programs, immunizations and

- holistic or alternative medicines that assist the patient in taking responsibility for their own care but do not mandate participation.
- A national registry of health information that is accessible in all health care settings by health care professionals.
 - Encourage utilization of technology, such as telemedicine, to support the delivery of care and management of patient conditions.
 - Address the alarming rate of medical errors in health care settings by establishing guidelines, training and standards.
 - Oversight of any federal healthcare program should be provided by a qualified health agency and not the Internal Revenue Service.
 - Medical decisions should be made by licensed medical professionals based on the needs of the patient.
 - Efforts to reduce overall health care costs while providing the right care by the right provider at the right time in the right place and for the right cost.
 - Guidelines for revamping the reimbursement structure to support the delivery of primary care that seeks to address the needs of the most costly patients.
 - Programs to ensure that there is an ample health care workforce that is qualified to deliver all levels of care.
 - Any health care program established by Congress should be acceptable to the members of Congress as required coverage for them and their families.
3. The National Grange believes that teeth should be declared a legitimate part of the body requiring the same comprehensive level of care and coverage as any other part of the body by health insurers and that all prosthetics, including dentures, implants, crowns, and bridge work be covered at the same rate as all other medical procedures. The National Grange also believes that dentists should be treated as any other medical specialists by both the government and insurance carriers and reimbursed at comparable rates.
 4. The National Grange urges federal agencies to be more aggressive in their investigations and prosecutions of fraud, waste, and abuse in the health care system. We support efforts to maintain the National Practitioners Data Base allowing consumers to have access to malpractice reports so they can properly choose the best medical professional for themselves.
 5. The National Grange encourages all continued legal and legislative actions necessary to eliminate the sources of counterfeit medications and to pursue the prosecution of those found responsible for the making and marketing of them, in support increased efforts to educate the public on the dangers of obtaining medications from unreliable sources.
 6. The National Grange supports tax deductible Medical Savings Accounts (MSAs) in the form of an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) type account to be used strictly for medical expenses. The National Grange supports legislation that reinstates the list of Over The Counter items eligible for reimbursement under Health Saving Accounts (HSAs), Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs), and Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRAs), removes limits on contributions and allows year-end balances to roll over to the new year or return to the employee.
 7. We support extending health care coverage under COBRA for all terminated employees who qualify for a period of up to 36 months or until eligible for Medicare/Medicaid and include portability of health insurance coverage even if there is a pre-existing condition for those who change jobs or become unemployed. The National Grange supports tax incentives for businesses to provide health insurance coverage for their employees and 100 percent tax deductibility of health insurance premiums for the self-employed and individuals acquiring private health insurance.
 8. The National Grange favors the passage of laws, which allow parents/guardians in conjunction with their doctors to decide whether or not to keep severely physically and mentally handicapped children alive by life support systems without interference by the government.
 9. The National Grange urges that the new federal and state laws on privacy of medical information be examined, and amended if necessary, so that medical practitioners may release or disclose limited information when necessary to contact relatives or others who are needed to authorize medical treatment. We further support legislation that would require patients, when physically or mentally able, to submit their medical background to health care professionals.
 10. The National Grange supports federal legislation requiring all restaurants and all public buildings to be smoke free and to require builders and landlords to include carbon monoxide detectors as well as smoke detectors in buildings they build or manage.
 11. The National Grange strongly opposes any effort to require the Internal Revenue Service to turn over tax return documents to other government agencies that review health care decisions.
 12. The National Grange opposes the imposition of a tax on medicine or medical supplies.
 13. The National Grange supports legislation to override the 1950 Supreme Court ruling that prevents medical malpractice suits against military doctors with the exception of threat of war.
 14. The National Grange opposes any legislation that would disenroll any veteran who is currently receiving health care coverage through the Veterans Administration (VA) Health Care System.
 15. The National Grange supports that complete medical records be made available to the service member at the time of separation for future Service-Connected Issues that may manifest after separation from service.

16. The National Grange supports World Mental Health Day observed annually on October 10.
17. The National Grange will work with other organizations to urge the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission to reject proposals to increase patient out-of-pocket costs and co-pays for beneficiaries under the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit (Part D).
18. The National Grange urges Congress to reform the Affordable Care Act in an open bipartisan manor. Special care needs to be taken so that rural hospitals that traditionally have high numbers of uninsured patients are not harmed by the reform.
19. The National Grange supports legislation that would bring about protection of parental and/or guardian rights in the guidance, control and administration of their dependent minors' health care. This legislation should be written to include any and all federal, state and local government agencies.

Long Term Care and Assisted Living

1. The National Grange supports coverage for long-term nursing/in-home care, including an allowable tax credit for long term care insurance premiums, and an allowable tax credit for adult day care expenses incurred by primary care givers of adults who cannot care for themselves. A tax credit should also be available for programs to provide assisted living to the elderly in their own homes. We urge changing the Medicare entitlement and managed health care insurance programs so that they provide payment for assisted living programs.
2. The National Grange supports legislation that will provide uniform care and services to nursing home patients and will protect their rights.
3. The National Grange encourages Congress to require Medicare to make timely payments to both acute care and extended care facilities to ensure that the correct level of care is maintained for all patients.
4. The National Grange urges the U.S. Health Care Financing Authority to allow elderly couples to be in the same nursing home when long term care for both becomes necessary.
5. The National Grange supports action that develops a comprehensive and economical method to treat patients requiring Palliative Care.

Medical Research/Awareness

1. The National Grange supports and recognizes the value of medical research in increasing the quality of life. We support improvement in the quality of health care services and access to new and existing technologies. We encourage continued funding of medical research, including the responsible use of animals in research.
2. The National Grange encourages research to continue on alternative treatments, such as acupuncture, hypnosis, massage therapy, prayer, and meditation, which may be used in conjunction with the standard treatments that are showing results against diseases.
3. The National Grange supports the National Cancer Institute and encourages Congress to continue providing funds for research.
4. The National Grange supports the establishment of a "radiation database" on radiation releases to the public resulting from both intentional and unintentional releases due to nuclear weapons testing and accidental releases from nuclear power plants.
5. The National Grange support legislation to explore the risks involved in the use of water fluoridation in the United States.
6. The National Grange urges that the correct information about Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) should be given to all parents and caregivers of children under five years.
7. The National Grange urges adequate funding for agencies at all levels dealing with the HIV and AIDS problem and supports increased emphasis on testing.
8. The National Grange urges the use of government funds for stem cell research only on postnatal or adult stem cells. We further support the research and possible use of cord blood stem cells and, promote the registry and donation of cord blood stem cells. However, we support legislation banning full human cloning.
9. The National Grange supports legislation that would ban the patenting of natural occurring genes. We only support the patenting of treatment and/or alterations of those natural occurring genes.
10. We urge a Silver Alert System for people dealing with dementia.
11. The National Grange supports governmental efforts on the state and national level to fund research on the prevention and treatment of Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses, to disseminate information and to educate the public about its prevention, detection, and treatment.
12. As an incentive for the pharmaceutical industry to develop drugs for "orphan" diseases, the National Grange encourages "market exclusivity" for orally administered Alzheimer's and Dementia medicines and treatments.
13. The National Grange supports continued research on man-made nanoparticles used in medical devices and sunscreen.
14. The National Grange and all state and local granges support the various national, state and local agencies and commissions striving to eliminate the unintended and intended abuse of heroin and opioid addiction. The National Grange will be proactive in support of a variety of treatment solutions and programs. The National Grange supports systems to limit the over prescribing of opioids and the education of the application of Naloxone (Narcan) pursuant to state regulations.
15. The National Grange encourage legitimate scientific studies on the risks and benefits of the use of medical marijuana in the treatment of disease.

Medicare/Medicaid

1. The National Grange supports the following reforms and changes in the Medicare and Medicaid programs: a) equity of payment

between inpatient and outpatient procedures according to Medicare's Diagnostic Related Groups; b) equity in reimbursements between rural and urban hospitals; c) prohibit hospitals or doctors from setting fees or discontinuing Medicare assignments for specific diagnosis during treatment on the basis of the method of payment or from charging amounts above the Medicare limits for Medicare services; d) faster processing of claims to permit faster reimbursement; e) extended coverage to ensure sufficient time for full recovery; f) health care professionals; and (g) all reimbursements under the Medicare program to all Medicare patients, medical personnel, suppliers, be made within a three month timeframe and (h) adequately compensate primary care physicians for non-procedural services.

2. The National Grange supports a full investigation of the causes of the rapid increase in Medicare/Medicaid costs. We urge our legislators to investigate pricing, availability and coverage options provided by health insurance companies as supplemental coverage for Medicare recipients. The National Grange supports the ability of Medicare and Medicare to negotiate with drug companies for the best reimbursement price of prescription drugs for consumers. We further support a cap on the annual increase in Medicare deductions of no more than the general inflation rate. The National Grange strongly urges Congress to refrain from reducing payment to physicians and providers under Medicare since it would add an additional burden to patients needing to use the program. The National Grange urges all U.S. Senators and Representatives to continue to support funding to all aspects of the current Medicare programs.
3. The National Grange will lobby for a change in current Medicare insurance to include coverage for hearing exams and hearing aids. The National Grange urges Medicare and Medicaid to review their payment schedules and make changes which recognize recommended and accepted medical procedures and screening tests, such as: coverage for the prostate-specific antigen test (PSA); increased coverage for home health care costs; reimbursement for services of midwives and physicians' assistants; coverage for outpatient office laser surgery.
4. The National Grange favors legislation permitting retired people to deduct the cost of their supplemental health insurance from their taxable income and legislation to improve access to Medicare to ease the financial burdens on seniors. We support changing current regulations to permit seniors who are "grandfathered" by residence address into a Medicare supplemental insurance program to be allowed to move anywhere within the original service area without being dropped from their insurance plan. We further support a division of assets procedure for Medicaid and Medicare that would preserve the financial stability of a healthy spouse.
5. The National Grange supports the right to have a second doctor in the operating room, where medically required, for patients on Medicare.
6. The National Grange supports legislation that would give eye and dental insurance to seniors age 65 plus for those procedures that Medicare does not cover, with a co-pay/deductible for amounts over 100 dollars.
7. The Grange at all levels works to convince our government that Medicare money should also be spent on health screening for early intervention of diseases which is far more economical than the huge cost of treating advanced stages of the diseases.
8. The National Grange urges Congress to pass an act allowing Medicare information to be given to an assigned representative and that the representative be allowed to act on behalf of said patient without consignment of Medicare and/or Social Security benefits.
9. The National Grange supports the continued process to eliminate the "donut hole" for Medicare prescription coverage.
10. The National Grange urges the United States Congress to amend the Federal Health Care Overhaul Bill to read that all states be fiscally responsible for their portion of Medicaid expenses.

Prescription Drugs and Medicines

1. The National Grange supports making prescriptions and over-the-counter drugs more affordable. The National Grange strongly encourages drug companies to produce lifesaving and life enhancing medicines for a wide variety of diseases and medical conditions. We further support requiring all government and private prescription drug coverage programs to offer the widest possible selection of lifesaving and life enhancing medicines at an affordable price for those who need them.
2. The National Grange supports allowing U.S. citizens, who are visiting foreign countries, to bring back with them up to three months supplies of regulated pharmaceutical products for their own use, provided that they have valid prescriptions for those specific pharmaceutical products from their U.S. physician. The National Grange supports the current Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act provisions that generally do not allow regulated pharmaceutical products to be imported into the U.S. for sale or distribution unless those importers are also pharmacists and/or pharmaceutical wholesalers currently subject to federal and state regulation. We strongly support current law and regulations that require anyone who imports regulated pharmaceutical products for sale or distribution in the U.S. to keep accurate records tracking the origin, history and chain of custody of these products before they entered the U.S. We support legislation requiring anyone authorized to import regulated pharmaceutical products for sale or distribution in the U.S. to be financially responsible for any testing necessary to verify the authenticity and/or degradation of the pharmaceutical products they import. We support strictly limiting the importation of pharmaceutical products to drugs from licensed pharmacies and wholesalers who sell to the public in Canada. We support providing the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) with sufficient resources and authority to ensure the safety of imported drugs from Canada employing technological and other safeguards. We further support legislation requiring anyone authorized to import regulated pharmaceutical products for sale or distribution in the U.S. to be allowed to import such products only if they are shipped into the U.S. in counterfeit proof and tamper resistant packaging.
3. The National Grange supports a voluntary program, which would offer pregnant women who test HIV positive voluntary

access to the drug AZT that could prevent the transfer of the HIV antibodies to the unborn child or newborn child.

4. The National Grange will work to secure legislation requiring physicians to obtain specific written approval of the patient or those legally authorized to give approval prior to prescribing experimental drugs. When the physician prescribes experimental drugs, the warning and permission form must be in clear, common layman language on a separate medical form.
5. The National Grange supports legislation that would require the pharmaceutical companies to significantly reduce the minimum dose purchase requirement for pneumococcal vaccine. We recommend that local county Health Departments include this vaccine in required childhood immunizations.
6. The National Grange urges the Food and Drug Administration to mandate that pharmaceutical producers label all products and commodities containing gluten.

Rural and Home Health Care

1. We urge that the federal government maintain block grant/matching funds to states for community health clinics.
2. The National Grange supports legislation to ensure that fairness in price and benefits offered becomes a part of any and all medical insurance programs. The National Grange believes that payment to health care providers should adhere to a schedule of fees for services provided that is fair and equitable across the United States.
3. The National Grange supports incentive programs for doctors who will agree to practice in rural areas where basic medical care is not available and supports the creation and/or expansion of programs that encourage students to become general practitioners and that address incentives and reimbursements for primary care.
4. The National Grange supports the establishment or use of the necessary infrastructure for the expansion of telemedicine into rural areas. The National Grange also supports the elimination of regulatory and statutory impediments to broaden the use of telemedicine and telehealth and institute a more uniform approach for reimbursement.
5. We encourage local Granges to present programs that educate the community about pharmaceutical assistance programs.
6. The National Grange supports preserving quality, rural home health care services provided under traditional fee-for-service Medicare by opposing the imposition of new, patient co-payment fees and the imposition of further cuts to reimbursement rates for home health care service providers.
7. The National Grange supports efforts by Congress, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the home health care industry to reduce unnecessary Medicare spending on home health care services by aggressively weeding out instances of fraud, abuse and poor management practices in the home health care sector.
8. The National Grange supports passage of the "Caregiver, Advise, Record and Enable (CARE) Act" to prepare caregivers for home healthcare medical and nursing tasks.
9. The National Grange, through Grange Advocacy, engage the American Association of Community Cancer Centers in discussions regarding potential joint efforts to address the lack of access to proper health care and cancer care in rural America. Further, National Grange will support legislation to improve funding and change regulations to help keep rural hospitals and health care facilities open.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Education and Health Committee for their input, attention to detail and perseverance in accomplishing our goal to present our resolutions in a timely manner. It was great to work with the John Trimble Legislative Youth representatives Phil Vonada and Leroy Squire, and we appreciated their assistance.

Thank you to this great committee for 100% attendance on our zoom meeting and multiple committee meetings. (na na na boo boo all other committees)

A big thanks to our wonderful and talented Secretary who kept us on track, at times kept us waiting and also kept us smiling. It takes a team to work together and finish a goal. It was great working with all of you.

Mark Noah, OR, Chair
Brenda Rousselle, VT
Wilber Heath, NH
Lisa Goodrich, VT

Debbie Gegare, WI, Secretary
Barbara Borderieux, FL
Sharon Russell, CT
Sharon Croucher, NY

Eileen Hebert, RI
John Crippen, MN
Philip Vonada, PA, Trimble Youth

Fraternally submitted,
Mark Noah
Education and Health Committee Chair

POLICY STATEMENT

Since our inception, our Grange has endeavored to improve the world around it through our growth to expand and influence change.

Civic engagement is an integral component of the Grange way. We encourage Grange Members to engage in local, state, and national government especially through Grange programs and activities like Legislative Fly-In. These programs are of particular value to our youth, who are the future of our Order.

Continued development of Youth and Young Adult programs are essential to the growth of the Grange. We view Youth and Young Adults as two distinct groups that require their own distinct programs and activities due to diverging interests. It is important that all leaders within the Grange recognize this fact, and we encourage the current and continued development of programs that meet the independent needs of both Youth and Young Adult age groups.

We encourage Subordinate, Pomona, and State Granges to continue to develop Agriculturally based educational programs to include environmental topics such as ways to control nutrient runoff. A better effort must be made where possible to keep nutrients out of our water where it can be detrimental to our health and the health of our food system.

Two of the Grange’s main focuses are family and community service. Along with these, attention should be invested to backyard farmers, farmer’s market vendors, and people who desire to go “back to the land.” These individuals and families are valuable prospective members that can carry on the original ideals of the Grange for the next 150 years.

The Grange is not a building, but the people working together for the good of their communities. We want our Granges to partake in the various benefits that the National Grange offers to celebrate our members and the great history of our Order such as *Good Day!* magazine, Distinguished Grange Program, and Grange Legacy Family Program. We encourage the National Grange to recognize Champions of Rural America.

Communication is instrumental not only in contributing to the growth of the Grange, but also the basic stability of our diverse national organization. We encourage communication to travel throughout our established grassroots structure to disseminate the flow of information at all levels of the Order. We encourage conversations to be the lifeblood of developing new ideas into tangible results. We encourage conversations to be the venue for reviewing established programs and procedures to ensure relevancy to our members and organization in the 21st century. We encourage conversations that are positive and constructive instead of destructive. We encourage conversations between Masters of the various divisions of the Order, while respecting the independence of individual Granges. We encourage conversations between Masters that take the form of coaching and developing leadership as opposed to getting involved in internal politics. We encourage communication to sustain the Grange for the next 150 years.

Membership is the life blood for growth of our organization at all levels. It is important that Granges not only have a membership director – but a membership committee to which we all belong. One tool to increase our membership is the use of the One Plus program. We encourage all Granges to use this program. We need to publicize our efforts to inform the community of the actions of our Grange. Our visibility should be a priority. Granges on all levels are encouraged to work with our local news outlets to promote our projects and organization.

We are strongly in favor of the National Grange developing a fact sheet to be utilized in educating the public, other schools and organizations about the history, our roles and involvements in creating the numerous contributions that the Grange has been a part of.

Each age group has different interests, so we need to adapt our membership programs as we ask them to join us. We have to encourage our youth to become more active and offer them more responsibilities on all levels of the Grange to enrich their lives and ensure the Grange will be here for many years to come. We encourage the youth to have meetings during their Regional Conferences to develop resolutions that could be submitted through the standard process.

We ask that the National Grange Website be more user-friendly and also provide a method of feedback to facilitate improvement of the website.

This covers Resolutions 605-IA, 609-IA, 610-FL, and portions of the Master’s Address.

INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS

RES. #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
602	PA	Child Abuse Clearances	Adopted as Amended

ADOPTED RESOLUTION

602-PA – Child Abuse Clearances

WHEREAS according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), hundreds of thousands of children (individuals under age 18) are abused every year in the United States; and

WHEREAS according to the CDC, most cases of abuse are perpetrated by familiar adults; and

WHEREAS most states have policies requiring all adults who work with children to have Child Abuse Clearances, State Police Background Checks, and National Criminal Background Checks; and

WHEREAS many volunteer organizations, community groups, and churches are enacting policies requiring their employees and volunteers provide Child Abuse Clearances and State and National Criminal Background Checks, for the protection of the organization, the volunteers, and the children; and

WHEREAS the National Grange currently has no such policy in place; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange establish a Child Protection Policy, development to be referred to the National Executive Committee with consultation of an attorney proficient in applicable law; be it further

RESOLVED that the National Grange establish the Child Protection Policy by May 1st, 2019; and be it further

RESOLVED that the National Grange strongly encourage the State Granges to establish Child Protection Policies.

The committee would like to thank the National Master for tasking us with the responsibility of serving on this committee.

We enjoyed the time spent together building relationships with each other. We feel that Grange Growth and Development is an important part of the future of the Grange.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Grange Growth and Development Committee for their hard work and many long hours.

Susan Plank, IN, Chr.

Debra Campbell, PA, Sec.

Joe Goodrich, VT

Pete Pompper, NJ

Karen Overstreet, TX

Kathy Baldwin, IA

Chris Heath, NH

Connie Johnson, MI

Lena Shufeldt, OK

Loretta Washington, Sales, Benefits, Programs and Membership Recognition Director

Fraternally submitted,

Susan Plank

Grange Growth and Development Committee Chair

POLICY STATEMENT

Just as our Ritual provides the vehicle to present and understand our teachings and principles, our Constitution and By-laws provide the unified structure for our order to function with unity of action. Understanding why we have our code is as important as understanding the code itself. Over the past 150 years, many hours have been spent by many minds crafting a document that will serve and protect the interests of the Grange at all levels, as well as its individual members. It is with a great deal of respect and caution that we approach the task of amending these laws, and sincerely hope that the changes made are in the best interests of the Grange as a whole.

With today's political climate we want to stress how important it is to remain non-partisan, that we as the Grange do not support any nominee, appointee, candidate, or agency appointees, etc. The officers and staff of the National Grange should be reminded while a publicly released assessment of the qualifications of any cabinet or agency appointee is a positive; any endorsement or opposition statement by the Grange risks harming the public perception of our non-partisanship in dealing with the issues before the agencies of the federal government.

Social media has afforded the members the opportunity for instant communication of Grange activities and successes. We understand that not all will ever agree with all policies and undertakings of our Order, and that makes our organization unique. We strongly oppose the posting of personal grievances, the purpose of which is to divide and destroy. The First Amendment of the United States Constitution, makes us powerless to stop the negativity. We challenge our Grangers to apply the high standards demanded by our Fraternal bonds to conduct our personal participation on social media sites accordingly.

As members we all enjoy the protection of our Digest of Laws and our fraternal responsibility to abide by them and hold our brothers and sisters accountable. Failure to do so results in strife and discontent. Let us practice our motto - "In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, and in all things charity.

Recognition that the Grange is considered a 501c organization by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) gives us freedom from most taxes. Our by-laws Sec. 4.11.1 (G) limits the amount a Grange may retain after the sale of property to \$1,000 with the remainder to be kept in custodial account by the State Grange. The value of property has risen dramatically over those years and this section has not been reviewed during that time. We recommend that an in-depth study of IRS tax implications be conducted to determine if an update would comply with IRS regulations and minimize future potential tax liabilities.

We want to make sure that we are maintaining a fairness in electing the officers of the National Grange. Delegates should be mindful of maintaining equity among the regions of the country, including other factors when electing the Executive Committee.

The National Grange should communicate with the State Granges regarding all the entities that have entered into contractual trademark agreements in their state, so that they may act as agents for the National Grange. This will insure that the State Grange is aware of all the entities that use our trademark in that state and that licensees are complying.

This covers Resolutions 705-CA and 706-CT.

There were no Master's Rulings issued between the times at which the 151st and 152nd Annual Conventions were convened.

INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS

RES. #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
701	CA	Demits - Amend Section 6.9.4 of the National Grange Digest	Adopted as Amended
704	DC	E-membership Dues (Two-Year Resolution 2017)	Adopted
707	Committee	Obligation and Welcoming ceremony obligation	Adopted as Amended

ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS

701-CA – Demits – Amend Section 6.9.4 of the National Grange Digest

WHEREAS The National Grange Digest of Laws, Section 6.9.2 states:

“A member is entitled at any time to a demit as a matter of right, if in good standing, and clear on the books.”;
and

WHEREAS The National Grange Digest of Laws Section 6.9.4 states:

“While action on a demit shall be taken only at a regular meeting of a Subordinate Grange, a demit may be given at any regular meeting as it is not necessary that the application therefore lie over.”; and

WHEREAS: there is a conceptual conflict between 6.9.2 which say a “member is entitled at any time”, and 6.9.4 which states that “a demit may be given at any regular meeting”; therefore be it

RESOLVED: that Section 6.9.4 be rewritten to read:

6.9.4 The Secretary and Master of the Grange may issue a demit upon a member’s written request, if the member requesting a demit is in good standing and clear on the books. If the member is not in good standing or clear on the books, any action to issue the demit shall be taken when the member has been restored to good standing.

RESOLVED that Section 4.6.15 of the Digest of Laws be replaced with the following language:

“(F) E-Membership. Membership in the National Grange and in a State Grange as an E-member may be attained by individuals or families who may have an interest in the advancement of agriculture, improvement of rural life, and policies and principles of the organization. Membership is gained by completion of the approved membership form and paying the annual dues for this class of membership directly to the National Grange, under the terms and conditions provided for by the National Grange.

- (A) E-members will receive such information, publications, programs, benefits and services from the National Grange, in such manner, as shall be determined by the National Grange. In addition, State Granges, may, at the discretion of each individual State Grange, extend the benefits of information, publications, programs, benefits and services provided by the State Grange to its Subordinate, Pomona or Junior members to the E-members who reside in their state, in such a manner and under such terms and conditions, as shall be determined by the respective State Granges. E-members shall not be entitled to vote on matters of Grange policy or compete in National Grange sponsored contests that are designed for the benefit of Subordinate Grange members only.
- (B) The National Grange shall report, via electronic communication, to the various State Granges, on a quarterly basis, the contact information of all active E-memberships within their jurisdiction, provided that State Granges may not sell, barter, exchange or otherwise provide this information to any entity outside the jurisdiction of this Digest of Laws without the expressed approval of the National Grange. Individual or family E-memberships may be terminated by the Executive Committee of the National Grange for improper conduct, illegal action, conflict of interest or other reasons that the Executive Committee may determine are taken for the Good of the Order.”; and be it further

RESOLVED: that Section 4.8.2 (F) in the Digest of Laws be replaced with the following language:

“(F) E-Membership. The annual dues for E-Memberships will be forty dollars (\$40.00) for individuals and eighty dollars (\$80.00) for families, to be paid directly to the National Grange.

- (1) A. Dues will be divided as follows: \$32.50 to the National Grange, \$7.50 to the State Grange for individual e-memberships and \$65.00 to the National Grange and \$15.00 to the State Grange for family memberships for e-members who reside within a state with an active, chartered State Grange.
B. For the purpose of this subsection only, Potomac Grange #1 in Washington, DC shall be entitled to receive the State Grange portion of the annual dues for e-members who reside within the District of Columbia.
C. One hundred percent of all E-membership dues collected from E-members who reside in any state or territory of the United States without an active, chartered State Grange, or who reside outside of the United States, shall remain with the National Grange, provided that the National Grange Executive Committee, may, by annual vote, on a case by case basis, elect to share the State Grange portion of E-membership dues collected from residents of any US states or US territories, with State Granges that have been assigned jurisdiction by the National Grange to organize and manage the affairs of the Order in a neighboring state or territory without an active chartered State Grange.
- (2) At the end of each calendar quarter, the National Grange will forward to each respective State Grange entitled to receive them, the annual State Grange portion of E-membership dues collected from residents of their respective states during the previous quarter. All transfers of dues funds from E-memberships within the various divisions of the Order entitled to receive them shall be by means of electronic funds transfers, unless both the sender and receiver agree to other alternatives.”

707-Committee– Obligation and Welcoming ceremony obligation

WHEREAS in order to make the obligation ceremony consistent within all three methods of initiating/welcoming members (i.e. first four degrees, welcoming ceremony and obligation ceremony); therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Subordinate Grange Obligation Ceremony and the Welcoming Ceremony obligation be changed to include the first-degree obligation which states:

“In the presence of our Heavenly Father and these witnesses, I do hereby pledge my sacred honor that, whether in or out of the Order, I will never reveal any of the secrets of this order, nor communicate the ritualistic work of this order to anyone unless legally authorized to do so. I will conform to and abide by the laws of my State and Nation; and the Constitution, rules and regulations of the Grange at all levels. I will never propose for membership in the Order nor sanction the admission of anyone I have reason to believe an improper person, nor will I oppose the admission of anyone solely on the grounds of a personal prejudice. I will not knowingly wrong or defraud a Brother or Sister of the Order or allow it to be done by another if within my power to prevent it. I will endeavor to be a true and faithful Patron of Husbandry, perform the duties enjoined in this Order, and aid others in the performance of the same. Should I knowingly or willfully violate this pledge, I will invoke upon myself suspension or expulsion from the Order.

Friends is this your Obligation?”; and be it further

RESOLVED that the National Grange distribute the changes to each State Grange for distribution to their Subordinate Granges and include the changes on the National Grange website under the members section.

The Grange Law Committee has worked diligently to present clear and concise changes to the Digest of Laws of the National Grange. I thank the members of the committee for their insight on the matters that have come before us and for their thoroughness in our deliberations.

George Thomas, MA, Chr.
Kent Westwood, CA
Bruce Croucher, NY

Cindy Greer, CO, Sec.
Susan Noah, OR
Roger Bostwick, KS

Leroy Watson, NH
David Bryant, WA

Fraternally submitted,

George Thomas, MA
Grange Law Committee Chair

PRESENT POLICY IS REPRESENTED IN THE CURRENT DIGEST OF LAWS.

LABOR, JUDICIARY, TRANSPORTATION & POSTAL POLICIES COMMITTEE REPORT

POLICY STATEMENT

Labor

The Grange has long fought for the rights of both employers and employees to live and thrive, understanding that worker protection and prosperity are not in conflict with company success and solvency. We believe that the hardworking men and women of America's workforce deserve the opportunity to earn a fair wage in a safe work environment and the guarantee that their pensions and subsequent benefits will be protected and preserved. We encourage businesses, municipalities, school districts, and state governments across the country to be proactive in ensuring the future growth and stability of employee pension benefits and to guard against their loss in the unfortunate event of a company merger or bankruptcy.

We support legislative efforts to streamline the H2A process to ensure that all agricultural operations can have access to guest workers. The National Grange supports an Agriculture Guest Worker Program for the establishment of the H-2C visa program for skilled agricultural workers to be administered by the USDA. This provides an option to both seasonal and year-round labor needs, recognizing that not all agriculture jobs are the same or require the same level of skill or experience. The H-2C visa program better understands the unique needs of the American farm and ranch operations, and the challenges of processing raw, perishable commodities. This will offer workers and employers more choices in their employment arrangements, with more flexibility and less bureaucratic red tape than the H2A visa program.

The global economy has allowed American businesses to reach markets once inaccessible and has increased the demand for many of our goods, including our agricultural products, in far regions of the world. The Grange continues to be an advocate for the implementation of fair free trade agreements that encourage international commerce while also incentivizing domestic job growth and economic output for American companies. We do not, however, support the bailout of any country, state, or territory that has engaged in wasteful spending and behaved in a financially irresponsible manner.

Judiciary

Since the Grange was organized in 1867, it has been a staunch defender of our Constitution and the rights and privileges it protects for each and every citizen. We are a nation of law and order and as such must work to draft, pass, and maintain legislation aimed at ensuring a peaceful society and a fair judicial system. Our first responders work hard and serve bravely on a daily basis to maintain this order. The National Grange will forever strive to grant them the support and respect they deserve.

We are saddened by the increase of gun violence caused by weapons equipped with bump stocks. We support legislation and/or regulations that would regulate bump stocks.

The Grange understands that citizens and the officials they elect are the best candidates to write the laws by which we will be governed, and that administrative agencies, commissions and other unelected governing bodies should be prohibited from drafting and implementing such regulations that dramatically impact our daily lives. We urge elected officials at all levels to periodically review and purge outdated laws and reduce burdensome and unnecessary regulations that stifle economic growth and fundamentally impede the free market system.

We vehemently oppose the use of eminent domain to confiscate such private property for commercial use or any project that does not directly benefit the general citizenry.

Identity theft continues to be a significant problem in the United States. We support legislation that would increase security of personal and credit card data to prevent fraudulent enterprises from acquiring and utilizing that data.

Transportation

From the National Grange inception in 1867, the National Grange has been an advocate for a strong transportation infrastructure. In many ways, agriculture is the "original" business and as such has driven the establishment of a multitude of subsequent industries down the economic food chain, including infrastructure development. The need for farmers to get their products to consumers drove the establishment of our nation's railroads, highways, and waterways and today continues to drive the development of our national infrastructure.

We continue to support laws requiring drivers to slow down and move over while passing an emergency vehicle that is stopped with lights flashing and believe all drivers should be held responsible for their driving and guard against distractions from cell phones and other such devices. We also support increased visibility devices for school buses. We strongly support technology that enhances the visibility of vehicles, rail cars, bicycles, motorcycles, trucks, etc.

We support the designation of English as our national language and thus believe that all road and highway signage should be printed only in English. We further urge that all drivers' tests, licenses and permits be printed in English as well.

INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS

RES. #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
829	PA	Service Animal Fraud	Adopted
832	PA	Use of Social Security Numbers for identification	Adopted

ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS

829-PA – Service Animal Fraud

WHEREAS lax or ambiguous regulations for service/support animals can allow owners to fraudulently claim untrained pets to be service/support animals; and

WHEREAS these untrained or unsuitable animals can pose a risk to public safety by allowing their access to areas where animals would otherwise not be allowed; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the National Grange supports legislation to regulate support animals to reduce the opportunity for fraudulently claiming pets to be service/support animals.

832-PA – Use of Social Security Numbers for Identification

WHEREAS Social Security numbers are for Social Security and tax purposes only and not for identification as stated on Social Security cards; and

WHEREAS stores, doctor offices, hospitals, companies, etc. request/require Social Security numbers as a form of identification and to check credit scores; and

WHEREAS the United States government is changing identification numbers on Medicare cards from Social Security numbers with a letter to completely different identification numbers to prevent identity theft; therefore be it

RESOLVED that all businesses and medical professionals, etc. be required to no longer use Social Security numbers as identification; and be it further

RESOLVED that all businesses and medical professionals, etc. use different numbers or another means of identification for customers and patients.

PRESENT POLICY

JUDICIARY

Banking and Consumer Credit Law

1. The National Grange supports strong independent banks in lieu of further concentration of banking and financial powers in interstate and nationwide firms. Banks should be prohibited from entering the field of general commerce.
2. The National Grange believes that any banks allowed to write and sell insurance must be subject to all applicable state insurance resolutions and laws as administered by State Insurance Commissions. We believe that any banks that are allowed to offer or underwrite securities must be subject to regulation by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.
3. The National Grange supports the continued independence of the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) and opposes the merger of the NCUA with any other government financial institution insurance fund.
4. The National Grange urges state and federal banking regulators to better monitor fees charged by banks, reduce and/or eliminate fees, and provide customers with protection against aggressive banking business practices.
5. The National Grange supports regulations requiring that all dormancy and/or inactivity fees for store gift cards and prepaid gift cards be permanently eliminated, just as these fees have been eliminated for credit cards.
6. We oppose unreasonable delays in the availability of the funds from a deposited check.

Bankruptcy

1. The National Grange favors additional penalties for bankruptcy fraud to combat planned bankruptcies and other abuses.
2. The National Grange supports companies or businesses that file for bankruptcy to ensure that the employees who are owed compensation are the first secured creditors.
3. The National Grange supports legislation, which would classify producers having an ownership interest in agricultural products as secured creditors in bankruptcy cases.

Children and Family Law

1. The National Grange supports efforts to increase public awareness of child abuse and the existence of child predators in our society. All child abuse laws and child predator laws should be reviewed, revised, and enforced so as to secure the safety and wellbeing of all children while remaining protective of the rights of innocent families and individuals. The National Grange supports equalizing sentencing of perpetrators of sexual abuse without regard of the familial relationship of perpetrator to the child. We further support greater notification requirements on convicted child predators, including immediate notification to authorities of address changes, community notification of the presence of a convicted child predator, a national child predator registry on the internet listing the current address of all convicted child predators and substantially increased penalties for failure of convicted sex offenders to comply.
2. The National Grange favors reforms that would consider the best interests of the child in all proceedings, investigations, or rulings by the courts.
3. The National Grange supports requiring that the biological father's name, if known and proven, be recorded on the child's birth certificate for purposes of determining the child's right to Social Security, and other support that should be provided by the father.
4. The National Grange supports policies that grant legal surrogate decision-making authority to grandparent caregivers in the absence of responsible parents or stepparents. We support financial, social and legal supports as needed to

grandparent caregivers raising grandchildren. We further support protecting the visitation rights of grandparents. In the case of a child who is legally removed from the parents, the grandparents should be first be considered as the custodian of that child.

Civil Law

1. The National Grange supports fairness in the civil judicial system at the state and federal levels through reform of tort, liability, and malpractice law. We favor a civil law system in which the plaintiff, if they lose, will be responsible to pay the defendant's legal and court costs when the court rules the lawsuit was frivolous. We further support limiting the amount of contingency fees that are paid to lawyers as well as putting caps on excessive jury awards for economic and noneconomic damages, such as pain, suffering, and bad faith. We support placing limits on findings of joint and several liability and clearly established standards of bad faith action. We support incentives for alternative dispute resolutions, such as arbitration. The National Grange proposes that businesses and medical professionals not be required to use Social Security numbers as identification and be allowed to use a different means of identification for customers and patients. We also favor legislation to regulate support animals to reduce the opportunity to fraudulently claim pets as support animals.
2. The National Grange believes that Legal Services Corporations and local legal aid bureaus should not receive any federal funding for suits against farmers. The National Grange also believes individuals should be prohibited from initiating so called "citizen suits," civil litigation against farmers and others for environmental violations without demonstrating any direct loss or damage to initiate such a suit.

Commercial Trade Policies

1. The National Grange believes that opening trade between nations increases international understanding. We will actively support programs to increase the competitive position of U.S. companies in world markets.
2. The National Grange encourages purchasing American-made products and recommends that all levels of government be required to buy American made products whenever feasible.
3. The National Grange supports a fair and equitable textile import policy that provides assistance to the domestic industry, is beneficial to the producers of fibers and is not be price inflationary to the U.S.' consumers.
4. The National Grange supports removal of trade, financial, and travel restrictions to Cuba.
5. The National Grange supports prohibiting the sale or lease of properties and/or businesses within the limits of the United States to any foreign purchaser or leaser whose country prohibits the sale or lease of properties and/or businesses to U.S. businesses or citizens.
6. The National Grange supports national, coordinated policies to combat trade-distorting practices instituted by foreign governments, such as currency manipulation and unilateral repudiation of sovereign debt, especially in those cases where it becomes more difficult for U.S. farmers and manufacturers to sell their products in overseas markets.

Consumer Protection Law

1. The National Grange supports legislation to allow the consumer more control over who has access to credit reports
2. The National Grange supports identification of all products that are foreign-made or assembled.
3. The National Grange supports requiring all companies to comply, to the full extent of the law, in setting strict limits for lead, lead paint and chemicals known as phthalates, and the mandatory third-party testing of products geared for children 12 and under.
4. The National Grange urges Congress to enact laws protecting an individual's right to privacy and to protect the confidentiality of all personal records from fraudulent use. The National Grange supports a program to educate individual consumers regarding how to report suspected identity theft activities. We also support stronger penalties for those convicted of identity theft including full restitution to all victims. National Grange supports allowing children's Social Security numbers and other private information to be frozen by the child's legal custodian in order to protect them from identity theft.
5. The National Grange supports allowing nonprofit organizations to make continued "incidental use" of copyrighted music.
6. Regulations should be enacted that require companies to give consumers the option of mailed billings or statements without surcharges.
7. The National Grange encourages companies to print product expiration or use by dates in the mm/dd/yy format.
8. The National Grange encourages changes in federal legislation, such that "compounding pharmacies" participating in interstate commerce would be classified as pharmaceutical manufacturers, under the Food, Drug and Cosmetics Act. The National Grange also supports that, as pharmaceutical manufacturers, "compounding pharmacies" be subject to Pharmaceutical Good Manufacturing Practices, FDA inspection and enforcement, and federal drug industry user fees.

Crime and Punishment

1. The National Grange supports imposing stiff mandatory sentences in criminal cases. We believe plea-bargaining should be restrained. We further believe that convicted criminals should be responsible for restitution to their victims and society. The National Grange believes that persons who are convicted of rape, murder, or any three-felony offenses should serve their full sentence without benefit of parole or furlough. We support the death penalty for premeditated crimes ending in death. We further support the death penalty for all citizens who are convicted of military espionage in either peacetime or war.
2. The National Grange favors classifying the importing, manufacturing, cultivation, or distribution of all illegal drugs as felonies

under state and federal statutes. An appropriate prison sentence should be imposed upon conviction for any felony drug offense.

3. The National Grange recommends that the U.S. Congress reauthorize the Trafficking Victims Protection Act to help prevent enslavement of persons and protect those who have been victims of enslavement. The National Grange also encourages its members to educate themselves and others about the dangers of human trafficking.

Firearms and the Second Amendment

1. The National Grange opposes any additional gun control laws until the present laws are strictly enforced. We oppose legislation restricting the rights of citizens to bear arms for protection of their families, property and common defense, except for assault weapons manufactured and designed specifically for military use and stun guns. We favor severe and mandatory sentences, including incarceration, for anyone using firearms while committing a crime.
2. The National Grange supports prohibiting the manufacture and sale of toy guns that are replicas of real guns.
3. The National Grange urges at the federal level, a law of national reciprocity between states be created so that a legal permit to carry weapons from one state be recognized by all states.

Foreign Aid

1. The National Grange urges the U.S. government to unconditionally extend foreign aid only in cases of natural disasters. We further support basing a greater use of agricultural products in lieu of cash transfers for humanitarian assistance; closer monitoring of International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans to encourage Third World countries to provide self-help; considering the recipient countries' present foreign debt, repayment schedule, and record before providing them with new financial assistance; and keeping in mind the needs of domestic programs when Congress considers the appropriate amount of foreign aid.
2. National Grange recommends that all countries share in the economic assistance to developing countries through the United Nations.
3. The National Grange supports requiring any country receiving U.S. foreign aid to purchase products made or grown in the United States.
4. The National Grange favors canceling all U.S. aid and supplies to foreign countries that take, hold, or kill American citizens, refuse to recognize international law, willingly permit the production and shipment of illegal drugs into our country, or allow the takeover of U.S. embassies or any property belonging to the U.S. government.
5. The National Grange encourages agricultural research and development in and for Third World nations.

General Law

1. The National Grange opposes federal regulations that force the closings of jails or that require excessive expenditures of state funds.
2. The National Grange supports tort reform to exempt manufacturers of goods and machinery from all lawsuits, fines, liabilities and other civil penalties if they meet all the state and federal regulations that were in effect at the time the product was built or produced. The National Grange also supports legislation which prohibits civil actions against a manufacturer or seller of food or a trade association for any injury resulting from a person's consumption of food including weight gain, obesity, or any associated health condition.
3. The National Grange supports federal legislation to prohibit gambling on the Internet. We further support legislation to make the unsolicited e-mailing or posting of advertisements for pornographic websites and materials both a criminal and civil offense in order to control the availability of pornographic material to children.
4. The National Grange recommends that there be no changes in the federal laws that currently ban the production and sale of marijuana in the United States.
5. The National Grange supports legislation to place salvia divinorum under the control of the Controlled Substance Act.
6. The National Grange supports legislation, which will create a new 12th Circuit Court of Appeals to meet the needs to the Pacific Northwest, Alaska, Hawaii and the Pacific Territories.
7. The National Grange believes that state law, not federal law, should have jurisdiction over "hate crimes" and state law should be responsible for assigning specific punishment for these crimes.
8. The National Grange believes that cell phone use by inmates should be banned at all state and federal correctional facilities. Prison visitors should be required to surrender all cell phones at the facility entrance until their departure.
9. The National Grange supports legislation requiring that Members of Congress shall deposit all personal investments into blind trusts for the duration of their term of office.
10. The National Grange supports the use of drone aircraft and associated technologies for agricultural use.
11. The National Grange supports that no federal official may halt harvesting and transporting of any farmer's perishable crop by declaring the crop as "hot goods."
12. The National Grange supports the principle that all federal judges be reconfirmed every 10 years to remain on the bench.
13. The National Grange supports revisions to the Hatch Act to permit federal employees to run for local municipal and county offices so long as no conflict of interest exists.

Insurance Law

1. The National Grange supports the efforts of the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies to strengthen and

improve insurance guarantee funds.

2. The National Grange believes that the National Flood Insurance Program should operate on an actuarially sound basis. Natural Flood Insurance Programs should not be available for properties that have suffered multiple losses where steps were not taken to protect the property from further damage.
3. The National Grange urges that the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) conduct a public awareness campaign to help property owners understand their rights when there is a flood map reclassification.
4. The National Grange urges the National Flood Insurance Program to change policy provisions to allow blanket coverage over multiple structures on a property. Additionally, we support the continuation of the 'Write Your Own' (local insurance agent) model of securing Flood Insurance.
5. The National Grange urges state and federal regulators to establish the necessary safeguards that will make it possible for the viatical industry to serve viators and investors in a responsible way.
6. The National Grange opposes any legislation that would require insurance companies to comply with "The Community Reinvestment Act," 12 U.S.C. 2901,
7. The National Grange supports legislation on a federal level that will require insurance companies to cover testing for breast cancer for all patients regardless of age.

International Relations and the United Nations

1. The National Grange supports a positive non-military program promoting the democratic form of government to roll back or contain dictatorial forms of government.
2. The National Grange supports actions by our government in condemning terrorist acts and supports efforts to secure the release of all hostages.
3. The National Grange supports a U.S. foreign policy that only allows American troops to be committed to foreign countries in turmoil when it is in the strategic interest of the United States and adequate safeguards are provided. We support the United States' involvement in United Nations' military operations including funding such military operations only with the approval of Congress.
4. The National Grange strongly supports extending and maintaining the protections of U.S. Constitutional law, guaranteeing individual rights, under all international law. We urge the United States government not to ratify or sign agreements or treaties that limit individual rights guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution or Bill of Rights, or that impose taxation on the citizens of the United States.
5. The National Grange continues to support the US non-participation in the International Criminal Court and prohibit the use of appropriated funds for the establishment or operation of the Court. We further urge the U.S. government to use all of its diplomatic and political influence to protect U.S. Service persons or U.S. citizens from being subject to the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court.

National Defense

1. The National Grange supports international agreements leading toward a balanced reduction and eventual elimination of all nuclear weapons and chemical weapons. To complement this objective, we further support the development of strategic and civil defense systems.
2. The National Grange recommends that the federal government negotiate with foreign countries for compensation for the military defenses that we provide to their countries.
3. The National Grange supports a strong effective military. We urge Congress to appropriate sufficient funding, including adequate pay for all branches of the military. We support policies which will re-establish effective security and intelligence capabilities.
4. The National Grange supports expanding our military capabilities using unmanned aerial vehicles.
5. The National Grange favors all citizens between the ages of 18 and 25 be required to register with the Selective Service.

Protection for Victims and Jurors

1. We support increased protection for those who serve on juries. All jury deliberations should remain confidential. The National Grange supports legislation to forbid public disclosure of information about criminal investigations that could be detrimental to the case of either the prosecution or the defense, until after the case's final deposition.
2. The National Grange supports legislation to assure that victims and witnesses of violent crimes must be notified in writing at least sixty (60) days before any hearings in which the person who has been convicted of that crime seeks release or a change in release status from either a prison or a mental institution.
3. The National Grange supports legislation to protect the language interpreter with an interpreter/client privilege just as lawyers have attorney/client privileges.
4. The National Grange supports the reliable, national DNA Index System (NDIS) database of DNA evidence acquired during previous investigations of criminal activity to be used in the investigation of other cases across the nation that will balance the rights of the accused to due process and the presumption of innocence with the rights to privacy of the victims. The National Grange further supports federal grants to the states, to audit the quality of the inventory of prior evidence acquired from sexual assault investigations by local law enforcement agencies in order to increase the value of this evidence in the investigation of sexual assault cases across the nation.

5. The National Grange supports a consumer oriented, national conviction registry of medical professionals who have been previously convicted of ethical or criminal activity and barred from the practice of medicine.

LABOR

Immigration, Aliens, and Migrant Workers

1. The National Grange supports the strict enforcement of the immigration laws of the United States and regular review of these laws to be sure they meet the needs of our country. We support increased efforts to patrol our borders, preventing the illegal entry of aliens into our nation, including the assignment of military forces to assist civilian agencies in enforcing our border control policies. We support a prohibition on general amnesty for all illegal aliens of any nationality. We support requiring proof of citizenship and/or legal registered immigration to receive government benefits. We also recommend that federal authorities be allowed to detain illegal immigrants and foreigners with expired visas for the duration of their investigation and processing, and be deported if immigration status is determined to be illegal.
2. The National Grange supports legal programs to bring guest workers into the United States on a temporary basis for the production of seasonal crops. We support reform of current foreign guest worker programs to allow for expedited processing of foreign guest workers employed in the agricultural sector as well as reform of the H2A program so that the wage costs to farmers when hiring under the H2A program more closely reflects the prevailing local wage. We further support an amendment to the Migratory and Seasonal Agricultural Workers Protection Act recognizing that a crew chief is an independent contractor who is responsible for the general care of his crew when it does not conflict with the requirements that are assigned to the landowners.
3. Agricultural employers should not be responsible for checking the authenticity of migrant and seasonal worker documentation at the time of employment. Employers who unknowingly hire illegal aliens should not be penalized. National Grange supports legislation or a Constitutional amendment to require that children born in the United States must have one parent who is already a United States citizen in order to automatically receive citizenship and government benefits.
4. The National Grange supports enactment of a practical and enforceable guest worker visa program. The National Grange supports the expansion of the H1Bvisa program for professionals/advanced agricultural skills/technical skills to enter the United States to provide services in sectors where there is a documented need.
5. The National Grange supports existing federal law that includes sheepherders in the H-2A visa (temporary work visa) program.

Wages, Employment, and Unions

1. The National Grange supports the repeal of the Davis-Bacon Act of 1931. Until that time, the threshold exemption level of the Act should be indexed to the rate of inflation.
2. The Grange opposes the legislative enactment of a Farm Worker Bill of Rights. We oppose legislation that would impose a 40-hour workweek that places a limitation on hours that can be worked in a single day, or that requires time and a half pay for overtime on a farming operation.
3. The National Grange opposes the child labor laws of the U.S. Department of Labor restricting family members under the age of 18 from working with animals, handling pesticides, working in timber operations, manure pits, grain elevators, feed lots, livestock auctions, and cultivating, harvesting, and curing tobacco, as well as restricting family members under the age of 16 from operating power-driven farm equipment; examples: tractors, combines, farm trucks, ATV's, and shredders.
4. The National Grange supports realistic OSHA work place safety regulations. It should be both the employer and employee's responsibility to follow safe work practices. Any employer who is cited by OSHA for violating work place safety regulations should be allowed a reasonable period of time to correct that violation before being penalized. The National Grange believes that OSHA reform legislation as well as any other new workplace health and safety standards should exempt farms having fewer than 10 full-time employees. The National Grange favors lifting the bans in the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1943, which outlaws work that is done in the home in embroidery, gloves and mittens, handkerchiefs, buttons and buckles, jewelry and clothing.
5. The National Grange supports allowing individuals enrolled in an accredited job training or vocational education program, who are collecting unemployment compensation, to decline offers of employment without losing their unemployment benefits.
6. The National Grange supports legislation that would require products bearing an "American Made", or equivalent claim, to have U.S. manufacturing costs constituting at least 75 percent of the total manufacturing costs for the product, and to be substantially assembled in the United States.
7. The National Grange supports legislation that requires all employers to pay at least the minimum wage, regardless of whether the employees are tipped. We also support legislation to allow younger teens (ages 13-15) to be given the privilege of working a maximum of ten hours a week for less than the minimum wage. After a probationary period, established by the employer, the younger teen should be paid the minimum wage.
8. The National Grange urges the necessary changes to the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) that would exempt volunteer worker member co-operatives from minimum wage requirements, allowing members access to quality foods at affordable prices.
9. National Grange strongly urges that the process to form a new union continue to be by secret ballot. We favor binding arbitration clauses in labor contracts covering public sector employees.
10. We support the right of individuals to join a union and collectively bargain in good faith, as long as employees are not

required to join or contribute money to any organization that claims to represent their interests in the work place. We further support mandatory restrictions on the use of compulsory union dues for political, charitable or social causes without the paying members consent.

11. The National Grange supports legislation that allows employers to hire replacement workers during a strike.

TRANSPORTATION & POSTAL POLICIES

Air Travel

1. The National Grange supports the assignment of Air Marshals on random flights.
2. The National Grange opposes legislation authorizing the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to establish fees for air traffic control and related activities, services, facilities, and equipment that increases user fees and taxes for general aviation such as crop dusting, pipeline patrol, power line patrol, forest fire patrol, and commuting to rural communities. We also oppose legislation creating a board dominated by airline representatives that would recommend FAA user fee pricing schedules.

General Transportation Policy

1. The Grange believes that a balanced transportation system, at the lowest cost consistent with adequate and efficient service, is in the best interest of farmers and consumers. We oppose efforts by state governments to toll expanses of the Interstate Highway System built and operating as toll free.
2. The National Grange urges federal and state weed control agencies to control noxious weeds on their highway rights-of-way and to work with the railroads to control noxious weeds along railroad rights-of-way but always respecting the landowners' property rights and preferences.
3. The National Grange supports inter-modal ownership of transportation carriers only when that intermodal ownership is consistent with the public interest; will not unreasonably restrain competition and will not result in segments of agriculture and rural areas being held by captive shippers.
4. The National Grange supports creating a national uniform vehicle Identification Placard system to be used by disabled drivers. Legislation should be enacted to include blindness as a provision for issuance of a disabled parking permit.
5. The National Grange strongly supports a simple public announcement procedure for special-needs citizens in intercity bus transportation systems.
6. The National Grange supports legislation that allows independent vehicle maintenance facilities or car dealership garages to have access to the technology/programming needed to repair all makes of vehicles so that consumers have a choice of where to take their vehicle for maintenance and repair.
7. The National Grange supports safety and educational programs for individuals 17 years and younger for the use of all non-roadway vehicles such as ATV's, snowmobiles, dirt bikes, sleds, etc. and also endorses the use of helmets and other protective gear.

Highways – Non-Interstate

1. The National Grange urges government agencies to conserve land for agricultural purposes when considering the location and design of highways including planting trees and shrubs along highways in places where such growth could stop soil erosion and aid in snow control.
2. The federal-aid system of highways should be continued as a federal-state partnership with more flexibility in the states' use of money for safety, construction, and maintenance of state and local highways, including rural roads and bridges that are built to the community's needs as determined by county and local road commissions. The National Grange recommends that the Highway Safety Administration require surface highway reflectors on the center lane divider of all two-way highways on the federal-aid highway system and adopt standards to ensure a better and more durable road surface.
3. The National Grange supports expansion of rural intracity bus, air and rail services.
4. The National Grange supports funding to construct adequate parking or rest areas to allow commercial and other drivers to stop and rest. We encourage the use of "Weigh Stations" as rest locations.
5. The National Grange continues to uphold the States' rights to regulate the farmer's transporting of equipment and crops and opposes any federal legislation or regulations that would require farmers to obtain commercial drivers' licenses to operate farm equipment.
6. The National Grange supports legislation to increase federal funding to maintain and repair local bridges throughout the nation.

Highway Policy, Interstate System and Federal Highway Trust Fund (HTF)

1. The National Grange strongly supports the continuation and reauthorization of the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). We support removing the HTF from the federal budget. We oppose any proposal that would change the concept of dedicating all federal motor fuel taxes to the HTF to be used for highway and highway related purposes. The National Grange supports the creation of a Federal Mass Transportation Trust Fund from user tax revenues separate from the HTF and highway user taxes. The National Grange opposes increasing the federal gasoline tax for purposes other than the HTF and reaffirms its position that all funds

received from highway fuel taxes be used only for construction and maintenance of roads and bridges. The federal and state governments should not use these funds to balance their budgets or fund other programs. We oppose impounding HTF monies as a means of enforcement of federal laws.

2. We support federal legislation to remove federal fuel tax from fuel used to operate farm trucks, including legislation that would use a federal motor fuel tax increase to reduce federal budget deficits.
3. The National Grange favors full compensation for homes, farming operations and businesses when displaced by eminent domain for highway rights-of-way.
4. The National Grange calls for increased border surveillance to ensure that commercial vehicles and drivers based in Canada and Mexico are in full compliance with the United States' motor vehicle equipment standards and requirements.
5. The National Grange supports the following provisions as part of any reauthorization of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA).
 - a. Additional funding for core safety programs that are properly directed to lifesaving roadway safety projects.
 - b. Provisions to reduce administrative delays at federal and state agencies responsible for approving highway planning.
 - c. New financial incentives for states to obligate new congestion relief funding for projects that reduce highway bottlenecks.
 - d. Full funding by the Congress for all "guaranteed" highway funds in future Transportation Appropriations bills.
 - e. Full enforcement of additional new fuel tax fraud provisions and additional credit for the HTF for revenue enhancements related to the new tax collection on ethanol.
6. The National Grange supports streamlining environmental requirements to expedite the completion of transportation congestion-relief projects in order to reduce pollution while promoting efficient land use and road capacity in areas designated for growth. We support redirecting the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program (CMAQ) to fund new passenger and freight inter-modal hubs in highly congested areas to serve trains, trucking companies and bus companies to improve intercity Amtrak stations and/or to construct public freight transfer stations that combine bus service, rapid transit and other transportation services, which operate on flexible schedules.
7. The National Grange recommends that the interstate highway system adopt the use of a uniform transponder system for all open-road tolling.
8. The National Grange opposes the sale of any toll roads or bridges.
9. The National Grange supports the amendment to the Federal Highway Bill that would classify milk as an indivisible load to allow milk trucks to legally haul the same weight on the interstate system as on state roads.

Impaired Driving

1. The National Grange believes the dangers of drinking and driving should be included in all federal anti-drug information and education programs.
2. The National Grange supports maintaining the minimum age for the consumption of alcoholic beverages at 21.
3. The National Grange recommends that transportation authorities, both government and privately owned, be vested with the authority to randomly test employees for illegal drug and alcohol use.

Railroad Transportation

1. The National Grange supports scheduling more commuter trains to offer better service to the public.
2. The National Grange urges all appropriate state and federal agencies to consider economic impact and public interests when undertaking transportation planning with regard to the impact of rail line abandonment. We support integration of rail and highway system planning in advance of possible abandonment to maximize economies to the public and private sectors as well as federal assistance to states for this purpose and to assist in rail takeovers by states where maintenance of service is cost effective to local or state governments and to local shippers. We support economic and social impact statements from railroads as well as meaningful local public hearings in the areas affected as a part of the abandonment process.
3. The National Grange supports the development and maintenance of a strong and effective rail network to enhance competition among and between rail carriers to ensure efficient rail service and reasonable rates.
4. The National Grange supports legislation requiring warning reflectors to be placed on both sides of all railroad cars in the United States.
5. The National Grange supports legislation that would require railroads to reveal to each landowner, before abandonment, the full and complete legal basis on which the railroad has claimed its right to occupy the corridor. If the railroad's right is less than fee simple ownership, the railroad should disclose to each landowner that its occupancy right would be extinguished upon abandonment. We believe that the right-of-way of an abandoned land grant railroad should revert to the last payer of taxes on the property, or by right of adverse possession or grant titles as well as the possible use of railroad rights-of-way, determined to be economically unfeasible, by adjacent landowners.
6. The National Grange supports efforts to create a Commuter Bill of Rights that would guarantee that rail passengers, stranded on railway trains, would have access to food, and water, as well as assure their timely removal from the disabled train.

Roadway Safety

1. The National Grange supports the enforcement of weight limits on vehicles operating on our highways.

2. The National Grange supports truck regulations requiring the use of brushes and/or flaps that will channel the water down reducing the spray.
3. The National Grange supports legislation that would require rear and side impact/under ride guards on all newly manufactured semi-trailers.
4. The National Grange requests that the Federal Highway Administration establish and promulgate standards for the minimum walk light time, type of visual images, and audible sound level for controlled crosswalks throughout the United States.
5. Railroad crossings in rural areas should have ripple strips installed in road surfaces on approaches to crossings, be clear of brush and other vision-inhibiting material and be equipped with flashing warning lights.
6. The National Grange supports requiring that all motorcycle, bicycle, and moped riders wear protective helmets, and wear high visibility clothing or have an apparatus to make them more visible to other motorists.
7. The National Grange urges automobile manufacturers to include the following modifications on their new models: uniformly located door latches; louder and more visible interior direction signal indicators; spare tires of equal quality and size as regular tires; uniform tow points; light sensitive sensors that would automatically turn on automobile headlights at a certain degree of darkness; at least one mirror on the right side of a vehicle to reflect an undistorted view of images and a curvature type mirror to pick up blind spots; and headlights that turn on automatically with the windshield wipers.
8. The National Grange supports standardizing the cellular emergency numbers for the interstate highway systems throughout the country.
9. The National Grange supports legislation banning hand-held cell phone use while driving.
10. The National Grange supports regulations that would strengthen the safety standards for smaller cars and opposes any weakening of the safety standards of sport utility vehicles.
11. The National Grange strongly supports state and national laws that require reflective tape on all existing and new trucks to help reduce under-ride accidents.
12. The National Grange supports legislation banning high intensity discharge (HID) headlights and/or driving lights and/or Xenon lights.
13. The National Grange encourages all states to use the same laws pertaining to school bus operations and traffic control around school buses. We support legislation requiring all newly manufactured school buses to be equipped with strobe lights that are highly visible in all types of weather. We further support, all school buses being required to have a sign on the back stating "Stay Back 50 Feet," and that all school buses manufactured have blind spot sensors or devices.
14. The National Grange supports present U.S. Department of Transportation requirements for random drug and alcohol testing for school bus drivers.
15. The National Grange supports legislation restricting the placement of any visual entertainment device within the driver's area of vision within a motor vehicle.
16. The National Grange supports requirements that newer vehicles be equipped with blind spot indicators visible by the driver and that after-market suppliers have blind spot indicators available for earlier models.

Truck Transportation Policy

1. The National Grange supports legislation and regulatory policies that enhance stability and competition in truck operations for cost-effective and dependable service.
2. The National Grange supports regulations requiring brake lights to be activated on commercial motor vehicles when a Jake Brake is used.
3. The National Grange supports legislation that would require reporting of positive drug tests for drivers with any commercial license to the Department of Motor Vehicles of the issuing state so long as there is a mandatory right of appeal and a second test to eliminate false positive results. The report of a positive drug test should remain in the driver's file for a period of two years.

U.S. Postal Service

1. The National Grange supports efforts by the Postal Service to eliminate waste, hold down operating costs and increase services and reliability. We support the following postal reforms:
 - a. We urge that any future postal rate increases be no greater than the rate of inflation.
 - b. We will support stable rates or eligibility requirements for nonprofit organizations' postal rates. We support the retention of the third-class bulk mail rate for not-for-profit-organizations at a reasonable rate.
 - c. We support reorganization of the Postal Rate Commission to include representation of the interests of mail users.
2. The National Grange supports Rural Free Mail Delivery Service as an essential part of universal mail service. We support the continuation of rural Saturday mail delivery and all other mail services to rural areas. Patrons of rural post offices must be given six months' notice before their post office is closed and must be provided with an opportunity to express their viewpoint at a public hearing.
3. The National Grange opposes any change in the current postal employee retirement programs that would adversely affect the retirement of any postal employees, limit the retirement options of current postal employees or result in a reduction of retirement benefits for current or future postal employees.
4. The National Grange encourages the Postal Service to make their patrons aware that handicapped persons may apply for

mail delivery to their door.

5. The National Grange encourages Congress to allow the U.S. Postal Service to be innovative and flexible in the modern business world and develop a competitive culture within its employees so it may return itself to financial and operational soundness and continue to fulfill its mission.
6. The National Grange urges the United States Postal Service to utilize guidelines such as the 10-mile proximity rule, in relation to the proposed post office closures, taking into consideration the special needs of the community as well as the statistical analysis developed for closure criteria.

Water Transportation

1. The National Grange supports a moratorium on user fee increases for agricultural products transported on coastal and inland waterways. All user fees on waterways should be based on the percentage of federal expenditures attributable to opening waterways to barge traffic and should be placed in an Inland Waterways Trust Fund and used only for construction and maintenance of inland waterways.
2. The National Grange supports maintaining the current United States Corps of Engineers' season for transporting grain on the Missouri River.
3. The National Grange supports the immediate upgrades to the locks on the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, facilitating greater barge traffic and providing an economic engine to fuel growth and prosperity.
4. The National Grange recommends repeal of the Jones Act, which requires all freight moved between American ports being carried in American ships.
5. The National Grange supports legislation to prevent any company controlled by a foreign government from taking over management of U.S. port facilities.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Labor, Judiciary and Transportation Committee for their hard work and dedication. We would like to also thank the Legislative Director and his staff for their support.

Chris Johnston, MI, Chair

Joan C. Smith, PG#1, Sec'y

Jimmy Taylor, VA

Steve Coye, NY

Anita Gentry, NC

Walter Hartley, RI

Billy Shufeldt, OK

Duane Scott, WI

Maureen Prelli, CT

Cheri Watson, NH

Fraternally submitted,

Chris Johnston

Transportation, Labor and Judiciary Committee Chair

FOUNDING OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE:

December 4, 1867 Washington, D.C

HISTORY OF THE CONVENTIONS OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

Session #	Year, Month	Place	Master
1	1868, Jan.	Washington, DC	William Saunders
2	1869, April	Washington, DC	William Saunders
3	1870, Jan.	Washington, DC	William Saunders
4	1871, Jan.	Washington, DC	William Saunders
5	1872, Jan.	Washington, DC	William Saunders
6	1873, Jan.	Georgetown, DC	William Saunders
7	1874, Feb.	St. Louis, MO	D.W. Adams
8	1875, Feb.	Charleston, SC	D.W. Adams
9	1875, Nov.	Louisville, KY	D.W. Adam
10	1876, Nov.	Chicago, IL	John T. Jones
11	1877, Nov.	Cincinnati, OH	John T. Jones
12	1878, Nov.	Richmond, VA	S.E. Adams
13	1879, Nov.	Canandaigua, NY	S.E. Adams
14	1880, Nov.	Washington, DC	J.J. Woodman
15	1881, Nov.	Washington, DC	J.J. Woodman
16	1882, Nov.	Indianapolis, IN	J.J. Woodman
17	1883, Nov.	Washington, DC	J.J. Woodman
18	1884, Nov.	Nashville, TN	J.J. Woodman
19	1885, Nov.	Boston, MA	J.J. Woodman
20	1886, Nov.	Philadelphia, PA	I.P Darden
21	1887, Nov.	Lansing, MI	I.P Darden
22	1888, Nov.	Topeka, KS	James Draper
23	1889, Nov.	Sacramento, CA	J.H. Brigham
24	1890, Nov.	Atlanta, GA	J.H. Brigham
25	1891, Nov.	Springfield, OH	J.H. Brigham
26	1892, Nov.	Concord, NH	J.H. Brigham
27	1893, Nov.	Syracuse, NY	J.H. Brigham
28	1894, Nov.	Springfield, IL	J.H. Brigham
29	1895, Nov.	Worcester, MA	J.H. Brigham
30	1896, Nov.	Washington, DC	J.H. Brigham
31	1897, Nov.	Harrisburg, PA	J.H. Brigham
32	1898, Nov.	Concord, NH	Aaron Jones
33	1899, Nov.	Springfield, OH	Aaron Jones
34	1900, Nov.	Washington, DC	Aaron Jones
35	1901, Nov.	Lewiston, ME	Aaron Jones
36	1902, Nov.	Lansing, MI	Aaron Jones
37	1903, Nov.	Rochester, NY	Aaron Jones
38	1904, Nov.	Portland, OR	Aaron Jones
39	1905, Nov.	Atlantic City, NJ	Aaron Jones
40	1906, Nov.	Denver, CO	N.J. Bachelder
41	1907, Nov.	Hartford, CT	N.J. Bachelder
42	1908, Nov.	Washington, DC	N.J. Bachelder
43	1909, Nov.	Des Moines, IA	N.J. Bachelder
44	1910, Nov.	Atlantic City, NJ	N.J. Bachelder
45	1911, Nov.	Columbus, OH	N.J. Bachelder
46	1912, Nov.	Spokane, WA	Oliver Wilson
47	1913, Nov.	Manchester, NH	Oliver Wilson
48	1914, Nov.	Wilmington, DE	Oliver Wilson
49	1915, Nov.	Oakland, CA	Oliver Wilson
50	1916, Nov.	Washington, DC	Oliver Wilson

51	1917, Nov.	St. Louis, MO	Oliver Wilson
52	1918, Nov.	Syracuse, NY	Oliver Wilson
53	1919, Nov.	Grand Rapids, MI	Oliver Wilson
54	1920, Nov.	Boston, MA	S.J. Lowell
55	1921, Nov.	Portland, OR	S.J. Lowell
56	1922, Nov.	Wichita, KS	S.J. Lowell
57	1923, Nov.	Pittsburgh, PA	S.J. Lowell
58	1924, Nov.	Atlantic City, NJ	L.J. Taber
59	1925, Nov.	Sacramento, CA	L.J. Taber
60	1926, Nov.	Portland, ME	L.J. Taber
61	1927, Nov.	Cleveland, OH	L.J. Taber
62	1928, Nov.	Washington, DC	L.J. Taber
63	1929, Nov.	Seattle, WA	L.J. Taber
64	1930, Nov.	Rochester, NY	L.J. Taber
65	1931, Nov.	Madison, WI	L.J. Taber
66	1932, Nov.	Winston-Salem, NC	L.J. Taber
67	1933, Nov.	Boise, ID	L.J. Taber
68	1934, Nov.	Hartford, CT	L.J. Taber
69	1935, Nov.	Sacramento, CA	L.J. Taber
70	1936, Nov.	Columbus, OH	L.J. Taber
71	1937, Nov.	Harrisburg, PA	L.J. Taber
72	1938, Nov.	Portland, OR	L.J. Taber
73	1939, Nov.	Peoria, IL	L.J. Taber
74	1940, Nov.	Syracuse, NY	L.J. Taber
75	1941, Nov.	Worcester, MA	L.J. Taber
76	1942, Nov.	Wenatchee, WA	A.S. Goss
77	1943, Nov.	Grand Rapids, MI	A.S. Goss
78	1944, Nov.	Winston-Salem, NC	A.S. Goss
79	1945, Nov.	Kansas City, MO	A.S. Goss
80	1946, Nov.	Portland, OR	A.S. Goss
81	1947, Nov.	Columbus, OH	A.S. Goss
82	1948, Nov.	Portland, ME	A.S. Goss
83	1949, Nov.	Sacramento, CA	A.S. Goss
84	1950, Nov.	Minneapolis, MN	Henry D. Sherwood
85	1951, Nov.	Atlantic City, NJ	Herschel D. Newsom
86	1952, Nov.	Rockford, IL	Herschel D. Newsom
87	1953, Nov.	Burlington, VT	Herschel D. Newsom
88	1954, Nov.	Spokane, WA	Herschel D. Newsom
89	1955, Nov.	Cleveland, OH	Herschel D. Newsom
90	1956, Nov.	Rochester, NY	Herschel D. Newsom
91	1957, Nov.	Colorado Springs, CO	Herschel D. Newsom
92	1958, Nov.	Grand Rapids, MI	Herschel D. Newsom
93	1959, Nov.	Long Beach, CA	Herschel D. Newsom
94	1960, Nov.	Winston-Salem, NC	Herschel D. Newsom
95	1961, Nov.	Worcester, MA	Herschel D. Newsom
96	1962, Nov.	Fort Wayne, IN	Herschel D. Newsom
97	1963, Nov.	Portland, OR	Herschel D. Newsom
98	1964, Nov.	Atlantic City, NJ	Herschel D. Newsom
99	1965, Nov.	Topeka, KS	Herschel D. Newsom
100	1966, Nov.	Minneapolis, MN	Herschel D. Newsom
101	1967, Nov.	Syracuse, NY	Herschel D. Newsom
102	1968, Nov.	Peoria, IL	Herschel D. Newsom
103	1969, Nov.	Daytona Beach, FL	John W. Scott
104	1970, Nov.	Boise, ID	John W. Scott
105	1971, Nov.	Charleston, WV	John W. Scott
106	1972, Nov.	Hartford, CT	John W. Scott
107	1973, Nov.	Lincoln, NE	John W. Scott
108	1974, Nov.	Sacramento, CA	John W. Scott
109	1975, Nov.	Columbus, OH	John W. Scott

110	1976, Nov.	Atlantic City, NJ	John W. Scott
111	1977, Nov.	Greensboro, NC	John W. Scott
112	1978, Nov.	Denver, CO	John W. Scott
113	1979, Nov.	Lancaster, PA	John W. Scott
114	1980, Nov.	Cedar Rapids, IA	Edward Andersen
115	1981, Nov.	Spokane, WA	Edward Andersen
116	1982, Nov.	Providence, RI	Edward Andersen
117	1983, Nov.	San Antonio, TX	Edward Andersen
118	1984, Nov.	Portland, ME	Edward Andersen
119	1985, Nov.	Eugene, OR	Edward Andersen
120	1986, Nov.	Madison, WI	Edward Andersen
121	1987, Nov.	Syracuse, NY	Edward Andersen
122	1988, Nov.	Redding, CA	Robert E. Barrow
123	1989, Nov.	Greensboro, NC	Robert E. Barrow
124	1990, Nov.	Wichita, KS	Robert E. Barrow
125	1991, Nov.	Burlington, VT	Robert E. Barrow
126	1992, Nov.	Denver, CO	Robert E. Barrow
127	1993, Nov.	Cleveland, OH	Robert E. Barrow
128	1994, Nov.	Peoria, IL	Robert E. Barrow
129	1995, Nov.	Harrisburg, PA	Robert E. Barrow
130	1996, Nov.	Spokane, WA	Kermit W. Richardson
131	1997, Nov.	Springfield, MA	Kermit W. Richardson
132	1998, Nov.	Greensboro, NC	Kermit W. Richardson
133	1999, Nov.	Portland, ME	Kermit W. Richardson
134	2000, Nov.	Fresno, CA	Kermit W. Richardson
135	2001, Nov.	Cedar Rapids, IA	Kermit W. Richardson
136	2002, Nov.	Portland, OR	Kermit W. Richardson
137	2003, Nov.	Burlington, VT	Kermit W. Richardson
138	2004, Nov.	Rochester, NY	William A. Steel
139	2005, Nov.	Columbus, OH	William A. Steel
140	2006, Nov.	Springfield, IL	William A. Steel
141	2007, Nov.	Reno, NV	William A. Steel
142	2008, Nov.	Cromwell, CT	Edward L. Luttrell
143	2009, Nov.	Grand Rapids, MI	Edward L. Luttrell
144	2010, Nov.	Charlotte, NC	Edward L. Luttrell
145	2011, Nov.	Tulsa, OK	Edward L. Luttrell
146	2012, Nov.	Boise, ID	Edward L. Luttrell
147	2013, Nov.	Manchester, NH	Edward L. Luttrell
148	2014, Nov.	Sandusky, OH	Edward L. Luttrell
149	2015, Nov.	Lincoln, NE	Edward L. Luttrell
150	2016 Nov.	Herndon, Virginia	Betsy E. Huber
151	2017, Nov.	Spokane, WA	Betsy E. Huber
152	2018, Nov.	Stowe, VT	Betsy E. Huber

Upcoming

153	2019, Nov.	Minneapolis, MN
154	2020, Nov.	Valley Forge, PA
155	2021, Nov.	Wichita, KS

NATIONAL GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

Financial Statements

December 31, 2017

NATIONAL GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

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ERIC BOLIN CPA P.C.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Board of Directors
National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry
Washington, D.C.

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, (a nonprofit organization), which comprise the statement of financial position as of December 31, 2017, and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry as of December 31, 2016, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Eric Bolin CPA, P.C.

March 29, 2019

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Telephone: 301.816.9446 • Facsimile: 301.816.9447 • email: erbolin@hotmail.com

NATIONAL GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2017

	GRANGE OPERATING ACCOUNT	GRANGE BUILDING ACCOUNT	TOTAL NATIONAL GRANGE
ASSETS			
Cash on hand and on deposit (Sch. I)	\$ 307,556	\$ -	\$ 307,556
Building Fund		125,734	125,734
Investments	422,706	-	422,706
Accounts receivable (Sch. II)	274,799	-	274,799
Rents Receivable		165,960	165,960
Prepaid expenses and Deposits	87,950	-	87,950
Inventory - sales	109,749	-	109,749
Building (at cost)		1,174,014	1,174,014
Accumulated depreciation - Building		(1,174,014)	(1,174,014)
Equipment and Improvement (at cost)	56,112	1,720,711	1,776,823
Accum.Depr.- Equip & Improvements	(56,112)	(719,071)	(775,183)
Land		255,238	255,238
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 1,202,760	\$ 1,548,572	\$ 2,751,332
LIABILITIES			
Accounts Payable-Trade	\$ 598,708	\$ 349,550	\$ 948,258
Accrued Membership Assessment	119,159	-	119,159
Accrued Expenses	16,912	-	16,912
Tom Severance Fund	1,220	-	1,220
Building Fund	-	-	-
Security Deposits - tenants	-	31,543	31,543
Trial Funding	10,208	-	10,208
Escrow	3,000	-	3,000
Due to State Granges	75,474	-	75,474
Note Payable -LMA	273,317	-	273,317
Note Payable -Oregon State Grange	231,154	-	231,154
Loan Payable	844,346	-	844,346
Due to Grange Foundation	8,675	-	8,675
Loan Payable Red Lion Grange	100,000	-	100,000
Loan Payable Grange Advocacy	18,750	-	18,750
Due to (from) building account	10,317,632	(10,317,632)	0
TOTAL LIABILITIES	12,618,555	(9,936,539)	2,682,016
NET ASSETS			
Unrestricted - building	-	11,485,111	11,485,111
Unrestricted - operating	(11,723,560)	-	(11,723,560)
Delegate Restricted Fund	307,765	-	307,765
TOTAL NET ASSETS	(11,415,795)	11,485,111	69,316
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 1,202,760	\$ 1,548,572	\$ 2,751,332

See Accompanying Notes to Financial Statements

NATIONAL GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2017

Schedule I - Cash on Hand and on Deposit

Operating account	\$	151,493
Petty cash		1,761
Reserved – State Granges		73,894
Escrow		80,408

Total Cash on Hand and on Deposit **\$ 307,556**

Schedule II - Accounts Receivable

Dues	\$	163,207
Other		111,592

Total Accounts Receivable **\$ 274,799**

See Accompanying Notes to Financial Statements.

NATIONAL GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

Statements of Activities - Operating Account

For the Year Ended December 31, 2017

REVENUE	
Dues and Fees	
Subordinate Grange Dues	\$ 744,194
Subordinate Grange Charter Fees	105
Junior Grange Charter Fees	10
E-Memberships	243
Sixth Degree Fees	30
Seventh Degree Fees	1,500
GIA	62,500
Nat'l Convention Assessments, Exhibitors	77,361
Sponsors, Grants, Other	53,420
Sales Income	38,958
Interest, Dividend Income	20,262
Fund Raising Donations	1,060
Bonding Commission	8,257
Licensing, Communications	29,321
Gain On Sale of Investments	29,950
Communications Gala	101,950
Communications Good Day Magazine	34,186
California Litigation	93,969
Building Fund	426,179
TOTAL REVENUE	1,723,455
EXPENSES	
General and Administrative	654,612
Gen & Admin - Professional Services	1,066,167
National Master	63,790
National Secretary and Lecturer, High Priest	1,000
Board of Directors	3,383
Communications	27,388
Communications Gala	52,776
Good Day Magazine	28,681
Youth Activities	19,393
Junior Grange	14,230
Credit Card, Bank Charges	3,946
Membership, Leadership	700
Legislative	15,628
IT/ Systems	37,238
National Convention	184,261
Radio	1,440
Marketing/Sales	5,453
Program Resources	6,881
Simple IRA	10,053
Interest	66,148
Investment Fees	5,603
Miscellaneous	405
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,269,176
(DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS	(545,721)
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS – January 1,	(11,422,756)
Prior Period Adjustment	244,917
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS – December 31,	\$ (11,723,560)

See Accompanying Notes to Financial Statements

NATIONAL GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

Statements of Activity - Building Operations

For the Year Ended December 31, 2017

INCOME	
Rent	\$ 1,117,568
NG Building – Expense Allocations	71,261
Storage, Other	5,363
Other	157,681
TOTAL INCOME	1,351,873
EXPENSES	
Salaries and Payroll Taxes	13,360
Real Estate Taxes	167,851
Electricity, Gas and Water	76,125
Building Supplies	14,640
Service Contracts, Inspection	194,319
Repairs and Maintenance	106,233
Insurance	15,523
Miscellaneous, Commissions	7,052
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	595,103
CASH FLOW FROM OPERATIONS	756,770
Provision for Depreciation	(20,375)
INCREASE IN NET ASSETS - Building	736,395
NET ASSETS - Building Operations – January 1,	10,748,716
NET ASSETS - Building Operations - December 31,	\$ 11,485,111

See Accompanying Notes to Financial Statements

NATIONAL GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended December 31, 2017

CASH PROVIDED (USED) BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES	
Decrease in Net Assets - Operating	\$ (545,721)
Increase in Net Assets - Building	736,395
Total	190,674
Adjustments to Reconcile Decrease in Net Assets to Cash (Used) by	
Operations	
Depreciation	20,375
Decrease (Increase) in Accounts Receivable	43,393
Decrease (Increase) in Rents Receivable	(163,400)
Decrease (Increase) in Prepaid Expenses, Deposits	(60,249)
Decrease (Increase) in Inventory	33,458
(Decrease) Increase in Due to State Granges	10,396
(Decrease) Increase in Accounts Payable	546,016
(Decrease) Increase in Accrued Expenses	3,083
(Decrease) Increase in Tenant Security Deposits	(9,913)
(Decrease) Increase in Prepaid Rent	0
(Decrease) in Due to Grange Foundation	(1,704)
(Decrease) Increase in Accrued Membership Assessment	61,926
(Decrease) Increase in IRA Payable	(1,368)
(Decrease) Increase in Building Fund	(7,377)
NET CASH PROVIDED (USED) BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES	665,310
CASH PROVIDED (USED) BY INVESTING ACTIVITIES	
Purchase of Equipment	(930,000)
Decrease (Increase) in Investment Account	116,234
NET CASH (USED) BY INVESTING ACTIVITIES	(813,766)
CASH PROVIDED BY FINANCING ACTIVITIES	
(Decrease) Increase in Loan Payable - LMA	172,813
(Decrease) Increase in Bank Loan Payable	(83,064)
Increase in Loan Payable – Red Lion Grange	100,000
Increase in Loan Payable – Grange Advocacy	18,750
(Decrease) in Loan Payable – Oregon State Grange	(18,846)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY FINANCING ACTIVITIES	189,653
NET (INCREASE) IN CASH	41,197
Prior Period Adjustment	244,917
CASH - January 1,	147,176
CASH - December 31,	\$ 433,290
<i>See Accompanying Notes to Financial Statements</i>	
Interest Paid During Year	\$ 66,148

NATIONAL GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2017

NOTE 1 - ORGANIZATION

The National Grange is a non-profit organization comprised of four distinct divisions. The mission of the National Grange is to improve the quality of life in America's families and communities. The National Grange provides representation for its members on agriculture and rural/urban issues, encourages and supports grassroots community and organizational leadership.

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements of the Organization have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting and accordingly reflect all significant receivables, payables and other liabilities.

The accounts of the Organization are maintained in accordance with the principles of fund accounting. Under fund accounting, resources for various purposes are classified for accounting and reporting purposes into funds established according to their nature and purpose. Separate accounts are maintained for each fund; however, in the accompanying financial statements, funds have been combined and presented for the Organization as a whole in accordance with the provisions of Accounting Standards Codification Section 958, *Not for Profit Entities*.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

For purposes of the statements of cash flows, cash and cash equivalents are considered to be unrestricted highly liquid investments with maturities of three months or less at the time of acquisition.

Inventories

Inventories are stated at the lower of cost or market, with cost determined on a first-in, first-out basis and market based on the lower of replacement cost or realizable value.

Investments

Items that may be included in this category are equity securities, debt instruments, including certificates of deposit with maturities greater than three months, bonds, notes and mortgages, limited partnerships, land and buildings not used in the operations of the Organization, cash value of annuity and life insurance contracts and coins and bullion.

It is the Organization's policy to hold bonds and notes to maturity. Accordingly, interim declines in market value which are not considered permanent are not recognized.

NATIONAL GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2017

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES (Continued)

Property and Equipment

Property assets are those assets used in the operations of the Organization. They are recorded at cost or, if donated, at the estimated fair market value at the date of donation.

We record property and equipment additions over \$5,000 at cost, or if donated, at fair value on the date of donation. Depreciation and amortization are computed using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of the assets ranging from three to thirty years, or in the case of capitalized leased assets or leasehold improvements, the lesser of the useful life of the asset or the lease term. When assets are sold or otherwise disposed of, the cost and related depreciation or amortization are removed from the accounts, and any resulting gain or loss is included in the statements or activities. Cost of maintenance and repairs that do not improve or extend the useful lives of the respective assets are expensed currently.

Depreciation is recorded using the straight-line method at various rates calculated to allocate the cost of the respective items over their estimated useful lives.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions. This will affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

Financial Instruments and Credit Risk

We manage deposit concentration risk by placing cash, money market accounts, and certificates of deposit with financial institutions believed by us to be creditworthy. At times, amounts on deposit may exceed insured limits or include uninsured investments in money market mutual funds. To, date, we have not experienced losses in any of these accounts. Credit risk associated with accounts receivable and promises to give is considered to be limited due to high historical collection rates and because substantial portions of the outstanding amounts are due from members. Investments are made by diversified investment managers whose performance is monitored by the executive committee. Although the fair values of investments are subject to fluctuation on a year-to-year basis, we believe that the investment policies and guidelines are prudent for the long-term welfare of the organization.

Net Assets

Net assets, revenues, gains, and losses are classified based on the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions. Accordingly, net assets and changes therein are classified and reported as follows:

NATIONAL GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2017

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES (Continued)

Unrestricted Net Asset – Net assets available for use in general operations. Unrestricted board-designated net assets consist of net designated by the Board of Directors for operating reserve and board-designated endowment.

Temporarily Restricted Net Assets – Net assets subject to donor restrictions that may or will be met by expenditures or our actions and/or the passage of time, and certain income earned on permanently restricted net assets that has not yet been appropriated for expenditure by our Board of Directors.

Permanently Restricted Net Assets – Net assets subject to donor-imposed stipulations that they be maintained permanently by the National Grange. Generally, the donors of these assets permit the National Grange to use all or part of the income earned and capital gains, if any, on any related investments for general or specific purposes. The NATIONAL Grange had no permanently restricted net assets and December 31, 2017.

Revenue Recognition

Contributions, grants and sponsorships are reported as revenue in the year in which the payments are received and/or unconditional promises are made. The National Grange reports gifts of cash and other assets as temporarily restricted support if they are received with donor stipulations that limit the use of donated assets. When a donor restriction expires temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified to unrestricted net assets and reported in the statement of activities as net assets released from restrictions. Gains and losses on investments are reported as increases or decreases in unrestricted net assets unless their use is restricted by donor stipulations or by law.

NOTE 3 - FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

We report certain assets and liabilities (or on or the other) at fair value in the consolidated financial statements. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction in the principal, or most advantageous, market at the measurement date under current market conditions regardless of whether that price is directly observable or estimated using another valuation technique. Inputs used to determine fair value refer broadly to the assumptions that market participants would use in pricing the asset or liability, including assumptions about risk. Inputs may be observable or unobservable. Observable inputs are inputs that reflect the assumptions market participants would use in pricing the asset or liability based on market data obtained from sources independent of the reporting entity. Unobservable inputs are inputs that reflect the reporting entity's own assumptions about the assumptions market participants would use in pricing the asset or liability based on the best information available. A three-tier hierarchy categorizes the inputs as follows:

NATIONAL GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2017

NOTE 3: FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS (Continued)

Level 1 – Quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that we can access at the measurement date.

Level 2 – Inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly. These include quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets, quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in markets that are not active, inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability, and market-corroborated inputs.

Level 3 – Unobservable inputs for the asset or liability. In these situations, we develop inputs using the best information available in the circumstances.

The following indicates the assets carried at the three levels in these financial statements. The National Grange did not have any Level 2 and Level 3 asset valuations.

Level 1 Investments include:

Fixed Income	\$ 156,197
Equities	194,775
Alternative	46,458
Other	<u>25,276</u>
	\$ <u>422,706</u>

Funds are allocated to:

Convention Bank	\$ 421,754
Savings	<u>952</u>
Total	\$ <u>422,706</u>

NOTE 4 - PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Property, equipment and accumulated depreciation are as follows at December 31, 2017

Depreciable Assets	
Equipment	\$ 56,112
Building	1,174,014
Building Improvements	<u>1,720,711</u>
	2,950,837
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(1,949,197)</u>
	\$ <u>1,001,640</u>

NATIONAL GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2017

NOTE 5 – UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS- BUILDING

Building unrestricted net assets is comprised of at December 31, 2017

From Operations	\$ 10,513,881
Contributions	260,745
Provided from Exchange of Former Building	396,936
Bicentennial Cookbook	<u>313,549</u>
	<u>\$ 11,485,111</u>

NOTE 6 - PENSION PLAN/SIMPLE IRA

In March 2002, The National Grange established a SIMPLE IRA employee benefit plan covering substantially all employees after the 90 day probation period at open enrollment and met minimum age requirements. Employees are allowed to defer up to 15% of annual salary with a 3% match by The National Grange. As of December 31, 2017, the matching portion was \$10,053.

NOTE 7 – INCOME TAXES

The National Grange is exempt from federal income taxes under Section 501 (c)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code. However, entities that are classified under this section of the code are subject to tax on “unrelated business income” as defined by IRS regulations. The National Grange had no unrelated business income for the year ended December 31, 2017.

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require the National Grange to evaluate tax position taken and recognize a tax liability if it is more likely than not that uncertain tax positions taken would not be sustained upon examination by taxing authorities. The National Grange has analyzed tax positions taken and has determined that, as of December 31, 2017, there are no uncertain tax positions taken or expected to be taken that would require recognition of a liability or disclosure in the financial statements. The National Grange’s tax returns are subject to examination by taxing authorities, generally for a period of three years after the returns are filed.

NOTE 8 - CONCENTRATION OF CREDIT RISK

The National Grange maintains its operating cash in a financial institution insured up to \$250,000 by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). At times the funds in this institution exceed the insured limit. The Organization maintains its capital reserve and investment accounts in non-FDIC insured accounts with reputable firms. The balance in these accounts at December 31, 2017 totaled \$351,639.

NATIONAL GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUBANDRY

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2017

NOTE 9 - LEASE COMMITMENT

The National Grange has entered into an operating lease for a copier. The lease for the copier was signed on August 29, 2013 for 57 months starting in September 2013. The monthly payment for the copier is \$514.

NOTE 10 - LEASES

As part of its ongoing operations the National Grange leases to tenants those parts of the building it does not use. The leases are one to five years, renewable, leases at current market rents. Some leases have expense pass-through clauses based on the previous year's operating costs. Expected rental income for the year ended December 31, 2018 is estimated at depending on renewals and if additional space becomes available.

NOTE 11 – NOTES PAYABLE

The National Grange has a Loan Management Account (LMA) with Merrill Lynch under which it obtains advances as needed. The account is a demand loan and is secured by the Grange investment account. The loan bears finance charges at a variable rate of interest equal to the Libor Rate plus the Spread and is payable monthly. The balance at December 31, 2017 is \$273,317.

The National Grange also has a promissory note with the Oregon State Grange in the amount of \$231,154 as of December, 2017, bearing interest at 6%. The note is payable quarterly, interest only for 2017 at \$14,581. The note and any unpaid interest is due in full by December 31, 2026.

The National Grange has a promissory note with Red Lion Grange No. 1781 in the amount of \$100,000 dated September 25, 2017 and due in full September 15, 2022, bearing interest a 3.2% per annum calculated half-yearly. The note is for semi-annual interest payment beginning September 15, 2017. The balance a December 31, 2017 is \$100,00.

The National Grange has a promissory note with the Grange Advocacy on the amount of \$25,000 dated September 1, 2017 with interest at .25% per annum. Interest and principal payments are payable monthly in the amount of \$2,086 based up on the interest rate and a 1 year amortization schedule. Note is due in full by September 1, 2018. The balance at December 31, is \$18,750.

NOTE 12 - SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

In preparing these financial statements, the Organization has evaluated events and transactions for potential recognition or disclosure through March 2019, the date the financial statements were available for use.

NATIONAL GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2017

NOTE 13 – DUE TO STATE GRANGES

During the current year the National Grange reorganized the charter of one of the two State Granges previously suspended. These suspensions required the National Grange to take over the administrative task usually performed by the State Grange and has collected certain funds that would normally belong to the State Granges. These amounts are reflected in the category “Due to State Granges”.

Certain legal actions have been undertaken by a State Grange which the National Grange has countered. The National Grange feels that the outcome of any such action will be in the favor of the National Grange.

NOTE 14 – LEGAL MATTERS

In 2014 the National Grange was engaged in two major litigations. First, a case in California Superior Court to determine if a former part of the organization could disregard the rules and retain the assets of the Grange, Second, a case in Federal Court with the same group that was sued for trademark infringement and counterfeiting.

In 2015 the Federal case was won on a motion for summary judgment and that case is now final and we are currently waiting to see if the other side appeals. The State Case was won on a motion for summary judgment and we are waiting to see when the case will be final as the other side is already claiming that they are going to appeal.

In August 2017 the air conditioning system failed in the National Grange headquarter building. Keepin’ It Cool (KIC) was contracted to replace the chiller, one boiler, and perform several other repair jobs. After 10 months KIC failed to complete the job and was fired. Subsequent contractors found incorrect installations, shoddy workmanship, and incomplete work. In January 2019 a suit was filed against KIC for Breach of Contract and Breach of Implied Warranty of Good Workmanship. Some settlement reimbursement is expected from KIC’s insurance coverage.

NOTE 15 – PROPERTY HELD IN TRUST

As of December 31, 2017, the National Grange is holding in trust the property of the Tulelake Grange of California. The Charter to the Tulelake Grange was revoked on October 31, 2013. The trust account was transferred to CA State Grange in November 2015.

The National Grange is holding in trust funds collected on behalf of the former Wyoming Grange. This amount is \$51,713 and is reflected as part of the reserved cash balance.

APPENDIX B: Grange Foundation Financial Statement

THE GRANGE FOUNDATION

Financial Statements

December 31, 2017 and 2016

THE GRANGE FOUNDATION

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ERIC BOLIN CPA P.C.

Board of Directors
The Grange Foundation
Washington, DC 20006

We have reviewed the accompanying Statements of Financial Position of The Grange Foundation (a nonprofit corporation) as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, and the related Statements of Activities and Change in Net Assets and Cash Flows for the years then ended. A review includes principally of inquiries of Company personnel and applying analytical procedures to management's financial data. A review is substantially less in scope than an audit, the objective of which is the expression of an opinion regarding the financial statements taken as a whole. Accordingly, I do not express such an opinion.

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America and for designing, implementing, and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements.

Our responsibility is to conduct the review in accordance with statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services issued by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Those standards require me to perform procedures to obtain limited assurance that there are no material modifications that should be made to the financial statements. We believe that the results of my procedures provide a reasonable basis for my report.

Based on our review, we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying consolidated financial statements in order for them to be in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Our review was made primarily for the purpose of expressing a conclusion that there are not material modifications that should be made to the consolidated financial statements in order of them to be in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Eric Bolin CPA, P.C.

May 2, 2019
Rockville, MD

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THE GRANGE FOUNDATION

Statement of Financial Position

	December 31,	
	2017	2016
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash – Operating	\$ 193,332	\$ 37,050
CD Investments	46,987	46,945
Pledge Receivable	7,250	100
Account Receivable - National Grange	12,499	10,379
Total Current Assets	260,068	94,474
Other Assets		
Endowment Fund (Restricted)	91,062	208,965
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 351,130	\$ 303,439
LIABILITY		
Accounts Payable	7,582	842
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	140,281	18,959
Temporarily Restricted	112,205	74,673
Board Restricted – Endowment	91,062	208,965
TOTAL NET ASSETS	343,548	302,597
TOTAL LIABILITY AND NET ASSETS	\$ 351,130	\$ 303,439

See Accompanying Notes to Financial Statements

THE GRANGE FOUNDATION

Statement of Activities and Change in Net Assets

For the Years Ended December 31,

	2017	2016
CHANGES IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS:		
Revenues:		
Contributions	\$ 2,420	\$ 1,211
Gain (Loss) in Investment Value	2,578	5,442
Interest and Dividend Income	3,932	4,850
Gift Annuity, Other	469	133
Other Income	0	90
Total Unrestricted Revenues	9,399	11,726
Expenses:		
Investment Fees	2,121	1,905
Office Expense	970	1,328
Donations, Other	4,400	17,200
Total unrestricted expenses	7,491	20,433
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	1,908	(8,707)
CHANGES IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS :		
Contributions, Interest, Grants	477,181	37,865
Expenses	438,138	(29,236)
(DECREASE) INCREASE IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS	39,043	8,629
CHANGES IN PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS:		
Increase	0	0
INCREASE IN PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS:	0	0
(DECREASE) INCREASE IN NET ASSETS	40,951	(78)
NET ASSETS – JANUARY 1,	302,597	302,675
NET ASSETS – DECEMBER 31,	\$ 343,548	\$ 302,597

See Accompanying Notes to Financial Statements

THE GRANGE FOUNDATION

Statement of Activities and Change in Net Assets

For the Year Ended December 31, 2017

Schedule I – Temporarily Restricted Net Assets

	O.H. Kelley Historical Prog. Fund	Junior Leadership Program	Youth Leadership Fund	Program For the Deaf	G.R.O.W. Club	American Arts	Youth Exchange Program	Community And Leadership	Trademark Protection	Elmer Grange	National Lecture Program	Communi- cation Fellows Program
Balance- January 1	\$ 4,964	\$ 10,454	\$ 17,667	\$ 17,864	\$ 8,332	\$ 2,973	\$ 5,195	\$ 10	\$ 3,925	\$ 2,125	\$ 915	\$ 250
Contributions	1,303	535	8,143	25	1,402	2,286	0	0	675	1,575	11,828	0
Interest, Other Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expenses	(3,500)	(350)	(12,383)	(500)	(1,865)	0	0	0	0	(3,425)	(6,987)	0
Balance- December 31	\$ 2,767	\$ 10,639	\$ 13,427	\$ 17,389	\$ 7,869	\$ 5,259	\$ 5,195	\$ 10	\$ 4,600	\$ 275	\$ 5,756	\$ 250

See Accompanying Notes to Financial Statements

THE GRANGE FOUNDATION

Statement of Activities and Change in Net Assets

For the Year Ended December 31, 2017

Schedule I – Temporarily Restricted Net Assets

	Building Fund	California Fire Relief	Intern Fund	I in 1000	H Watson MF School	Memorial Dorothy S. Zug	Youth-Pie In the Face	GALA	Gift Annuity
Balance- January 1	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 100
Contributions	400,000	7,829	1,000	19,000	5,000	1,085	9,589	5,056	469
Interest, Other Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expenses	(400,000)	(7,829)	(1,000)	(0)	(0)	0	0	0	(469)
Balance- December 31	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 19,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 1,085	\$ 9,589	\$ 5,056	\$ 100

See Accompanying Notes to Financial Statements

THE GRANGE FOUNDATION

Statement of Activities and Change in Net Assets

For the Year Ended December 31, 2017

Schedule I – Temporarily Restricted Net Assets

	OH Kelley Historical Prog. Fund	Junior Leadership Program	Youth Leadership Fund	Program For the Deaf	G.R.O.W. Club	American Arts	Youth Exchange Program	Community And Leadership	Trademark Protection	Elmer Grange	National Lecture Program	Communi- cation Fellows Program
Balance- January 1	\$ 3,743	\$ 9,912	\$ 18,444	\$ 18,339	\$ 5,549	\$ 2,973	\$ 5,195	\$ 10	\$ 1,880	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Contributions	1,221	2,072	13,019	25	4,283	0	0	0	2,045	13,775	1,175	250
Interest,												
Other Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expenses	0	(1,530)	(13,796)	(500)	(1,500)	0	0	0	0	(11,650)	(260)	0
Balance- December 31	\$ 4,964	\$ 10,454	\$ 17,667	\$ 17,864	\$ 8,332	\$ 2,973	\$ 5,195	\$ 10	\$ 3,925	\$ 2,125	\$ 915	\$ 250

See Accompanying Notes to Financial Statements

THE GRANGE FOUNDATION

Statement of Cash Flows

For the Years Ended December 31,

	2017	2016
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	\$ 38,373	\$ (5,620)
Decrease Increase in Due From The National Grange	(2,120)	6,764
(Increase) Decrease in Pledge Receivable	(7,150)	
(Decrease) Increase in Accounts Payable	6,740	842
NET CASH PROVIDED (USED) BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES	35,843	1,986
CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Change in FMV of Investment Endowment Fund	2,578	5,442
Decrease in Investment Account	117,903	0
Increase in CD Investment	(42)	(47)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY INVESTING ACTIVITIES	120,439	5,395
CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES	0	0
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH	156,282	7,381
CASH - January 1,	37,050	29,669
CASH - December 31,	\$ 75,428	\$ 37,050

See Accompanying Notes to Financial Statements

THE GRANGE FOUNDATION

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2017

NOTE 1 - ORGANIZATION

The Grange Foundation is a non-profit organization affiliated with The National Grange through common officers and management. The National Grange acts as trustee for funds received on behalf of The Grange Foundation.

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Accounting - The financial statements of the Organization have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting and accordingly reflect all significant receivables, payables and other liabilities.

The accounts of the Organization are maintained in accordance with the principles of fund accounting. Under fund accounting, resources for various purposes are classified for accounting and reporting purposes into funds established according to their nature and purpose. Separate accounts are maintained for each fund; however, in the accompanying financial statements, funds have been combined and presented for the Organization as a whole in accordance with the provisions of Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 117, "Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Organizations".

Cash and Cash Equivalents – We consider all cash and highly liquid financial instruments with original maturities of three months or less, and which are neither held for nor restricted by donors for long-term purposes, to be cash and cash equivalents. Cash and highly liquid financial instruments restricted to building project, permanent endowment, or other long-term purposes are excluded from this definition.

Inventories - Inventories are stated at the lower of cost or market, with cost determined on a first-in, first-out basis and market based on the lower of replacement cost or realizable value.

Use of Estimates - The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions. This will affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

Net Assets – Revenues, gains, and losses are classified based on the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions. Accordingly, net assets and changes therein are classified and reported as follows:

Unrestricted Net Assets: Net assets available for use in general operations. Unrestricted board-designated net assets consist of net assets designated by the Board of Directors for operating reserve and board-designated endowment.

THE GRANGE FOUNDATION

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2017

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

Temporarily Restricted Net Assets: Net assets subject to donor restrictions that may or will be Met by expenditures or our actions and/or the passage of time, and certain income earned on permanently restricted net assets that has not yet been appropriated for expenditure by our Board of Directors.

We report contributions as temporarily restricted support if they are received with donor stipulations that limit the use of the donated assets. When a donor restriction expires, that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or purpose restriction is accomplished, temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified to unrestricted net assets and reported in the statements of activities as net assets released from restrictions.

Permanently Restricted Net Assets – Net assets whose use is limited by donor-imposed restrictions that neither expire by the passage of time nor can be fulfilled or otherwise removed by our actions. The restrictions stipulate that resources be maintained permanently but permit us to expend the income generated in accordance with the provisions of the agreements.

Contributions - Contributions received are recorded as unrestricted, temporarily restricted or permanently restricted support, depending on the existence and/or nature of any donor restrictions.

Gifts of cash and other assets are reported as restricted support if they are received with donor stipulations that limit the use of the donated assets. When a restriction expires, that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or a purpose restriction is accomplished, temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified to unrestricted net assets and reported in the statement of activities as net assets released from restrictions.

Donations of property and equipment are recorded as support at their estimated fair value at the date of donation. Such donations are reported as unrestricted support unless the donor has restricted the donated asset to a specific purpose. Assets donated with explicit restrictions regarding their use and contributions of cash that must be used to acquire property and equipment are reported as restricted support. Absent donor stipulations regarding how long those donated assets must be maintained, the Organization reports expirations of donor restrictions when the donated or acquired assets are placed in service as instructed by the donor. The Organization reclassifies temporarily restricted net assets to unrestricted net assets at that time.

THE GRANGE FOUNDATION

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2017

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

Donated marketable securities and other non-cash donations are recorded as contributions at their estimated fair values at the date of donation.

No amounts have been reflected in the financial statements for donated services. The Foundation pays for most services requiring specific expertise.

Unconditional promises to give are recognized as revenues or gains in the period received as assets, decreases in liabilities or expenses depending on the form of the benefits received. Conditional promises to give are recognized when the conditions on which they depend are substantially met. The Foundation has not received any promises to give.

NOTE 3 – INCOME TAXES

The Grange Foundation is organized as a nonprofit corporation and has been recognized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as exempt from federal income taxes under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3), qualifies for the charitable contribution deduction under Section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi) and (viii), and has been determined not to be a private foundation under Section 509(a)(1) and (3) respectively. AP is annually required to file a Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax (Form 990) with the IRS. In addition, The Grange Foundation is subject to income tax on net income that is derived from business activities that are unrelated to its exempt purpose. We have determined that The Grange Foundation is not subject to unrelated business income tax.

We believe that The Grange Foundation has appropriate support for any tax positions taken affecting its annual filing requirements, and as such, does not have any uncertain tax positions that are material to the financial statements. We would recognize future accrued interest and penalties related to unrecognized tax benefits and liabilities in income tax expense if such interest and penalties are incurred. The Grange Foundation's Form 990 tax filings are subject to tax examination for three years from date filed.

NOTE 4 – SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

In preparing these financial statements, Grange Foundation's management has evaluated events and transactions for potential recognition or disclosure through May 6, 2019, the date the financial statements were available to be issued. In January, 2018 the Foundation loaned the National Grange \$100,000 with a promissory note bearing interest of 2.4% payable monthly of \$2,086 and due on full September 15, 2022.

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NATIONAL GRANGE

Founded in 1867 as the National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, we proudly serve as America's oldest agricultural advocacy organization with deeply held nonpartisan ideals.

We are headquartered at the historic National Grange Building at 1616 H St. NW, Washington, DC 20006.

However, the heart of the Grange is located in the more than 1,600 communities in which local Grange chapters operate today. Our nearly 150,000 fraternal members initiate policy resolutions through a grassroots process and advocate for issues of importance to themselves and their neighbors. In addition, they serve as part of the social safety net and network that improves the quality of life for those living in rural America or following agricultural pursuits.

We welcome you to learn more about the Grange at nationalgrange.org or by visiting a local Grange meeting.