



The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

January 22, 2021

Inauguration Day

By Betsy Huber National Grange President

I'm writing this article on Wednesday, January 20, the one day every fourth year that most symbolizes the democratic government of the United States and why it has stood firm for 245 years—Inauguration Day. On this day, we bear witness to the peaceful transfer of power from one President to another, and in this case, from one party to another.

In his inaugural address, President Biden asked for unity and promised to be the President of “all the people.” For the sake of our nation, which is so very divided, we hope this is the case. The voters and the Congress are almost evenly split; there is an uneasy peace in Washington DC locked down like never before, and state capitols have heightened security. For almost eight months, radical groups on both sides have initiated riots and caused damage to private businesses and public buildings.

The Grange will have a big job ahead of us this year, not only to present our grassroots policy issues to a new administration, but especially to continue promoting civility, faith, hope, charity, and fidelity in our local communities and in our government at all levels. Let's all pray for wisdom for our new leadership in Washington and all those in authority across our land.

Honoring Members of your Community

By Pete Pompper National Grange Community Service Director

The importance of Grangers saying thank you to those in our communities who deserve our praise cannot be stressed enough. As we all know, a simple thank you – the recognition of good work or going above and beyond – goes a long way to not only lifting people's spirits but also connecting people to your Grange.

I hope that every Grange in some way honors those in our community who go unrecognized but truly are deserving. This is not only the above-mentioned categories but anyone or group who help those who need it. Elmer Grange #29 (NJ) has done this for many years because they realize the importance of this. They have honored a gentleman who owns a bus company who for years has donated buses for special events and groups that needed it. Another person was recognized for his many years on the local fair board who spends countless hours giving back to the community. All the awardees are extremely humbled and feel they don't deserve this award. There are so many Granges out there that do this by having a Community Citizen of the Year award meeting.

A Grange can honor more than one person or group --remember it is your dream, you can make it as big as you want. In a small community, I would have to believe that most people will know who you are honoring. Have an open meeting; invite as many people as your hall can hold or have it in the summer and have it outdoors. Nothing is better than an outdoor meeting with homemade Grange food and ice cream.

The National Grange store has available for a small fee a Community Service certificate and a nice paperweight that can be given to the honoree. My hope is every Grange will say thank you to those who deserve it. Invite your local newspaper or TV station to the meeting and tell them what and why you are honoring this individual or group. I would also like you to send me any press coverage or drop me a note of who you honored.

While the Community Service Department has the “Of the Year” awards for teachers, firefighters, and law enforcement officers, don’t feel you’re limited to just people in those professions. Today we see that community heroes and those deserving thanks come from all walks of life – just like the fair board member and bus company owner. Think outside the box, choose those who may otherwise go unrecognized and delight in the smile you bring to your recipients’ faces.

Speaking of the “of the Year” awards, the 2020 winners were: Firefighter/EMT Carrie Dunn-Thompson (CO), Teacher Kellie Perkins (NC) and Law Enforcement D/Sgt Eric Shirley (NH). All of them are very deserving of these awards and the judges were complimentary of all the nominees.

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Building sustains no further damage; banner to be hung

By Amanda Brozana Rios, National Grange Communications & Development Director

Much of D.C. was on high alert throughout the past few weeks, and in preparation for potential unrest, the National Grange saw its building's front door and windows boarded up again.

Thankfully, with protections put in place around the several blocks surrounding the White House and limited traffic in the area, along with very few protesters for Inauguration week, the headquarters building sustained no damage this week. Also, Building Engineer Mujo Mrkonjik was preparing to hang a banner welcoming President Biden to the White House, per the organization's tradition when a new president takes office.

A decision was made not to place the banner on the top of the building, facing the White House, prior to the inauguration as has been done in the past so as not to draw negative unwanted attention of potential destructive or violent individuals.

"We will follow our tradition and make welcome President Biden, raising the profile of the Grange in doing so," National Grange President Betsy Huber said. "The delay was designed to ensure our precious

asset would not be targeted, but we will not be deterred from supporting the new administration as we have done for many years and showing our interest in working to elevate the interests of rural Americans.”

Show your Support Today

By Mandy Bostwick National Grange Youth and Young Adult Director

Show your Junior and Youth pride by purchasing one, or both, of these exclusive Pura Vida bracelets. Pura Vida is a movement that is celebrating the simple things in life. These bracelets are 100% waterproof, wax-coated with an iron-coated copper “P” charm on each bracelet. Bracelets are adjustable from 2”- 5”.

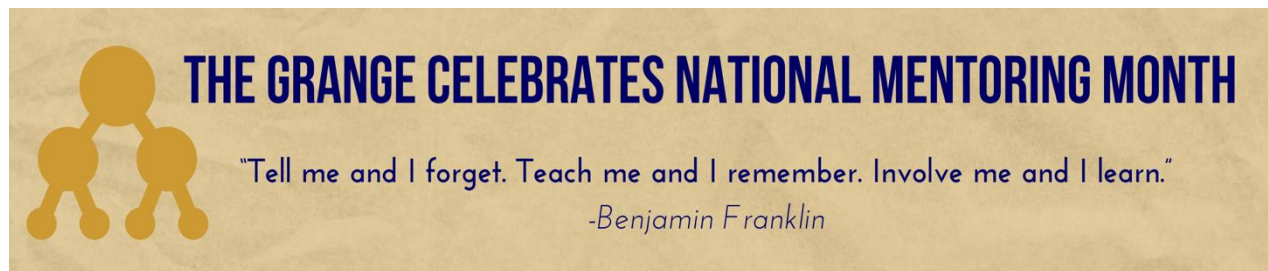
The Junior bracelets feature nine strings in red, black, and vanilla while the youth bracelets feature nine strings in Gold, Kelly Green and Hunter Green. These bracelets are a great way to show that you are a proud Jr. and Youth alumni. They also make great gifts for the Jr. and Youth in your local Grange.



Each bracelet is as unique as the person wearing it.

Pura Vida bracelets were founded in Costa Rica and each bracelet helps provide full-time jobs for artisans around the world. Funds from sales of our exclusive Youth and Junior bracelets will support our Junior and/or Youth Leadership Fund. To order, go to bit.ly/YouthandJuniorPureVidaBracelet (case sensitive).

If you are interested in making a donation but don't want a bracelet, both the Youth and Junior funds are open for direct donations. Place your order soon, quantities are limited!



Junior, Youth Departments start virtual Monthly Meet-Up Series

By Amanda Brozana Rios, National Grange Communications & Development Director

The Grange's youngest members will have one more way to get involved and connected across the organization thanks to the addition of new monthly meet-ups hosted by the Junior and Youth departments.

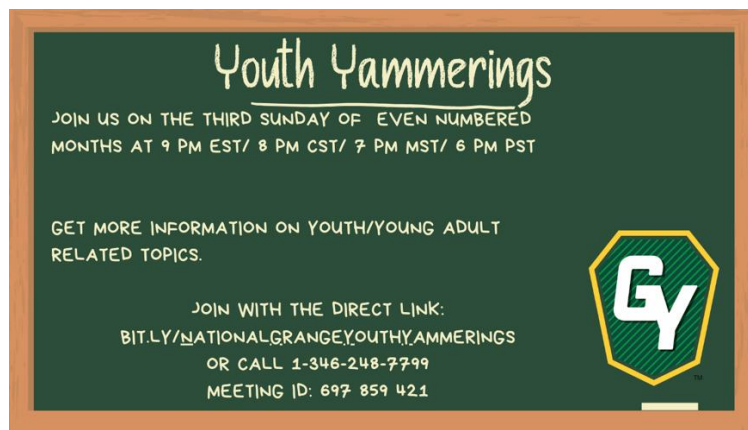
Starting in February, the departments will alternate months to host sessions on the third Sunday, as a way to provide details about contests and programming and encourage young members to stay active in the organization.

“We’ve seen that virtual meetings are successful in connecting people and of course, youth and kids are used to having virtual events to take part in especially since the pandemic started,” Youth Director Mandy Bostwick said.

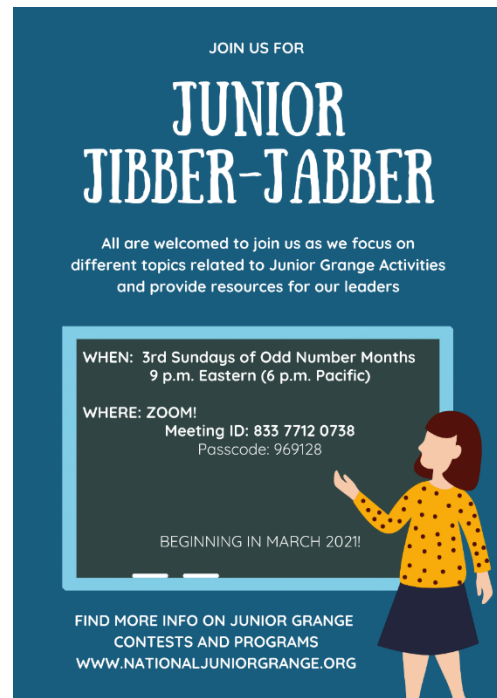
Junior Director Samantha Wilkins said the events – titled Junior Jibber-Jabber for the 5-14 crowd – are not meant to take the place of Junior meetings, but will help to encourage Junior members and leaders to explore programs and activities they may not normally focus on.

“We hope this opens some doors for our kiddos, especially those whose Junior Grange or Subordinate Grange they affiliate with as 1+ members haven’t been very active over the past year,” Wilkins said.

The events are held on Zoom, and each director asked members to share the information with every Junior and Youth they know.



bit.ly/NationalGrangeYouthYammerings



Grange Foundation NAITC Applications

By Kennedy Gwin National Grange Intern

The Grange Foundation each year sponsors a National Agriculture in the Classroom Award (previously known as the Agriculture Advocate Award) where we honor educators and community members for spreading agriculture awareness beyond their communities.

Last year’s recipient Sara Harward from Salt Lake City, Utah, won this distinguished award for her work in agriculture and how she has continued to introduce it into the classroom. On her corn and pumpkin farm, she hosts thousands of students each year showing them the complexities of agriculture and how it impacts their everyday lives. Sara was going to receive her award at the National Ag in the Classroom Convention in Salt Lake City but due to COVID-19 the convention had to be postponed.

If you know someone in your community whose story and efforts are similar to Sara’s in the realm of agriculture and believe that they deserve to be recognized, go online to grangefoundation.org and nominate them for their efforts. Honoring those who continue to advocate and educate the public about agriculture in America is a cornerstone of our organization and these individuals deserve positive recognition about their programs. Applications are due **February 26th** so make sure to spread the word and nominate advocates in your life.

Distinguished Grange and Grange in Action

By Kennedy Gwin National Grange Intern

Each year the National Grange sponsors the Distinguished Grange Award to recognize Community and State Granges across the country who go above and beyond with activities and service to their communities during the year. As COVID-19 has continued to impact states and Granges across the country we wanted to reaffirm to Grangers that the rules for Distinguished Grange have not changed, that the pandemic is being taken into consideration in judging, and to encourage you highlight the work your Granges have accomplished.

With COVID-19 hitting rural communities the hardest due to limited resources and lack of access, many people turned to their local Granges for assistance. Grangers mobilized to support people in their communities and became innovative, coming up with ideas such as grab and go dinners even before restaurants considered it. Many Granges started to host outside community events with social distancing in mind and even utilized Zoom and other platforms to continue to meet and foster community in what seems like a very lonely time. Staying active during the pandemic and continuing to support your community despite the chaos has pushed Grangers beyond distinguished and has made them pillars in their communities.

With all these events such as food drives and virtual events happening in Granges everywhere, we wanted to remind you that these count towards Distinguished Grange points and that you should fill out the application even if you think you don't qualify this year. Cancellations and virtual State Sessions will be taken into consideration, but there are so many other ways to earn points on the application form that you may qualify in spite of these difficulties.

If you ultimately feel that your Grange is not able to make up the points needed to earn the Distinguished Grange title, you can always apply for the Grange in Action Award. This award requires that you take pictures at three different Grange hosted events, caption the photos, and submit the application to receive this award. Every Grange should be capable of this and we would love to see more applications for Grange in Action displayed at the 2021 National Grange convention.

Great job, Grangers, for your work in the community during tumultuous times and we hope to see you continue this great work into 2021!



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