



The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

June 11, 2021

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Fellowship and Service in the Grange

By Betsy Huber, National Grange President

Congratulations to Mandy Bostwick, National Youth Development Director, and Samantha Wilkins, National Junior Director, for a fabulous virtual telethon last Saturday. They worked very hard to gather guests, testimonials, and talent performances to make the eight-hour program interesting, exciting, and lots of fun. The goal of \$20,000 was exceeded, with donations still coming in. You can donate on the website www.grangefoundation.org/telethon. If you missed the program you can still watch it on Facebook, and many of the testimonials will be available on the website for later viewing. Thank you to the many members who participated to support our Youth and Junior programs in this way. And thank you to staff members Stephanie Wilkins, Kennedy Gwin, and Amanda Brozana for giving up their weekend to make sure everything ran smoothly.

It is wonderful to see so many Granges getting back to work, holding events, fundraisers, and community service projects. I know you may feel pressure to jump right in and get busy since you've possibly missed a whole year, but take time to enjoy each other's company before you get too busy. You may have missed a whole year of talking to your fellow members, so be sure to plan some time to catch up and socialize before you become submerged in work! Celebrate those friendships, have lots of fun re-connecting, and just enjoy the time together while you plan your next activities. Grange is about fellowship as well as service, so be sure to make time for both as you move into the summer. And invite your neighbors to join in those events because they may be looking for meaningful activities to devote time to after their lives have been re-set through the pandemic. Share that Grange benefit of fellowship with those who are searching for new meaning in their lives.

Facebook and Your Grange

By Kennedy Gwin, National Grange Communications Manager

Facebook is increasing its number of users every day. It is currently the largest social media platform in the world and helps us connect to fellow Grangers from across the state. While social media can be a drag to some people it is time to reframe your thinking and see it as a tool for your Grange!

Facebook is a great tool for getting the word out about events and other local projects your Grange is participating in, for member recruitment, and connecting with fellow like-minded individuals.

Ever had the idea to host an event, and you weren't sure how you were going to advertise, or reach people in other districts? Well Facebook has this amazing tool that helps you create your own event, and even assists in getting the word out to your community, and further. By posting this information local members of your community can see it through geotags, this helps in advertising. Creating an event on Facebook can also help with transparency. Transparency is particularly important when hosting events, that way people know basic things like where and what time the event is, while also showing what the event is supporting and who the funds from the event directly benefit.

Facebook can also benefit your Grange by recruiting new members while making impactful connections. Facebook supports in the reengaging of lost, potential, and uncertain enrollments. While often we hear that Facebook can become an echo chamber due to its algorithm, it can also help you connect with members of your community. Through Facebook you can message people within your community and invite them to Grange meetings, or even your local events to get them involved. After COVID-19 more people than ever are looking for something to do, and people to meet. People who are posting in your local community garden page, or local community service pages are the perfect people to network with, to build your Grange numbers. Sometimes all it takes is one invite to an event to get a new member of your Grange.

Finally, Facebook is a budget friendly choice for promoting your Grange through ads. While it is well known that you can create ads on Facebook, it should also be noted you can boost these ads. When boosting an ad, it allows you to take your original post that you have published, and drive said post to an expanded, but targeted, audience. Boosting an already interactive post is like adding gasoline to a fire, people will see these interactions and jump at the opportunity. Standard ads, such as a newspaper ad, costs you anywhere from fifty dollars for a small article to a thousand plus for a large article depending on the popularity of the paper, the date, and even the ink. However, posting Facebook ads has a minimum of five dollars daily, you can boost your ad for as little as one dollar leaving a total of about six dollars for an ad that you get to customize. In addition, Facebook will help you budget your ad money by allowing you to set your own ad budget (the total amount you want to spend) whether that be daily, or the whole campaign timeline. Keep in mind that you can edit this amount whenever you would like!

Sometimes Facebook can be daunting but I promise with just a little time and a few events you will see your page bloom. I really hope to start seeing more Facebook pages from Granges across the country and strongly encourage people to step out of their comfort zones and expand their online presence.

COVID Webinar Recap

By Claire Loker, National Grange Intern

On June 9th Loker attended a webinar presented by WBRC News out of Alabama. The webinar was presented by several healthcare specialists. They include Karyne Jones who is the president and CEO of the National Caucus and Center on Black Aging. Dr. Derrick Jordan a pastor at Hope Everlasting Ministry. Michael Saag MD, Professor, department of medicine and an infectious disease expert, and John Waits, FAAFP, CEO, CFMR program director, FM and OB faculty and with the Cahaba Medical Care.

They discussed the importance of getting vaccinated while trying to educate those who haven't gotten it, and how the lack of vaccines and broadband services to rural communities are affecting the number of people who are vaccinated. Saag started by saying now that the vaccine has become available it has separated the world into two categories, the vaccinated and the non-vaccinated. Vaccines are like a bio mask, they give people immunity, people are still able to get COVID but it won't affect them as bad and certainly won't be putting you into a hospital. The delta variant is coming out of India and is showing to be more infectious than any other strain. Waits also added that the vaccine is proving effective against all these new variants as well. Communities that have the greatest success in vaccinations have churches and community centers that held mass vaccination sites for those who had a harder time going to get a vaccine. He also stated that there was no judgment for those back in January who were against the vaccine because it was new. Now there is no reason to question a scientific study that has proven effective. The studies they conducted were originally going to have around 1,000 participants, they ended up having 40,000 participants.

Jordan says they are focusing on not only people's mental and physical health but also their spiritual health. He got vaccinated, because he couldn't encourage other people to do something that he wasn't even going to do.

Jones talked about how she has helped educate people of the African American community on the benefits of getting vaccinated. There is a known distrust among African Americans and the health community so she wanted to make sure they are comfortable and receiving educated information. Her company helped advocate and educate them and encouraged them to become vaccinated. The National Guard also went out to minority communities and helped educate and then provide either transportation or vaccination sites that were easily accessible. Jones stated that a year ago she too was one of the people who said they would never be vaccinated, then she did her research and became educated and then got the vaccine. She also stated the more people we educate and the more that become advocates the more people will get their vaccination.

Jones also discussed a lot about the lack of broadband not only in the African American communities but many rural communities in her area. Even if you had internet access it wouldn't allow you to book an appointment through the vaccination sites. A lot of comments and concerns she received were "I want the vaccine but I can't get an appointment" or "I can't access the vaccine site". Broadband is an issue and it always has been, COVID just shined a light on it and brought people's attention to it. For many places, if you don't have internet you couldn't book an appointment.

Saag said as a health care provider it is more beneficial for people to have the one on one with their doctor so they get the answers to their questions and concerns about the vaccine. One statement he said that stuck out to me was it's not a question people should be asking if they should or shouldn't get the vaccine but more of a question of having a risk of COVID or no risk.

Some people who have gotten COVID have the risk of getting "long COVID" which are COVID-like symptoms that can last months after recovering, this occurs in 10%-15% of people who had COVID. It can eventually lead to POTS which are Postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome. It can cause your heart rate to skyrocket after doing simple things like walking to get the mail. You can choose between having vaccine side effects for 24 hours after or risk having COVID symptoms for months after recovering.

Fellows Application is Live

By Kennedy Gwin, Communications Manager

Any Grange member interested in participating in a rigorous, hands-on training program in communications, with additional resources for membership, programming and engagement, is invited to apply for the 2021 Communication Fellows program.

This program, is made possible thanks to generous funders, but there are a limited number of spots available. Fellows receiving the bulk of their training during a 8-day experience at the 155th Annual National Grange Convention, held this year Nov. 6-14 in Wichita, Kansas. Those selected also are expected to make time for several teleconferences between July and October, as well as a few brief assignments prior to the start of National Convention.

This year, Fellows will hear from the National Master, National Grange Staff and Officers, other communications professionals and more. Fellows will produce content for the daily convention newsletter, interviews and content for our social media channels and stories/elements for Good Day!™ magazine, livestream events – and much more.

This is a hands-on training with a support from many of the more than 45 previous Fellows who have participated in the program since 2012. Those previous Fellows now hold many significant offices and jobs in their State and National Grange and often credit the program with providing them insight into the differences across State Granges and the opportunities and challenges to the organization, as well as great motivation for being part of our next 150+ years of service.

Any Grange member in good standing may apply, but all applicants must have a nomination letter from a State President/National Delegate; National Officer; National Grange Staff Member or past Communication Fellow.

The deadline for all materials to be submitted by email to the National Grange Communications Department via email (kgwin@nationalgrange.org) is PRIOR to “start of business” (9 a.m. Eastern) Thursday, July 15th.

We strongly encourage those who have not participated in the program previously to apply and will be given the highest priority.

If you have any questions about the program please contact kgwin@nationalgrange.org

Grange Benefit

Grange members can now enjoy 20% off their membership with Harvest Hosts, which has more than 825 partner sites across the U.S. and Canada that allow members with RVs to stay one night free on the property of an agriculturally-oriented business. In addition to the ag-based destinations, individuals can add to their membership the “+golf” option that includes more than 350 golf courses.

There is an app associated with Harvest Host that provides maps of the destinations, trip routing and planning and much more. Members of Harvest Hosts can also enjoy other RV-oriented savings.

Grange members with RVs are encouraged to check out Harvest Hosts at harvesthosts.com and use the code GRANGE at checkout.



Membership Matters

Hosted by:
**Jason Davis and
Katie Green from the
North Carolina State
Grange**

June 15th at 8:30 pm

They will be discussing generational differences
and how this information will help recruit new
members



Everyone is welcome! See you there!



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NATIONAL GRANGE & GRANGE FOUNDATION STAFF

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Editor Kennedy Gwin, National Grange Communications Manager, available by email at kgwin@nationalgrange.org or by phone at National HQ, ext. 106. Contact for assistance with publicity, to submit a story idea for the Patrons Chain or social media and more.

Membership, Leadership Development and Communications Amanda Brozana Rios. Contact to submit a story idea for Good Day! magazine at abrozana@nationalgrange.org or call/text (301) 943-1090. You may also contact her as Foundation Associate in regards to tax-deductible gifts for Grange Foundation.

Membership Recognition, Sales and Benefits Loretta Washington, National HQ, ext. 109 or email sales@nationalgrange.org

Free Grange Websites and emails, Good Day! subscriptions and renewals, Membership Database and more Stephanie Wilkins, National HQ, ext. 101 or email swilkins@nationalgrange.org

Lecturer Chris Hamp for program ideas, Quilts of Valor labels, contest details and more, by email at lecturer@nationalgrange.org or call/text (509) 953-3533.

Community Service Pete Pompper for project ideas, information about "Of the Year" awards and more by email at communityservice@nationalgrange.org or phone at (609) 820-6239

Legislative and Policy Issues Burton Eller for advocacy information and Grange priorities, contact him at National HQ, ext. 114 or email beller@nationalgrange.org.

Grange Youth Mandy Bostwick for contest, program and more information for young members at youth@nationalgrange.org or call/text (785) 250-7606.

Junior Grange Samantha Wilkins for Passport and other program and contest information at junior@nationalgrange.org or call/text (210) 838-7892.

Grange Foundation Joan C. Smith, Chairwoman, for more details about grants, programs and Foundation outreach at info@grangefoundation.org or (571) 662-7220.

ADVOCACY PLAYBOOK

WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

The Growing Climate Solutions Act is a bipartisan bill sponsored by Senators Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Mike Braun (R-IN) which would decrease barriers to a voluntary carbon credit system in agriculture. Specifically, the bill directs the Department of Agriculture to create programs to provide technical assistance to farmers when applying for carbon credits, and certify third-party auditors which would be able to verify conservation actions taken on farms. In doing so, the bill would provide Federal endorsement and support to carbon credit systems which compensate farmers for conservation practices which combat climate change. Currently, this bill has been passed by the Senate Agriculture committee on a unanimous bipartisan vote but is awaiting action from legislators in the House before it can move forward.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Currently, agriculture is the fifth largest contributor to America's greenhouse gas emissions at 10%. At the same time, because agriculture is an industry which is highly dependent on the climate, increases in heat waves, droughts, and other extreme weather events which are predicted to result from extreme climate change will uniquely harm farmers. In fact, a 2017 EPA report listed agriculture as one of the sectors most likely to be harmed by climate change. Yet more, agriculture has the potential to play a constructive role in combatting climate change not just by reducing its own emissions, but also by sequestering carbon emissions in general.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

If you want to get involved and make sure the Growing Climate Solutions Act becomes law, one useful way you can advocate for the bill is by reaching out to your member of Congress (if you are not sure who that is, use this website: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>). Whether you plan to call, send an email, or write a letter to your member of Congress, it is important to make clear that you would like to see them support the Growing Climate Solutions Act by cosponsoring the bill and later voting for it. As well, try to include a story about how the bill will affect you, your family, and your community. Each call, email, and letter an office receives is tallied up and considered when your Representative is deciding whether or not to support a bill, and extra weight is given to those contacts which include personal stories. By lending the voice of Grangers across the country in support of the Growing Climate Solutions Act, together we can push Congress to continue to move the bill forward and create a system which benefits both the climate and farmers.

