



The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

February 11, 2022

Communication is Key to Growth and Resilience

By Betsy Huber, National Grange President

In thinking about this week's activities, it seems it's been all about communication. The issue of rural broadband deployment is based on providing equal access to modern methods of communication for all Americans, no matter where they choose to live. The National Grange, as you know, has been advocating for this equal access for more than twenty years now.

Another current issue is the [Postal Service Reform Act](#), passed by the House of Representatives yesterday and moving through the Senate next week. Again, communication—a little slower than the internet, but still vital to our members. The National Grange has been supporting the Postal Service for about 140 years.

The lifeline of the Grange is communication. We provide this Patrons Chain every week to keep in contact with our members, to let them know what the Grange is working on and what's happening in the organization. Obviously, you are subscribed to this "PC" if you are reading this article. But what about your fellow Grangers? Do you encourage them to send us their email address so they can receive it too? If they don't have email, are you sharing the contents with them at your Grange meetings?

We definitely want to stay connected with all our members to keep you updated and keep the Grange vital and growing. A very important reason to have email contact with our members is for our legislative work. Sometimes things happen very slowly in Congress, but sometimes they move through quickly and we need to reach you rapidly with information so you can contact your Legislators to express your views before the issue is voted on.

Won't you please help us to help you by encouraging your fellow members to share their email addresses with us? Collect those emails at your next meeting and [send them to the National office](#). Thank you!

Lecturer's Programming – What's New, What's the Same?

By Ann Olson Bercher, National Grange Lecturer

I am happily following in the footsteps of past National Lecturer, Chris Hamp with many of the Lecturer's Programs, however, there are a few minor changes. Most notably is the change in deadline for submissions for the [Virtual Photography Contest](#) and the [Quilt Block Contest](#), moved up to **June 30**. This change came to allow for more judging and processing time. We also hope to use the winning photographs in a project that will benefit all of our Granges. The Wonky Star Quilt block is meant to be a quilter-friendly opportunity for beginners and seasoned quilters like. Yes, it supposed to look awkward. But I can assure you, finished quilts made up of the whimsical blocks



are beautiful and joyful. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about either of these contests.

The [Quilts of Valor Foundation Partnership](#) is still going strong. Several Granges have found new contacts in their communities through this program. I continue to be so proud of our Granges that honor our veterans in this way. If you need additional quilt labels, please contact me.

I want to bring your attention to the [Weather Service Partnership](#), specifically to one of the organizations that I have some experience with, [CoCoRaHS](#) (Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network). Much like the Grange, CoCoRaHS is a volunteer network of backyard weather observers of all ages and backgrounds working together to measure and map precipitation (rain, hail and snow) in their local communities. The only requirements to join are an enthusiasm for watching and reporting weather conditions and a desire to learn more about how weather can affect and impact our lives. The website has lots of educational materials, clear training videos and power point instruction. The only tool required is a specific rain gauge that can be ordered through CoCoRaHS. Reporting is easily done through their website or through a free app on your phone. Regular reporting is required, but this could be a great project for a family home or a Grange Hall that is frequently attended. For more information, please click here: [Information about CoCoRaHS](#)

The [Publicity Item Contest](#) is now in the worthy hands of our Communications Director, Phil Vonada. Any questions about that contest should be [directed toward him](#).

I am working on some new Lecturer's programs and initiatives to roll out July 1. Let me know if you have suggestions because with all the talent that is in this organization, I know there are great ideas out there!



2022 National Grange Quilt Block Contest

Sponsored by the National Lecturer

ADULT, JUNIOR AND MEN'S DIVISIONS
JUNE 30, 2022 DEADLINE

Visit nationalgrange.org
for all details and entry sheet

Wonky Star

Star may be in any color family (solid or print) on white or light gray background.
Final size - 12 1/2" unfinished.

Join us for the National Grange Legislative Fly-In



Join Brothers and Sisters from around the country in promoting Grange policy priorities and participating in advocacy training. Then, put your training to use as you present your community's concerns to elected officials and their staff.

The Fly-In is one of the greatest ways members can engage in Grange advocacy and remind legislators and regulators of the unique grassroots way in which our policy is developed. Participants will help to tell the story of an organization that is relevant, vibrant, and speaks from and for the heart of America.

Registration is FREE at <http://bit.ly/flyin2022>

Sunday, April 24

Welcome reception at the hotel

***Monday, April 25**

Overview of Washington, Congress and Federal Agencies
How to best work with elected officials and staff
Issue briefings
Speakers from the Hill, government agencies, private industry and think tanks

Tuesday, April 26

Capitol Hill appointments
Champions of Rural America Awards Reception

Wednesday, April 27

Complete Capitol Hill appointments

*Monday's events will be able to be accessed virtually!

More information on speakers, specific issues briefings, and the Champions of Rural America will be released in the coming weeks!

Hotel Information:

Quality Inn Tysons Corner
1587 Spring Hill Rd, Vienna, VA
703-448-8020

"National Grange" rate: \$79/night plus tax by April 1, 2022

More information on the Legislative Fly-In can be found here:

<https://www.nationalgrange.org/national-grange-legislative-fly-in-2022/>



The latest issue of *A Quarter's Worth* from the National Lecturer is now available – [check it out here](#), and be sure to share it with members of your Grange. If you would like to receive future issues, please [Sign Up Here!](#)

Rural America May Experience Service Blackouts as Providers Sunset 3G Technology

Courtesy of [Daily Yonder](#)

As telecommunications companies prepare to sunset their 3G networks, some activists are worried about what that will mean for residents of rural America, particularly those who may find themselves in situations of domestic violence.

According to the Federal Communications Commission, mobile carriers are shutting down their 3G networks, which rely on older technology, to make room for more advanced network services, including 5G. This means that many older cell phones will be unable to make or receive calls and texts, including calls to 911 or use data services. This will affect 3G mobile phones and certain older 4G mobile phones that do not support Voice over LTE (VoLTE or HD Voice).

The companies are shutting down the services at various times throughout 2022, with AT&T expected to shut down the 3G service by the end of February, while Verizon will wait until the end of the year.

“Access is hard anyway, just due to the remoteness of our communities,” said Lori Jump, director of StrongHearts Native Helpline, a hotline for and by American Indian and Alaska Native peoples in an interview with *The Daily Yonder*. “We’re not located for the most part in major cities or urban areas. So access has always been an issue for Indian Country.”

StrongHearts is a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline and the National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center.

Jump said certain groups are going to be affected more by the 3G shutdown: People in rural areas, those living on reservations, people who are low-income, and people of color. “These are the people who are going to be most impacted by this,” she said.

[Read the full article here.](#)

Advocacy Playbook – Foreign Land Ownership in America

By Burton Eller, National Grange Legislative Director

The Issue:

Land ownership by foreign entities is once again getting attention in Congress. USDA says 37.6 million acres, or about 3%, of the nation’s farm, ranch and forest land are under foreign ownership. That’s up from about 25 million acres in 2010. An increase of 2.4 million acres in 2020 was seen as a relatively safe investment choice and a hedge against inflation by buyers. Most of the new acres added were in Oklahoma, Texas and Colorado. Under the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act of 1978, foreign investors are required report their land purchases to USDA. However, USDA depends on companies to self-report. Because of incomplete and late-filed paperwork, most observers suspect the numbers in the report are understated. Investors from Canada, including entities owned by Canadians and by U.S. corporations with Canadian shareholders, hold 12.4 million acres or about 32% of foreign-owned land. The Netherlands followed with 13%, Italy with 7%, United Kingdom with 6% and Germany with 5%. Roughly 46% Of all foreign-owned land is in forestry.

Why It Matters:

Federal, state and local records of who owns what land don’t seem to match. The USDA’s FSA Form -153 used to report foreign ownership and the source for the USDA database doesn’t specifically correspond to USDA’s foreign ownership database. What’s more, USDA does not routinely transfer data from their FSA Form-153 with local county governments. Those counties then have no idea whether a land title transfer in their county is to a foreign or domestic owner. Multiple bills have been introduced over the last decade to provide more oversight of foreign investment in American land, but each died in committee. Proponents of these legislative initiatives cited national security, food security, land conversion, and access to land by young and aspiring farmers as reasons to more closely monitor and possibly restrict foreign ownership.

What You Can Do About It:

Reach out to your county government and ask if it has accurate records of foreign owned land ownership in your county. Ask your congressman to cosponsor legislation to require USDA to share its foreign owned land data with county governments in an accurate and timely manner. Right now, the total amount of foreign ownership doesn’t appear to be a major problem. However, precise monitoring of foreign ownership trends is just good public policy for the future

National Grange Roster Now Available!

"may our friendship be as firm as the stone itself"



2022
GRANGE ROSTER

The 2022 Digital Roster of Grange leaders nationwide is now available from the National Grange.

This resource provides contact information for Grange officers, staff, and Committee/Department Chairs and Directors across the country, allowing you to get in touch with other Grange leaders to share ideas and grow the Grange.

[Access the Handbook Edition here.](#)

[Access the Spreadsheet Edition here.](#)



SUPPLY STORE

www.grangestore.org



THE GRANGE MUSIC KIT

The **MUSIC KIT** includes all you need to enjoy great Grange music at your functions. Includes (1) Pianist Songbook, (1) Digital Grange Songbook CD and (1) Junior Songbook.

\$14.35 plus shipping

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

[Click Here to see a list of the 100+ songs included on the Songbook CD](#)

National Grange Member Benefit

President's Day Sales Event is here! Save up to 69% tech

Now through February 27th, the President's Day deals bring the best of Lenovo.com savings, up to 69% off legendary ThinkPad, Yoga convertibles, and Legion gaming devices for one and all, while supplies last.

Visit: www.lenovo.com/us/en/lsp

Call: 1-800-426-7235 (M-F: 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. ET, Sat: 9:00 a.m. -6:00 p.m. ET)

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



**President's Day Sales
Event is here!**

Save up to 69%

While supplies last!

 Free Shipping

Lenovo

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

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

Editor Philip J. Vonada, National Grange Communications Director. To submit a story idea for Patrons Chain or Good Day! magazine, request assistance with publicity, email pvonada@nationalgrange.org or call/text (814) 404-7985

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

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

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

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

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

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

Convention Registrations, Leasing Inquiries, Junior Department Samantha Wilkins, junior@nationalgrange.org or (210) 838-7892

Grange Youth Mandy Bostwick, youth@nationalgrange.org or (785) 250-7606

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