



The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

April 15, 2022

Diversity Task Force aims to expand

by [Betsy Huber](#), National Grange President

Happy Easter! I hope you have a wonderful, relaxing Holy Weekend with your family.

The Diversity Task Force, which reported at the 2020 National Grange Convention, is getting ready to start meeting again to continue its work identifying any unintended prejudices that may exist in our Grange work.

You may recall in the summer of 2020, with racial unrest swirling around the country and around the National Grange Headquarters building in Washington, DC, I appointed a task force with the goal to evaluate the Grange through a social justice lens to make sure that we are as welcoming in reality as we say we are in our literature. The group was also tasked to make recommendations to increase diversity and improve accessibility and inclusion within the Grange.

Several differing backgrounds, races, cultures, ages, and geographical areas were included on the original committee to ensure a diverse panel of Grangers who took extra care in evaluating the best moves for the Grange going forward.

At the 2021 Convention the delegates voted to continue the task force's work, taking a broader look at us and our traditions and procedures. They are looking to expand the committee, so if you are interested, please contact me, and let me know your willingness to participate on the committee. They will be reporting again at the 2022 Convention in Sparks, Nevada.

Advocacy Playbook – How Does the Grange Advocate for You?

by [Sean O'Neil](#), National Grange Legislative Assistant

The National Grange serves as the voice of nearly 150,000 rural Americans in Washington, D.C. by working with Congress, the White House, and the federal bureaucracy. Advocacy organizations of all sorts exist in Washington, D.C., with many depending on campaign contributions, business interests, and explicit partisan engagement such as endorsements to achieve their goals. However, the National Grange derives its influence in federal policymaking from its grassroots membership, which is spread across America. For grassroots organizations like the Grange, this makes engagement from individual members of paramount importance. Unlike paid lobbyists who typically live and work in the Washington, D.C. area, grassroots advocates can speak with firsthand experience about the issues they face, and because they are constituents who can vote for or against Congressional officials, their opinion carries more weight.

With this in mind, the National Grange hosts an annual Legislative Fly-in event, where members have the opportunity to come to Washington, D.C. to learn about and participate in advocacy directly. This year's Fly-In is taking place from April 24-27, and members will have the opportunity to hear about issues such as agriculture, health care, and broadband from national experts and elected officials.

On April 25th, Grangers will have the opportunity to hear from Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), House Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Glenn "GT" Thompson (R-PA), as well as officials from the US Department of Agriculture and the White House. The following day, Fly-In attendees will have the opportunity to go to

Capitol Hill and take part in direct advocacy on behalf of issues they care about by meeting with members of Congress and their staff. By participating in this year's Fly-In, participants will not only have the chance to learn about advocacy but will themselves be able to serve as effective advocates by taking the message of the National Grange directly to Congressional decision-makers.

While it is too late to sign-up to attend this year's National Grange Legislative Fly-In in person, Grangers who wish to hear from the event speakers can still register to attend virtually by clicking [here](#). As well, for those who cannot attend this year's fly-in, there are still many ways that you can engage in grassroots advocacy without travelling all the way to Washington, D.C. Actions as simple as writing a letter, emailing, or calling an elected official can be effective ways to advocate for policies important to you and your community. Yet more, elected officials also have offices that they maintain in the district they represent where you can often request meetings on behalf of yourself or your local Grange. So, regardless of if you are attending this year's legislative fly-in in-person, virtually, or not-at-all the National Grange encourages you to get involved in advocacy in whatever way you can because our most important and effective advocates come from the grassroots.

Upcoming Grange Month Events



During Grange Month, we encourage Grangers across the country to participate in spreading the word about Grange's advocacy for rural America, to participate in service projects, and to really take pride in being a Grange member!

Thank you to everyone who participated in **Grange Spirit Week** on social media! It was amazing to see and hear so many photos and stories about how the Grange has impacted you, your communities, and the whole country!

Coming next week, three new Grange Month Zoom events!

- **April 18** – State Secretary Seminar with Debbie Campbell, National Grange Secretary – 8:30pm Eastern on Zoom
- **April 19** – Membership Matters with Amanda Brozana Rios, National Grange Membership and Leadership Development Director – 8:30pm Eastern on Zoom
- **April 20** – Legislative Roundtable Zoom with National Grange Legislative Director Burton Eller and Legislative Assistant Sean O'Neil – 8:30pm on Zoom

All Zoom events can be accessed by visiting bit.ly/grangemonthzoom

Have you missed our past Zoom events? They're available on our [YouTube Channel](#) or on our Grange Month page!

Check out everything we have ready for you for Grange Month – these materials can be used on social media, in your newsletters and local newspapers, as posters in your Hall or community, or more!

Visit the [Grange Month 2022 page here](#).

Questions about Grange Month? [Contact Philip Vonada](#), Communications Director

Speakers slated for Legislative Fly-In



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 for Virtual Attendance on April 25
can be found here: <http://bit.ly/flyin2022>***

Speakers at the Fly-In include

- Betsy Huber, *President, National Grange*
- Burton Eller, *Legislative Director, National Grange*
- Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), *Chairwoman, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry*
- Representative Glenn Thompson (R-PA), *Ranking Member, House Agriculture Committee*
- Debbie Witchey, *Executive Vice President and CEO, Healthcare Leadership Council*
- Mike Saperstein, *General Counsel and Head of Government Affairs, Lumos Fiber*
- Brittany Jablonsky, *Vice President of Public Policy and Stakeholder Relations, Farm Credit Council*
- Jeff Winton, *Founder and Chairman, Rural Minds*

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

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

Applications open for 2022 Communication Fellows

We invite you to apply to be part of the 2022 class of Communication Fellows at the 156th Annual National Grange Convention in Sparks, Nevada. This opportunity is made possible thanks to generous funders, but there are VERY limited spots available. Those who become Fellows are expected to make time for at least three hour-long orientation/training teleconferences that will be held at least once a month starting in August and running through October, as well as a few brief assignments or projects prior to the start of the National Convention.

Throughout the program, participants receive an 8-night stay at the convention hotel, free registration, and most meals for the duration of the program. Participants are only responsible for the cost of travel and a few meals. Fellows are encouraged to bring a small amount of money for snacks, personal items and souvenirs they wish to purchase during

their time at the convention. If Fellows arrive prior to the start of the program housing date or stay after the end of the program housing date, they are also responsible for any lodging cost with the hotel. FELLOWS MUST ARRIVE AT THE HOTEL IN SPARKS BY NO LATER THAN 10am on Saturday, November 12 and can leave anytime after the close of the Celebration Banquet on Saturday, November 19 (10 p.m.) [it is recommended you plan to depart on Sunday, Nov. 20].

Fellows will hear and learn from the National President, National Grange Staff and Officers, former Communications Fellows, other communications professionals and more. Fellows will produce content for the daily convention newsletter Patrons Chain, interviews and content for our social media channels, stories/elements for Good Day! magazine, live stream events - and much more. This is hands-on training with support from many of the previous Fellows who have participated in the program since 2012. Former 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 155+ years of service.

The application is available here. Completed applications including nomination letters must be received by the start of business on July 8, 2022.

National Grange Communication Fellows

at the 2022 National Grange Convention in Sparks, Nevada

Application available at <http://bit.ly/commfellows22>

Commentary: Telehealth and Broadband Adoption

by Craig Settles

Reprinted with permission from [The Daily Yonder](#)

The need for healthcare can be a significant driver of broadband adoption. Everyone gets sick or is responsible for others who are sick. It's universal. The need to get well and stay well drives a myriad of telehealth technologies. Because you can't have most telehealth apps without broadband, every time you deploy telehealth, broadband is also in the picture. Plan on it.

"Using telehealth to drive broadband adoption is effective," said Matt Larsen in an interview. Larsen is the CEO of Wireless Internet Service Provider (WISP) Vistabeam.

"The first step is to get customers comfortable with collecting basic health data daily through an app," he said. "Vistabeam is working on a pilot project that includes a community center with a private telehealth consultation room that we will facilitate with our staff. As customers get more confident with telehealth, they will be more comfortable with using telehealth at home as well as developing other digital skills."

Frederick Memorial Hospital in Maryland is currently giving away hundreds of tablet computers and Internet access to monitor patients who have chronic ailments such as diabetes and heart diseases. The [University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences](#) (UAMS) linked 54 mostly rural hospitals via public broadband into a telestroke network that evolved to treat other acute care patients. These recovering patients are excellent candidates for broadband-delivered care.

Telehealth is ripe with the potential to create many new healthcare solutions and bring broadband adoption right along with it. The key to telehealth and broadband success is a creation-orientation. With this approach, the goal is to create something great that didn't before exist – new uses for existing structures and new methods for keeping healthy. A community can step away from conventional thinking to push the envelope or reimagine it.

Creation-Orientation Starts with Effective Needs Assessments

You want to assess the general health of the entire town or county but then examine in more detail health issues of the different populations within the jurisdiction. Certain illnesses and medical issues will be more prevalent depending on constituents' economic status, ethnicity, education, gender, and location.

Determine what is the quality of the community's healthcare, and the quality of the community's *access to healthcare*.

"Start with the county public health department," said Peter Caplan in an interview. He is the managing marketing consultant for New York-based eHealth Techniques & Options. "They are tasked with doing a county health assessment and a health improvement plan." Next, push the envelope of telehealth creativity with stakeholders such as elected officials, library directors, community activists, and unofficial leaders such as ministers, hairdressers, and Veterans of Foreign Wars posts. Here are some orienting questions to start with: If you have an immigrant population, where do they currently meet to socialize? Can telehealth be delivered there? If there is a homeless shelter nearby, does it make sense to set up a telehealth kiosk here? If there is a local gym, why not have appropriate equipment on hand to temporarily transform the gym into a telehealth center during natural disasters?

With Creative Telehealth, Broadband Adoption Follows

As communities create strategic implementations of telehealth and healthcare, determine which broadband services, tactics, and devices support the telehealth, including digital inclusion, digital and health literacy, and smart home technologies.

Reinvent the doctor's office visit: Wherever there is fast broadband available in at least 10' by 10' space, together with some healthcare partners, that's a potential spot for telehealth.

"I would designate the barbershop and salon as 'community anchor institutions,' which are the magic words broadband industry people understand," Larsen said. "Then deliver

telehealth through these anchors to drive new subscribers to the broadband network in neighborhoods around the anchor.”

Community “anchors” are creation-orientation gold mines: laundromats, commercial gyms, churches, supermarkets, Kiwanis clubs, etc. Recruit the department of health, a local ISP, and a few creative local activists and they can generate ideas that make sizable dents in the digital divide.

Marry telehealth chronic healthcare and home care: Remote patient monitoring (RPM) is an increasingly popular telehealth app. Hospitals send patients home with Internet access and devices that transmit vital signs, changing medical conditions and treatments, and can save hospitals millions of dollars.

Hospitals can increase adoption by deploying more RPM and partnering with ISPs to leverage the FCC’s Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). ACP is a subsidy of up to \$30 per month for Internet service and up to \$75 monthly for homes on qualifying Tribal lands, plus it offers a \$100 discount on devices such as laptops and tablets.

Enhance the emergency response and save more lives: Compared to urban residents, rural residents have higher rates of mortality from heart disease, respiratory disease, cancer, stroke, and unintentional injury. Low-income rural African Americans and other populations of color have the highest rates of strokes, heart attacks, and other medical trauma.

These communities are hit the hardest by hospital closings. Reverse these trends by creating telestroke or telehealth critical care “broadband subnetworks” that are hosted by major hospitals, and linked to rural Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), clinics, and other facilities. Set up broadband subsidy programs specifically for telehealth for recovering patients.

Expand efficiency of mental healthcare delivery: About 20,000 people per 100,000 in the U.S. experience some form of mental illness, but there are only 268 mental health providers for every 100,000 people. Forward-thinking cities and towns can place telehealth kiosks and fixed wireless broadband in strip malls as well as in trendy parts of town. Kiosks are discreet, relatively inexpensive, and easy to fit into the surroundings. Also, home may not be the place where some people feel safe, so libraries and churches can host telehealth sessions at their facilities. Market programs that encourage and incentivize “laptops for good mental health.”

Improve senior care and facilitate aging in place: Telehealth benefits particularly seniors wanting to receive healthcare and live safely in their homes for longer, especially as mobility issues make doctor visits harder,” said Peter Caplan of Techniques & Options. “A lot of rural communities are populated heavily with older people who suffer from chronic conditions that telehealth can address.”

Broadband planners should support infrastructure redundancies in health-related facilities in senior communities as well as smart-home and telehealth technologies. “If a senior falls, many times something will break, which leads to hospital stays, surgeries, and rehabs,” said Anthony Cirillo, president of the Aging Experience. “A person in their 70s or older who has any type of a major medical event often faces a cycle of greater complications later on.”

Broadband planners need to be a step or two ahead of the telehealth game.

Craig Settles, saved from a stroke by telehealth, pays it forward by uniting community broadband teams and healthcare stakeholders through telehealth initiatives.



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Save the Date

Regional Leaders Conferences will be here soon!

Great Plains <small>Mid-Atlantic & Southeastern</small>	June 10-12 Manhattan, Kansas	Midwest	June 24-26 Muscatine, Iowa
Eastern	June 17-19 Washington, DC	Western	August 5-7 Eugene, Oregon

For Grange members of all ages

Registration information for all conferences will be available on the National Grange website



Registration information for conferences is now [available on the National Grange website](#).

Welcome New Members!

**Mingo
Grange #1084**

**North
Carolina**

*"Welcome to the Grange,
as its doors of friendship
swing wide to receive you
into its membership."*

- President, Introduction to the
First Degree

The Submission Deadline for

Good Day!TM

and



a quarter's worth

is May 1st

Please email submissions for Good Day! to Phil: pvonada@nationalgrange.org,
and for A Quarter's Worth to Ann: lecturer@nationalgrange.org.



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www.grangestore.com

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Grange Supply Store

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This includes any seals, certificates, and membership recognition applications.

National Grange Member Benefit



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

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