



The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

April 22, 2022



Ritual brings a sense of belonging and community

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

This week I read an email that I would normally delete as spam, but this time it attracted my attention with the opening line, “Ritual appears in a lot of places in our lives...and we may not even notice.”

Grangers talk a lot about our ritual and whether we love it or hate it, think we should eliminate all ritual from our organization, or honor our history by performing the Degrees at every meeting. This article by Rob Herring (*reprinted below*) went on to say we have many rituals in our lives, like leaving flowers on a loved one’s grave—a ritual as old as humanity—that can be healing to our spiritual or even physical bodies. It’s a way of telling those who have gone on before us, I remember you, love you, and miss you. It can be comforting to the bereaved spirit.

It should be no surprise that today’s society has fewer rituals than our ancestors did. Some think that our lack of rituals or “rites of passage” contribute to teens’ searching for a sense of belonging and social acceptance through gangs, alcohol or drugs. Instead of rituals today people of all ages may turn to pharmaceuticals or counseling. But those “solutions” lack the sense of community or meaning that we used to find in simple rituals or communities like the Grange. Mr. Herring said, “In a world that is losing the value and memory of ritual, the responsibility falls on those of us with this awareness to re-integrate powerful tradition into our own lives.”

Here is another reason to encourage others to join the Grange—it can provide the ritual they need and are searching for in their busy lives.

Virtual Telethon for Juniors and Youth is coming up – seeking sponsorships, talent and testimonials

by [Mandy Bostwick](#), National Grange Youth and Young Adults Development Director

We are just 78 days away from the 2nd annual Grange Foundation Virtual Telethon! Last year Mandy Bostwick, National Grange Youth Development Director, and Samantha Wilkins, National Junior Grange Director, came up with a creative fundraising idea for the Youth and Junior Leadership Funds in the Grange Foundation to be able to continue to support Youth and Junior programming for years to come.

The two departments joined together and set a goal to raise \$20,000 last year and, after surpassing last year’s goal, they are here to do it again.



This year, they will be coming to you live on July 9th with a Fiesta-themed celebration. The 8-hour event will be live-streamed on all the National Grange Facebook pages and on the National Grange YouTube page. “Even if you can’t be there the whole time, be sure to check in throughout the day to see our fundraising progress or to watch some of the awesome talents and testimonies from Grangers across the country,” said Mandy.

During the 2022 event, you can expect to see cooking segments with National Grange Lecturer, Ann Bercher; tune in for a 2022 National Convention Sneak Peek with Lillian Booth and Martha Stefenoni, host region co-chairs; Grange Foundation Board members will be on throughout the day with live testimonies and to celebrate as funds are raised. “We are excited to continue for a second year and are looking forward to a high-energy day filled with a fun, fabulous fiesta,” said Samantha Wilkins.

Wondering how you can be involved in the telethon? You or your Grange can become

sponsors today, with sponsorships starting at \$25.

Donations of \$100 or more, will receive a FREE telethon t-shirt. You can visit the Grange Foundation website (<https://grangefoundation.org/telethon/sponsorship-levels/>) to check the different levels of sponsorship available for you or your Grange.

Talent and testimonies are still being sought for this year’s event. You can submit your video using this handy form: <https://bit.ly/2022TelethonSubmissions>. If you need help with your video submissions, contact Mandy at youth@nationalgrange.org.

So don’t siesta on this fiesta and mark your calendars for July 9th. *Viva la Grange!*



Applications for the GROW Club Academic Scholarship are due on Saturday, April 30th.

These scholarships are open to any Grange member in good standing who is also a full-time student at a university, college, or technical school.

Please apply by visiting: bit.ly/GrowClubScholarship

Upcoming Grange Month Events

A promotional graphic for Grange Month events. On the left is the Grange logo, a shield with a sheaf of wheat and the letters 'P' and 'H'. To the right are two white boxes with blue text: 'APRIL 27 Online Trivia Zoom Night 9:00 p.m. eastern' and 'APRIL 29 E-Member Forum Zoom 9:00 p.m. eastern'. The background is a field of golden wheat under a blue sky with clouds. In the top right corner, the text 'RAISED RIGHT HERE™' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the text '#GRANGESTORY #GRANGEMONTH22 USE LINK: BIT.LY/GRANGEMONTHZOOM' is on the left, and 'GRANGE MONTH' is written in large, bold, blue letters on the right.

APRIL 27
Online Trivia Zoom
Night
9:00 p.m. eastern

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RIGHT
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#GRANGESTORY
#GRANGEMONTH22
USE LINK: [BIT.LY/GRANGEMONTHZOOM](https://bit.ly/grangemonthzoom)

GRANGE MONTH

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!

Coming next week, the final two events for Grange Month!

- **April 27** – Online Trivia Zoom Night – 9:00pm Eastern on Zoom – *teams of 4 will play, but don't worry if you don't have a team, we will partner you up when you log in!*
- **April 29** – E-Member Forum with Amanda Brozana Rios, National Grange Membership and Leadership Development Director – 9:00pm Eastern on Zoom – *this meeting is for National Grange E-members to learn more about the Grange!*

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

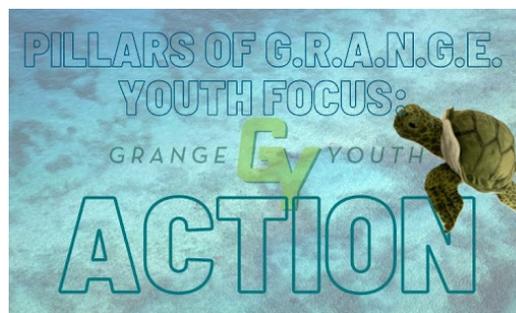
Grange Month Challenge: National Grange Youth Trash Pick-Up

By [Mandy Bostwick](#), National Grange Youth and Young Adults Director

The National Grange Youth Department is challenging State and Local Grange Youth to organize a trash pick-up day in their community during Grange Month (April) and in celebration of Earth Day. In the [linked Google Doc](#) you will find full details, a helpful link to start your organizing as well as a fill-in-the-blank press release to use after your event. Any event organized counts towards the G.R.A.N.G.E.

Youth Pillar Projects that can be found in the 2022 Handbook and on the [National Grange Youth Website](#).

Please pass this information on to the youth in your state and with your local Granges. Be sure to send Mandy photos (and media releases) to be shared on our social media pages! I can't wait to see all of the amazing work put in and our Grange Youth in ACTION! This is meant to be a quick and simple way to get your youth involved in their community and can be planned easily via Zoom, Google Meets, etc.



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.

Speakers at the Fly-In will 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 “GT” 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/>

[Click Here to be a part of the Fly-In Virtual Day on Monday!](#)

The Power of Ritual

by Rob Herring, *Executive Director, [Earth Conscious Life](#)*

Ritual appears in a lot of places in our lives...

...and we may not even notice.

More importantly, we may underestimate the power of these rituals, and the positive impacts they have on our health: spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.

Still, something that seems so simple could be the glue holding our lives and relationships together. But why? And how?

Rituals can help give our lives meaning and restore our connections with spirituality, the world, and others.

What's more, they can trigger a healing process in ourselves and our loved ones that nothing else could even come close to.

For hundreds (if not thousands) of years, ritual was foundational to healing of all types, in many different cultures and regions all over the world.

From simple and personal, to elaborate and communal, this type of healing didn't work like pills, surgery, or even supplements— but on a spiritual or social level instead.

An example of a small and simple ritual: leaving flowers on a loved one's grave.

Most people may not think much of it, but this ritual is as old as humanity itself. (Did you know that the oldest archeological burial sites almost always include flowers?)

It's a way of remembering and communing with loved ones once lost.

Regardless of what you believe in, it's a way of telling the dead: "I remember you, love you, and miss you."

In this way, the ritual can be healing.

It helps someone process and move through their grief. In fact, it could be seen symbolically as transforming grief into something new: with flowers representing life and rebirth.

On the other hand, we have bigger rituals in our cultures that many of us see as even more strongly associated with healing.

A good example: the sweat lodge, sauna, or temezcal ceremonies.

These rituals can have powerful detoxifying effects on the body.

But symbolically, they are also meant to represent purification and detoxification of the soul, and even collective purification when done in a group (with all participants witnessing and supporting one another's purification).

Rituals can have powerful effects, lots of meaning, and even bring us together in an emotional way...

...that physical remedies might not be able to.

But what happened to ritual in Western culture?

We still do have some strong rituals. But not as many as our ancestors did.

And unlike back then, these rituals aren't front and center to modern healing.

Some theorize that a society's lack of 'rites of passage' (especially for teens and those coming into adulthood) creates the conditions for youngsters to seek out mischief, alcohol, drugs, or other forms of 'initiation' around the high school and college years to achieve a feeling 'crossing' into a new stage of social acceptance.

For all age groups, instead of rituals, our go-to healing methods are pharmaceuticals, surgery, or visiting a psychologist.

What is lacking in those other forms of medicine (though they do have their place!) is a sense of connectedness to humanity, community, significance, and meaning...

...things that conventional medicine couldn't even get close to, especially in sterile places like hospital rooms or psychiatry offices.

We also lack rituals that help connect us to nature and the earth.

Our ancestors had rituals that honored the rise and fall of the sun, the bounty of harvest season, and the inextricable bond we share with planet earth...

...because you are part of the planet, and the planet is part of you.

In a world that is losing the value and memory of ritual, the responsibility falls on those of us with this awareness to re-integrate powerful tradition into our own lives.

Times are always changing, but it's possible that a revolution into a true regenerative, healing future is one which circles back to many older or even ancient traditions.

I hope you can take a moment to ask yourself: what rituals do you hold onto to help heal your family, your community, and even honor your connection with nature around you?

It could be something simple...even the simplest rituals have immense power.

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 or 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 any time 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.](http://bit.ly/commfellows22) Completed applications including nomination letters must be received by the start of business on July 8, 2022.

Registration information for conferences is [available on the National Grange website](http://www.nationalgrange.org).

Biden-Harris Administration Launches Nationwide Network of Partners to Tap Resources for Rural America

Press release from the USDA

April 20, 2022 - U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack and White House Domestic Policy Advisor Susan Rice today announced a new whole-of-government effort led by USDA to transform the way federal agencies partner with rural places to create economic opportunity in rural America. The USDA-led [Rural Partners Network](#) (RPN) is an all-of-government program that will help rural communities access government resources and funding to create jobs, build infrastructure and support long-term economic stability.

This announcement is part of the Biden-Harris Administration's [Building a Better America Rural Infrastructure Tour](#), during which Biden Administration officials are traveling to dozens of rural communities to talk about the impact of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law investments, as well as President Biden's broader commitment to ensure federal resources reach all communities in rural America.

"Under the leadership of President Biden and Vice President Harris, USDA and its federal partners are committed to unlocking the full potential of rural America by investing in its people and the unique visions they have for the places they call home," Vilsack said. "Rural America is incredibly diverse – economically, racially, culturally and geographically. What makes sense for one community may not for another. The Rural Partners Network will help communities get funding for investments that create long-lasting benefits for their communities, especially those that have been overlooked in the past. By providing one-on-one support to these communities, we can lay the foundation for people to build healthy, successful futures on their own terms."

Background: Rural Partners Network

The Rural Partners Network is a first-of-its-kind collaboration between federal agencies and local leaders and residents. This Network is focused on improving social and economic well-being bolstered by existing local partnerships and assets. The Network will launch in selected communities in Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, New Mexico as well as certain Tribes within Arizona. Community networks within these states will receive individualized support with the expertise to navigate federal programs, build relationships and identify additional resources to promote community-driven solutions.

Each community network will be supported by a Rural Partners Network team to help address that community's specific needs and concerns, building on local assets. Network staff will also be responsible for sharing lessons learned from selected communities with federal agencies in D.C. to ensure rural communities have a voice in policymaking. Policy development will occur through regular convenings of the Rural Prosperity Interagency Policy Council, co-led by USDA and the Domestic Policy Council. There are 16 federal agencies and regional commissions participating in the Council.

Read the full release here: <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2022/04/20/biden-harris-administration-launches-nationwide-network-partners>

The Submission Deadline for

Good Day!™

and

 a quarter's worth

is May 1st

Please email submissions for *Good Day!* to Phil: pvnada@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 Jewelry is now in stock at the Grange Store. Pins include years of service and member recognition pins from 5-80 years, past officer pins, degree recognition pins, and much more!

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Prices vary

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



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