



# The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

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## Available educational programs can expand your Grange's reach

By [Betsy E. Huber](#), National Grange President

If you've been paying attention to news from National Grange, you've heard that we have several upcoming opportunities for Granges to participate in educational programs to benefit their members and neighbors. I'll review them here briefly. Your Grange does not have to be involved in them all, but I encourage you to join in at least one of these opportunities.

1. [Rural Minds](#) partnership – see Pete Pompper's article in this issue. Surveys showed that the suicide rate in rural America is 65% greater than in urban areas. Shocking! We have information and educational materials available to you so you can make a difference in this statistic. On our website, [nationalgrange.org](http://nationalgrange.org), search for "Rural Minds" to learn more, and look at [Ruralminds.org](http://Ruralminds.org) for available information.
2. National Grange will disseminate a pre-surgery guide and a post-surgery guide and support website to optimize post-surgery discharge care, both based on prior research, providing these patients with actionable information needed to understand their condition, to help them make informed care decisions, to facilitate shared decision making, to prepare for surgery, and to allow their families and caretakers to provide best practices aftercare. Similar to our cancer program in 2020, we will provide each Grange with a flash drive complete program you can present to your members or at a community meeting. (Contingent on our winning this grant.)
3. National Grange will provide information to assist your Grange in promoting the [Affordable Connectivity Program](#), an FCC program to provide qualifying low-income households with a monthly discount of up to \$30 a month for broadband services, and a one-time \$100 discount on a connected device (tablet, laptop, or computer) with a co-pay of at least \$10 but no more than \$50. Many eligible people are not aware of this benefit. As you know the Grange has worked for rural broadband expansion for more than 20 years, and we believe that addressing affordability is a critical component of closing the digital divide. We hope you will participate in this educational program when it becomes available. (Contingent on our winning this grant.)
4. The 2020 program "[What to Do With a Cancer Diagnosis](#)" is still available on our website and still a great program to share.
5. We are investigating a new opportunity, Farmshare, an affinity marketplace to connect small farmers/food producers with a customer base for online marketing and sales. If

you have a small business selling produce, value-added food products, etc, and are interested in learning more, please [contact me](#).

6. New projects and opportunities are appearing each day! Please share these with your membership and stay tuned for more information.

## Growing Hope Together

By [Pete Pompper](#), National Grange Community Service Director



This tagline says so much to me the more I think about it since it was adopted by the partnership between the National Grange and [Rural Minds](#). We have been working together for over a year to bring that message to our communities through our Granges. This partnership, along with the Partnership Council on which the National Grange has two seats, has two focus points: one is suicide awareness and prevention, and the other is rural mental health issues and reducing the stigma surrounding them. The more research I do, I am realizing these topics are multifaceted and affect so many different demographics differently.

Because of this, we at the National Grange leadership level are all working on this in different ways. We are all working towards a common goal along with the leadership at Rural Minds. There are weekly - and sometimes daily - phone calls between the National Grange (Burton Eller) and Rural Minds (Jeff Winton and Chuck Strand) when new ideas, topics, or meetings occur. This forward momentum is great to see, and the Grange is at the forefront and helping lead the way in "Growing Hope Together."

We are working on some exciting future plans that will bring several leading groups together to discuss suicide awareness and rural mental health in a forum open to members and non-members alike. As these plans evolve, we will keep you informed and give you the opportunity to be part of it.

I personally applaud the Granges who have already reached out to Rural Minds and other mental health groups in their communities and held public meetings on these topics. From emails and conversations I have had, these programs have been overwhelmingly attended and appreciated in the communities. Cuba Grange #799 (NY) held a Grange Youth weekend recently and invited Jeff Winton (Rural Minds) and Teresa McMahon ([NY FarmNet](#)) to speak. They not only had Grange members there, but 20-25 community members attended and interacted with both speakers. Clifton Springs Grange #1042 (NY) and Pioneer Grange #1 (NJ) are both planning meetings on suicide prevention and rural mental health awareness this spring.

I bring these up to say thank you to all of them for realizing the importance of these issues in their communities and taking the lead to put these meetings together. I have had several Grange members call me (609-820-6239) to discuss holding programs like these and how they can do it.

Leaders at the National Grange are working on some suggestions and guidelines to help with this, but I encourage Granges to move forward in your communities. These topics are important to address, and the Granges are leading the way. We are learning from you and everything you are doing. Keep up the good work and feel free to contact [Ann Bercher](#), [Burton Eller](#), or [myself](#) if you have questions or comments to help our communities in "Growing Hope Together".

I encourage you to go to Rural Minds website: [RuralMinds.org](#) for some very useful and pertinent information on these topics.

## The disproportionate impact of cancer on rural communities

*A new report from the National Grange*



Cancer is the second most common cause of death in the United States. But thanks to new innovations to screen, diagnose and treat cancer, mortality rates have been steadily decreasing across the country. Unfortunately, as a new study by the National Grange with data analytics firm Xcenda reveals, this decline has not been experienced equally.

The study finds that compared to urban areas, rural communities have overall higher rates of cancer incidence, late-stage diagnoses, and mortality – and the urban-rural disparity in cancer mortality has been steadily widening over the last decade. Rural areas also generally have lower self-reported rates of preventive screenings for colorectal, breast, and cervical cancer.

### Key Findings of the Report

- Nationwide, cancer deaths in rural areas are 14% higher than urban areas and the urban-rural disparity in cancer death rates is getting worse.
- The 5-year cancer survival rate for all cancers was 8% lower in rural areas compared to urban areas.
- Rural areas are behind urban areas when it comes to getting preventive screenings.
- Concerning colon and lung cancer specifically, the rates of both cancers found at late-stages were higher in rural areas than urban areas.

[Read the report and view the results on the National Grange website.](#)

On February 14, join National Grange Membership and Leadership Development Director Amanda Brozana Rios to talk about lessons in love and leadership and how the two are interconnected. Membership Matters starts at 8:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month in 2023 (except November). Everyone is welcome to attend.

[Click Here to Join!](#)

## Advocacy Playbook: The Debt Limit

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

The new 118<sup>th</sup> Congress has brought with it a return to divided partisan control of the levers of power in Washington, D.C. As a result, many of the must-do legislative actions of this Congress will be more challenging and time-consuming to address. The first must-do action comes in the form of the need to raise the debt limit. The debt limit is a cap set by Congress on the amount of money that the federal government is authorized to borrow to meet ongoing fiscal obligations.

It is important to note that the debt limit does not control future or new spending by the federal government; it only controls borrowing to meet existing spending authorized by Congress. Congress has never failed to raise the debt limit when necessary, and has done so 78 separate times since 1960 under Congresses and Presidencies of both parties. Should Congress fail to raise the debt limit before the cap is hit, which is estimated to come sometime in the coming summer, then the federal government would default on its fiscal obligations, certainly causing serious economic turmoil.

House Republicans have made clear that they will not vote to raise the debt limit if Democrats in the Senate and White House don't agree to certain terms. The House Republican demands vary significantly depending on which member of Congress is asked, but all generally center around some amount of future spending cuts or an agreement to not spend over a certain amount of money in the future. Currently, Democrats have demanded that Republicans outline a specific set of demands before they are willing to begin negotiations surrounding a deal to pass a debt limit increase. Many Democrats have also argued that the debt limit should be raised without any conditions, pointing to recent debt limit increases which occurred under President Trump without any conditions as precedents. For the time being, neither side looks likely to budge in its position, but a compromise must be found in order to avoid serious economic consequences.

If you want to get involved in the discussion surrounding the debt limit increase, one useful way you can advocate for yourself and your community 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 your position clear. As well, try to include a story about how the potential spending cuts or a debt default could 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 to support or oppose a bill, and extra weight is given to those contacts which include personal stories

## Grange Month Materials



Grange Month is just around the corner – April will be here before we know it!

Over the next few weeks, keep checking the [Grange Month 2023](#) page on the National Grange website as more things will be added!



Stay tuned for information on **Grange Spirit Week** which will be celebrated April 16-22. We are in year two of our "Raised Right Here," theme. This year, we encourage our Granges to use the theme to celebrate building strong communities – of all sorts! The network of the Grange community is strong, and we work to make the communities where our Granges function strong, too!

During Grange Month, there will be online forums and events with many of the National Grange officers and Directors – please encourage your Grange members to attend! That calendar will be available in mid-March.



## SUPPLY STORE

[www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org)

### COMMUNITY CITIZEN AWARD



## \$12.00

PLUS SHIPPING

Order with paperweight for just \$8 more!

This Award is perfect to be presented to those who make a difference in your community. Presented in a vinyl navy folder with the Grange emblem on the front.

Wording: *"In recognition of outstanding service to this community and mankind. Your dedication and personal involvement are gratefully and sincerely acknowledged by the members of..."*

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



## SUPPLY STORE

[www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org)

### VINTAGE GRANGE HALL DEDICATION PLAQUE

*Limited number available!*



Place your engraving here!

Grange Hall Dedication plaques from 1947 – made of wood with felt backing.

11.5" x 13" with space for your Grange to place a dedication engraving.

Handmade – may have some imperfections – ***sold as-is.***

**\$25.00**

*with free shipping!*

Get yours by ordering online through the Grange Supply Store at [grangestore.org](http://grangestore.org) or by calling Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109.

FIRE SALE!

## Grange Member Benefit: Lenovo Presidents' Day Deals



### **Save up to 75% off tech and more**

Lenovo's Presidents Day sale brings monumental savings of up to 75% off PLUS 2x MyLenovo Rewards, now through Feb. 26th, 2023.

**Not a MyLenovo Rewards Member?** Sign up and earn rewards for future purchases. Plus, you'll receive expedited delivery at no extra cost!

### **Looking to upgrade? Start with Think.**

Get great deals on ThinkPads, ThinkBooks, & ThinkCentre PCs.

**Shop Now:** [www.lenovo.com/us/en/lsp](http://www.lenovo.com/us/en/lsp)

**For assistance with purchases, 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.*

An advertisement for Grange Jewelry. On the left, a vertical banner reads "SUPPLY STORE" in blue. In the center, four circular images showcase different jewelry items: a blue circular pin with a gold emblem and "5 YEARS" text, a blue circular pin with a gold emblem and "75 YEARS" text, a gold circular pin with a blue emblem and "P H" text, and a blue star-shaped pin with a gold emblem. To the right, text reads: "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!" Below this, it says "Some jewelry is now on clearance!" and "Prices vary". At the bottom, it says "Order online through the Grange Supply Store at [grangestore.com](http://grangestore.com) or by calling Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109." A gold banner at the bottom contains the website "www.grangestore.com".

## **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](mailto:betsy@nationalgrange.org) or by phone at (484) 459-1957

**Editor** Philip J Vonada, National Grange Communications Director. Contact to submit a story idea for Patrons Chain or *Good Day!* magazine, request assistance with publicity, business cards, and more. Email [pvonada@nationalgrange.org](mailto:pvonada@nationalgrange.org) or call/text (814) 404-7985

**Leadership Training and Membership Development** Amanda Brozana Rios, National Grange Membership, and Leadership Development Director. Contact to learn more about membership recruitment or how to start or reorganize a Grange, leadership training and more. Email at [abrozana@nationalgrange.org](mailto:abrozana@nationalgrange.org) or call/text (301) 943-1090

**Legislative and Policy Issues** Director Burton Eller, *National HQ*, ext. 114 or email [beller@nationalgrange.org](mailto:beller@nationalgrange.org); Assistant Sean O'Neil, *National HQ*, email [soneil@nationalgrange.org](mailto:soneil@nationalgrange.org)

**Membership Recognition, Grange Supply Sales, Grange Programs and Member Benefits** Loretta Washington, *National HQ*, ext. 109 or email [sales@nationalgrange.org](mailto: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](mailto:swilkins@nationalgrange.org)

**Lecturer** Ann Bercher, [lecturer@nationalgrange.org](mailto:lecturer@nationalgrange.org) or (612) 501-1231

**Junior and Youth Programming** Samantha Wilkins, [samantha@nationalgrange.org](mailto:samantha@nationalgrange.org) or (210) 838-7892

**Community Service** Pete Pompper [communityservice@nationalgrange.org](mailto:communityservice@nationalgrange.org) or (609) 820-6239

**Grange Foundation** Chairperson Joan C. Smith [ngfb@grange.org](mailto:ngfb@grange.org) or (571) 662-7220