

The Patrons Chain – April 2016

Happy Grange Month!

April 2016



The Patrons Chain

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

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Ruling expands options for Grange attendance, involvement

BY JOE STEFENONI

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Over the last 148 years the Grange has seen many advances in technology and improvements to rural life. Our generation is no different than our Grange forbearers, when at the end of March National Master/President Betsy Huber issued a ruling that allows Grange members to participate in Grange meeting via electronic methods (phone, video conference, etc.). Through this ruling, Grange members will now be able to attend and vote in the Grange meeting without being physically present at the meeting.



In her ruling, Master Huber stated,

“In today’s world, people are much more mobile than in 1867 or even 1967. Grangers are required to travel for their employment or even move to another part of the country or world. Grange members proudly serve in the armed forces or the Peace Corps, far away from their communities. Some Grangers temporarily relocate to warmer climates for several months of the year. Our youth may live at college for 8 months out of the year. Grangers may be nursing home residents or may be temporarily home-bound. Many of these members would like to remain connected to their home Grange while they may be unable to attend in person, and certainly their home Granges would appreciate their participation and input.”

While virtual attendance at a Grange meeting will be new for some of our Granges, there are Community Granges that are models of success for this format. Queen City Grange #1298 of Charlotte, NC was organized in February of 2012 and from its inception has met through a combination of in person and electronic means. They utilize group emails as well as website jotform for any voting they might need to conduct. Queen City Grange President Jessica Horton said that “since we have members living over an hour apart, across a large city, it’s just too hard to get everyone together on a regular basis.”

The members of Queen City Grange aren’t strangers to one another. Other than Grange meetings, members participate in community events together and conduct service projects as a group. This year Queen City Grange members will be attending Herb Fest and Moo & Brew where proceeds go to benefit the Second Harvest Food Bank of Metolina. As community service their Grange puts together backpacks for school children and sponsors “angels” at Christmas time. They use email to coordinate dates and time for when to complete their projects.

Sister Horton offered some advice for Granges looking to start utilizing an electronic medium for their members to participate in Grange meetings.

- Collect emails from all your members and be sure to capture an email on your membership application
- Create a professional email address for your Master/President so that it can be passed along when a change of leadership occurs. This will also make you appear more professional to outside groups and non-members.

◇ president@queencitygrange.com or QCGrangePresident@gmail.com are some examples of emails outside the grange.org system

◇ The National Grange offers free emails for each grange. Contact Stephanie Wilkins at information@nationalgrange.org to get an @grange.org email address!

- Start things with a welcome email from the Master/President of the Grange, letting everyone know what are the protocols/etiquette
- Don’t spam members with a high amount of emails. Send only one to two emails a month with all the necessary updates, not two emails a week.

I encourage all Granges to find a way to use this medium as a way of being able to include more people in their Grange meetings. This format will be a way to include college students, members serving in the military and

members who travel to maintain connections with their local Grange and take an active role in the progress of their Community Grange.



Grange Month theme is a cornerstone of our Order

BY BETSY HUBER

National Grange Master | betsy@nationalgrange.org

Access—that's what the Grange has been all about for 149 years. From the very beginning members joined together to work for access to education, to markets, to mail delivery. In the early 1900s the Grange worked for access to research through Land Grant Universities and the Cooperative Extension Service, to electricity and telephone, to leadership training for youth which turned into 4-H and FFA organizations.

More recently we have been vocal in advocating for access to broadband internet service for rural areas. Broadband would also provide better access to education and healthcare. A person's address should not determine his level of basic services.



Available on our website is a great video about Rural Free Delivery and the Grange's involvement in advocating for it. I recommend you take a few minutes to view this and then arrange to show it at your next Grange meeting. This was included in the Grange Month packet for Granges to use for a town hall meeting on the topic of access. If you missed it for Grange Month you can still do it in May or June!

Maybe there is an access issue in your hometown. Is the park accessible to wheelchairs? Does your library have computers that people can use? Is your Grange Hall handicap-accessible? This could lead to a project that your Grange can tackle and involve the whole community. A big part of Grange is serving others and we should be always looking for new ways to help out.

The Grange has always provided access for members to government officials. As an individual you may not feel your voice is heard in your state Capitol or in Washington. But combined with thousands of Grangers across the country, we are recognized as a major force for rural/suburban America. I hope your Grange is taking advantage of this voice to write resolutions, hold legislative banquets, candidates forums, and town hall meetings to let your officials know your opinions on timely topics. They really are interested in what your wishes are! Develop a relationship with your officials and you will have even greater access to them.

The Grange gives its members so many opportunities! I hope you are taking advantage of all our organization has

to offer, and celebrating its accomplishments during Grange Month and all through the year.



Secretary Vilsack to Speak at Grange Convention

BY AMANDA LEIGH BROZANA

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BY STEPHANIE TILLER

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U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack has confirmed that he will attend the 150th Annual National Grange Convention in November and serve as the keynote speaker at the Salute to Ag Breakfast on Wednesday, Nov. 16.

“It’s very fitting that the Secretary speaks to the Grange because of our history with that office,” National Grange President Betsy Huber said. “The National Grange was one of the most influential and primary champions of this position achieving status as a member of the president’s cabinet, which happened in 1889.”

The convention, the theme of which is “Power of the Past, Force of the Future,” will be held from Nov. 15-19 at the Hilton Dulles, in Herndon, Va., just miles outside of Washington, D.C.

Vilsack is the 30th Secretary of Agriculture, and in his more than six years at the Department, he has worked to implement programs that put Americans to work and create a strong economy.



Tom Vilsack, U.S. Secretary
of Agriculture

[***Click here to learn more and register today***](#)



**Power of the Past,
Force of the Future**

Washington, DC | November 15-19, 2016

As chair of the first-ever White House Rural Council, Secretary Vilsack and USDA are taking steps to strengthen services for rural businesses and entrepreneurs by finding new ways to make the connection between the demand for investment in rural areas and the financial community.

Prior to his appointment as Secretary, Vilsack served two terms as the Governor of Iowa, in the Iowa State Senate and as the mayor of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. A native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Vilsack was born into an orphanage and adopted in 1951. After graduating Hamilton College and Albany Law School in New York, he moved to Mt. Pleasant, his wife Christie’s hometown, where he practiced law. The Vilsacks have two adult sons and two

daughters-in-law – Doug, married to Janet; and Jess, married to Kate. They also have four grandchildren.

A limited number of tickets will be available for this meal and many other functions of the convention. Ensure your seat by registering early for convention. Registration is now open.

Early planning will save you money. Those who register by Sept. 2 for convention will save \$5 on registration and are assured the group rate at the hotel – a dramatic reduction from regular pricing.

For those of you who have never attended a convention, this is an amazing experience. Members from around the country say they made friends for a lifetime attending previous conventions and we expect this anniversary event to be no different.

In addition to the banquets and other traditionally scheduled events at convention, we are taking advantage of all that will be around us in our nation's capital city.

The Junior tour will reflect the theme of the convention, having Juniors tour the Sully Plantation, completed in 1799 and used as a homestead and working farm of the Lee family and the Smithsonian IMAX Theater showing at Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum.

General and Youth tour participants will visit to the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History or American History, or both. Buses will bring you to Union Station for dinner on your own. After dinner you will take a guided tour of Washington, DC monuments at night, with stops at the Lincoln Memorial, Korean War Memorial, World War II Memorial, Vietnam War Memorial, FDR Memorial and more.

If your State Grange or other group is planning a bus trip to this year's convention, please have the group leader contact Host Committee Co-chair Jessie Cope jessica.cope.events@gmail.com to confirm special arrangements.



Grange Month brings blue and gold to Members' Social Profiles

BY AMANDA LEIGH BROZANA

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Many of you may have noticed over the past few months the Facebook and Twitter profile pictures of your friends and people you follow appear with rainbow or red, white and blue filters, include the logo of FFA or 4-H or show active support for other causes right alongside the image of the person you know.

These have been extremely effective campaigns, allowing members of these organizations who do not know each other but feel a common bond to connect on social media and to visibly show their affiliation and support for the organization they hold dear.

These overlays are often called “twibbons,” named after the most widely used of platforms on which these are created and distributed.

Now you can show your support and Grange Pride by adding a twibbon to your profile. It's simple and free.



Members can go to twibbon.com/support/nationalgrange and connect your Facebook and/or Twitter accounts. Once connected, you can click to “Add to Facebook” or “Add to Twitter.” Your current profile picture will be imported and the filter or overlay will automatically be added.

You will be able to preview the way your photo will appear before it is posted. The Grange logo appears in the bottom right corner, so you may wish to change your current profile picture before applying the twibbon so your face or other important part of the image isn't covered. You can do this directly from the preview screen, changing it to any image you uploaded previously to that social network.

Once you are happy with the profile image, click “Add the Twibbon to (Facebook/Twitter)” again. This adds the image to your uploaded photos, but does not automatically make the change. Instead, you must do two more easy things to complete the process. First, click “Set as your (Facebook/Twitter) profile picture” and the site will automatically take you to your Facebook or Twitter, to the image added. You must then hover over the image or click on the image and at the bottom click “Make Profile Picture” in order for the image to be set and seen by your friends.

If you scroll farther down on the twibbon page, you can also find three Facebook cover photo options you can add to further show your affiliation. The include “Country Girl by birth; Granger by the Grace of God,” “Country Boy by birth; Granger by the Grace of God,” and “Rural Certified, Grange Proud.”

These twibbons are important not just during Grange Month, but anytime you are looking to promote the Grange. These are especially important to include during any recruitment campaigns your local Grange is holding, when your Grange is working on an issues-based campaign in your hometown, county or state level, or to help promote nearly 150 years of Grange.



Expect other twibbons to be released as we near our 150th Anniversary in 2017.

Store holding Grange Month Sale on Cooking Bundle

BY LORETTA WASHINGTON

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Before Grange Month ends, make sure to take advantage of our Cooking Bundle sale by ordering items to show off your Grange pride and prepare amazing foods.

This month, you can purchase a set of Grange Apron, Grange Cookie Cutters (3 pc.) and Grange Cookbook, "What's Cookin' in the Grange," for the set price of \$20 plus shipping. Or you can purchase one or several of each item for the discounted prices listed on our sale flyer, located at <http://pos.li/xaN>.

To order, call (202) 628-3507 ext. 109 or email
sales@nationalgrange.org.



Special set (apron, cookbook, cookie cutters) sale runs through April 30. Discounted pricing on all items will last until sold out.



New Partnership Announced

The National Grange recently partnered with National Farm to School Network to advocate for safe, nutritious, locally and regionally sourced fresh foods for school-aged children.

The NFSN was founded in 2007 and allows individuals interested in farm to school initiatives **sign up for free as members** on its website, www.farmtoschool.org.

Members receive regular updates and can tap in on the network's vast array of resources.

We look forward to gathering materials that Granges can use to educate members and their communities about farm to school and other locally sourced food initiatives.

Granger can attend the 8th National Farm to Cafeteria Conference, June 2-4 in Madison, Wisc.

This event is the only national gathering of stakeholders from across the farm to cafeteria movement, making it a crucial [leadership development](#) opportunity to advance community health, build economic opportunities for farmers and producers, and ensure long-term sustainability for local food efforts nationwide. Registration is open now, including pre-conference short courses and field trips. Event organizers expect more than 1,500 attendees, and the last event sold out before the registration deadline, so don't wait.



Registration closes May 16. Learn more at farmtocafeteriaconference.org.

2016 Fly-In Participants get First-in-the-Nation Primary Experience

BY BURTON ELLER

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This February, 30 Grangers from across the country took part in the annual National Grange Fly-In, hosted by the New Hampshire State Grange and the State Grange Legislative and Agriculture Department. Participants, including several National Officers and three “generations” of National Grange Legislative Directors, spent Feb. 4-7 learning about state government and participating in various ways with campaigns of their choice in the “First-in-the-Nation” primary.

About one-third of the participants were Grange Youth, some getting the experience before they would cast their first ballot for president.

Fly-in participants then went to work on the Campaign of their choice. Some Grangers knocked on doors for up to five hours. One participant even rode with DC-based campaign staff for a former presidential candidate to Portsmouth to help in the door-to-door effort. Others worked phone banks and a couple did a sign wave.

Some participants chose not to work campaigns but instead attend a rally, later meeting with the rest of the group at the Radisson Hotel in downtown Manchester, the site of the 2013 National Grange Convention, that had been turned into ground zero for media and candidates stopping through. Over the weekend a few attendees were able to get their photos with then-candidates Rubio and Carson.

Attendees also learned a lot about the primary process in the state and the state’s unique and highly representative government. They toured State House, including the offices of the Secretary of State, the Minority office and the Speaker’s Office, and sat in on briefings in a room where the state’s House Committee on Environment and Agriculture meets. New Hampshire Commissioner of Agriculture Lorraine Merrill and the House Minority Leader Steve Shertleff also spoke to participants.

New Hampshire Secretary of State Bill Gardner spent more than an hour talking about the history of the primary that celebrated its 100th year in 2016. He showed off one of the first ballot boxes used in a primary and talked about the legislation written by New Hampshire State Representative Stephen Bullock – a Grange member from Southern Cheshire County – to set up the primary process used throughout much of the nation today.

Scott Spradling, formerly of WMUR was the keynote speaker for the morning, who discussed what it takes to win the

primary in New Hampshire and how it differs so greatly from other states. Kevin Landrigan from NH1 News spoke about the primary from the local media perspective.

One evening, participants enjoyed dinner at the Barley House, a restaurant not far from the State House building, touted as “Where the Presidential Campaigns Begin.”

Hosts for the weekend were state representatives and Grange members, Bob Haefner, Chairman of the Committee on Environment and Agriculture, and Tara Sad, who serves as the same committee’s ranking minority member.

In all, about a dozen New Hampshire State Grange members worked hard over the weekend to facilitate this amazing event. They drove, coordinated and even made and served breakfast on Saturday morning at the New Hampshire State Grange headquarters that included local eggs, bacon, sausage, home fries and pancakes with

New Hampshire maple syrup and homemade blueberry muffins.

