

Patrons Chain – August 2016

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August Issue



The Patrons Chain

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

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We Can Make a Difference in the Face of Unrest

BY BETSY HUBER

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This year has seen some horrible incidents of violence in our cities and small towns. Our country seems to be going crazy; we may feel afraid to leave our homes or local communities. We probably all feel powerless to help or to do something to change the angry mood of our society.

I was impressed by a statement made by President Obama following one of the recent episodes. He suggested three things that every person CAN do to change our world.

1. Bring back to your community a set of straightforward steps you can take right now to make a difference. Immediately to my mind came the thought of our Law Enforcement Officer of the Year award through the Community Service Department. The very difficult job of police officer has been made so much more dangerous and thankless by recent unprovoked attacks on officers just because they wear the uniform. Make a difference in your local community by honoring one of your local officers with the Grange award. While you're at it, give the Teacher of the Year and Firefighter of the Year awards too. Granges could really raise their profile in their communities by giving these awards annually.
2. Become a mentor – ensure that every young person in America knows that as a country we believe in them. In the Grange we are so fortunate that this is easy for us– we have the Junior Grange and the Youth Department! Recognize and support the members of your Junior Grange or your One-Plus Junior members (see website nationaljuniorgrange.org for more information.) Encourage them to enter the contests, participate in camps and activities, perform or give speeches at your meetings. Encourage your youth members to take leadership roles on committees or as officers. Ask them to help your Grange with technology issues, or talk about their educational experiences. In the Grange we are mentors without even trying!
3. Keep the conversation going in your community to build bonds with new people, seek out new viewpoints, and share your stories and examples. What better place to keep the conversation going than in the Grange! We've been doing just that for 149 years. Hold open meetings or community nights. Always invite neighbors and friends to attend your meetings and activities. Show how the Grange is relevant today by having discussions on current issues, both national and local. Yes, we are strictly nonpartisan, but we do take positions on legislation in our local, state, and federal governments. Often all it takes to revitalize a Grange is a good local controversy!

Yes, we CAN make a difference, and it's a lot easier when we join together as a Grange to work on these three things that truly could change our world for the better.



National Grange Presents First Edition of “Daily Journal of the Rambles of O.H. Kelley” Online

BY BRUCE CROUCHER

National Grange [High Priest of Demeter](#) | croubr@fltg.net

Many members of the Grange are familiar with the story of O. H. Kelley, assigned by President Andrew Johnson to make a tour of the southern states after the Civil War to assess the condition of agriculture. During his travels, Kelley kept a daily journal, from which he would eventually make his report. It is said that it was on this trip he found his membership in the Masonic Order helpful in obtaining the trust of farmers in the south who in turn became helpful with his research.

It was also on this trip where he had a vision of a farm fraternity that would help to heal the wounds of the Civil War and become an instrument to increase the knowledge and elevate the status of farmers in American society.



Recently, while looking through the written archives at the National Grange Headquarters, I came upon a typewritten copy of the Kelley Journal. Past Master Edward Luttrell was able to digitize the document.

Worth Master Huber agreed that it would be a great addition to our Sesquicentennial Celebration to share the work with our membership. The first installment of the journal has been placed on the National Grange website at ([LINK](#)). We do hope you'll take the time to hear from one of our founders about the era and the need for what we now know and love – the Grange. We will be publishing future installments throughout the Sesquicentennial Celebration so that all will have a chance to enjoy hearing from O.H. Kelley.



New Health Benefits Offered to Our National Grange Members

BY LORETTA WASHINGTON

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The National Grange is now making it possible for members to enjoy new Supplemental Health Benefits offered by AFLAC, at policy premium rates that are lower than the rates available to the general public.

These supplemental health benefits and the reduced member rates are available to Grange members, members' spouses and members' dependent children.



These supplemental benefit policies pay cash directly to the AFLAC policy holder if they have an accident or use hospital emergency room or urgent care services, if they are diagnosed with internal cancer, have a heart attack or stroke, need a major organ transplant or use certain dental services to name a few. The cash can be used as the policy holder sees fit, and policy holders will never receive a 1099 or be taxed in any way on the cash benefits paid from these policies.



Presidential Politics: Who Cares About Rural America?

BY BURTON ELLER

National Grange Legislative Director | beller@nationalgrange.org

Rural America is rich political ground this year for political parties and presidential candidates. Republicans want to keep their lock on all red states of any shade and Democrats increasingly see opportunities to turn some of those red states into battleground sites.

After several profitable years in farm country, just about every agriculture commodity is in a downward price spiral. Low prices are predicted to prevail for several more years.

On the rural residential landscape, jobs, businesses, hospitals, medical services, economic growth and trained millennials continue to flee rural America. Candidates Clinton and Trump both want the rural vote which may influence the outcome for President in several states.

Do the Trump and Clinton campaigns recognize this and, if so, what will the candidates do to convince farmers, ranchers and rural residents to vote their way? Listen closely during September and October to see if either candidate can turn their red state “want to” into political “can do”.

In the meantime, let’s look at the Democratic and Republican presidential platforms for clues.

Democratic Platform

- Support the next generation of farmers by doubling federal funding
- Build a strong local and regional food systems by doubling federal funding
- Reforms to and increased support for lending and credit programs that serve farmers and rural communities
- Support the farm commodity price safety net concept (but no further details)
- Promote environmentally sustainable agricultural practices; fully fund the Environmental Quality Incentive Program; support the Regional Conservation Partnership Program
- Support the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Enlist farmers as partners in promoting conservation and stewardship to protect water, land, oceans and the climate

Republican Platform

- Support market-oriented commodity price safety net



- Separate the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) from the next farm bill and from its administration by USDA
- Support federal crop insurance programs to assist farmers in managing risk that are as cost-effective as they are functional, offering tools that can improve farmers' ability to operate when times are tough while remaining affordable to taxpayers
- Commends farmers and ranchers for being among the country's leading conservationists
- Condemns the EPA's [Waters of the United States](#) rule (WOTUS) as a "travesty"
- Strongly supports the First Amendment rights (freedom of speech, press, religion; right to peaceably assemble, petition government) of all Americans
- Theme throughout is generally anti-regulatory



Membership Contest Entry Deadline Approaching

For the first half of 2016, the Membership department has been promoting a contest to encourage each and every Grange member to share the Grange story with their friends, family and community. The contest design is simple, recruit a member and be recognized for your efforts. To be entered into the contest, you must have been the person to sign the first recommendation line on the new member's application between January 1, 2016 and June 30, 2016.

Members who recruit new members will be recognized for their efforts at the 150th Annual Session of the National Grange. Members who recruit one to four new members will be recognized as a "+1 Builder." Members that recruit five to nine new members will be recognized as a "Grange Builder" and members that recruit 10 or more new member will be recognized as a "Super Recruiter."

"My goal in promoting this contest was to illustrate the point that it is the responsibility of every member to share the Grange story and bring new people into the organization," Membership Director Joseph Stefenoni said. "Also it doesn't matter if you recruit one member or 100, every new member makes a difference in the future of our organization."

[CLICK HERE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT FORM](#)

Entries forms are due to National Grange Membership Director Joe Stefenoni no later than Sept. 30, 2016. Entries may be submitted electronically to membership@nationalgrange.org or may be sent by mail to 1537 Cunningham Way, Santa Rosa, CA 95403



Deadlines for Many Youth Contest and Programs Fast Approaching

BY CHARLENE SHUPP ESPENSHADE

National Grange Youth Director | youth@nationalgrange.org

Greetings Grangers! Where have the summer months gone? The deadlines are quickly approaching for the Horizon Leadership, National Youth Officer Team and Legislative Experience. All applications are to be postmarked Sept. 1.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Details and application requirements are in the [Youth Handbook](#).

Youth Photo Scavenger Hunt

This program has been developed by the 2016 Youth Team to provide a new activity for Grange Youth and Young Adults to share their Grange story.



The submission deadline is Sept. 1.

The rules are as follows.

- At least 25 pictures must be submitted from the 30 categories provided. The categories are listed at: <http://nationalgrangeyouth.org/youth-programs/photo-savenger-hunt/>.
- All pictures must be taken in 2016
- All pictures must be submitted in either a PowerPoint, Google Slides, or MP4 file. The photo files should be placed in a Dropbox file folder or Zip file.
- All submissions must be submitted by September 1st, 2016 and sent as an email to nationalgrangeyouth@gmail.com
- You may only use one picture per category.
- All pictures must be taken by 1 person. This is an individual effort.
- If you have questions, please contact National Grange Youth Development Director Charlene Shupp Espenshade at youth@nationalgrange.org or at (717) 361-2844.

Regionals are a wrap.

Thanks to our 2016 host states for welcoming Grangers to attend and participate in youth department contests. Youth also gained a range of skills in code reading, the election process, agriculture and farming, and leadership.

The Northeastern region hosted its drill contest. It was a tight contest as Massachusetts' drill team won by one point over New York. Each region also hosted the Grange Jeopardy contest. Top three qualifiers will compete for each region will compete at the national contest.

While the 2016 regionals have concluded, now is the time to begin organizing speech and Sign-A-Song entries to present at state contests to qualify to represent your state. Videos of the Sign-a-Song and drill contests will be made available on the National Grange Youth YouTube channel in the near future.

Invest in the future

The Grange Foundation through its Grange Youth Fund provides the opportunity for youth to attend national session. Most youth would not be able to attend without the support of generous donors to the Foundation, which cover the costs of housing, food and the youth tour for the Youth Ambassador, Young Patrons, Youth Officers and John Trimble Legislative Experience Participant to attend. Won't you consider investing in the youth of our Order? Each donation given can make a difference for the number of youth we can support and bring to nationals.

Donations can be submitted online or by check. Please make sure to note Youth Fund in the memo line. [CLICK HERE FOR INFORMATION ON HOW TO DONATE.](#)

National Session plans are coming together

Workshops at the national session will focus on life skills. The Friday morning youth workshops include financial budgeting, resume writing and job interview skills. We will also have a sign a song workshop to help youth learn ASL basics.

Youth Zoom will return this September

After taking the summer off, youth Zoom meetings will return. Stay tuned for details

Thank you

I want to say thank you for all of your work this year. It takes a lot of commitment and dedication to serve as a youth director. I have enjoyed working with all of you this year.



Poke-WHAT?

BY JOE STEFENONI

National Grange Leadership/Membership Director | membership@nationalgrange.org

Since the beginning of July, a new app has been sweeping the country enthraling many people across the generations, but especially those of the Millennial and Generation X groups.

Pokémon GO is an augmented reality game based off the popular 1990's card game. The game is designed to get users outside exploring their area and a key feature is that users must walk around the area they are in to advance in the game.



These Poke Stops are typically local landmarks, points of interest and historical spots that one might not normally visit in their daily explorations. It just so happens that our National Grange headquarters building in Washington, DC is a Poke Stop and although I have not confirmed it yet, it is safe to assume that there are other Grange related Poke Stops throughout the country.

How does this relate to Grange membership though?

If your Grange Hall is a Poke Stop, you have an opportunity to share the Grange with potential members.

Even if your Grange isn't included in this new wave of millennial tech, **you as a Grange should evaluate if your Grange Hall is serving you as best as it can.**

With this mass of potential members coming near your Grange Hall, take a minute to look at your building and see what, if any, information is outside to tell someone how to join the Grange. Is the name of your Grange prominently displayed where the public can see it? Does your Grange have a marquee or sign board where you can share upcoming events and list contact information? Is there somewhere on or near the building that lists your Grange website, social media links or basic contact information? All of these things are easy and inexpensive ways for your Grange to increase the possibility of a potential member becoming a member.

One of the main keys to developing a healthy and successful relationship with the community you serve is communication.

Your Grange must communicate who they are and how to become a part of the Grange.

Consider putting some new paint on your Grange sign or putting your next Grange event in the local newspaper.

Or possibly... find out what Pokémon are hanging around your Grange Hall and tell the local youth/young adult community **and invite them to come learn about the Grange** at the same time.



Grange Holds Patriotic, Food-Related and Other Programs Over Summer Months

BY PETE POMPPER

National Grange Community Service Director | communityservice@nationalgrange.org

The community service works that our Granges do never ceases to amaze in their diversity and scope. These programs show that Granges are active and relevant in their communities nationwide. We encourage all Granges to make community service a cornerstone of their Grange and know that if you do, you will see it as a key tool in your kit to making your Grange grow.

Highlights of some Grange community service projects:

Five Mile Prairie Grange (WA) held a community dinner and then had a speaker give a presentation on the American flag.

Gardner Grange (KS) has for many years holds a Veterans Appreciation night where they invite members from the local VFW to the Grange Hall for dinner. They then ask each veteran to discuss their time in the Armed Forces and play the anthem for each branch.

Bangor Grange (ME) will be hosting its 6th annual Veterans Tribute Show and their 4th annual fundraiser for the House in the Woods which is a veterans retreat in Lee, ME.

Florissant Grange (CO) hosted a Heritage Day where the town celebrated the heritage in that area of Colorado. At the hall they had food, kid's games and crafts along with historic displays of the town. This is a wonderful way to open the Grange Hall to the community and get individuals and families to learn about the Grange.

Concord Grange (NH) borrowed a community service idea from **Harmony Grange (NH)** a Meet, Greet and Eat project where they served good Grange food and presented several awards to deserving people and community organizations. One of the groups was a local band who then gave a free concert. I really like to hear Granges that borrow ideas from other Granges, great job Dick.

Pennsylvania State Grange at the PA SG annual Family Festival the members donated money. Gift cards and other items that was then donated to a local Ronald McDonald House by Ruth Vonada, PaSG Community Service Director.

Burns Grange (MI) hosted a Meet the Candidates night, one of many Granges, where they had not only a good turnout of candidates but also community members. This is an excellent way this time of year to open up our Halls to the community.

Little Lake Grange (CA) has started a local radio station at their Grange Hall with coverage in the local community. It is a 100 watt low power FM station KLLP-LP 97.9. Think of the possibilities this Grange now has to serve their community. Job well done. For more information you can contact Larry Cotler, Gen Mgr., at lanny@kllg.org.

REMINDER:

Granges should be finalizing their submissions to their State Grange contests for the Teacher, Firefighter and Law Enforcement Officer of the Year contests. This contest was initially started by Dick Patten (NH) in his time as National Grange Community Service Director, and we are proud to continue the tradition today, honoring those who do so much to better our communities.

LIKE US

If you have a Facebook account, please "like" the National Grange Community Service page because there are some amazing ideas shared that other Granges can use. This is one of the best real-time ways to share information



on community service projects and it gives members the opportunity to ask questions about a project to the Grange that is doing it.

ADDITION

For those State and Local Directors who keep their contact sheets up to date, add Martha Stefenoni to your list as the California State Grange Community Service Director. Martha's email is stefenonim@gmail.com. Welcome to the club Martha.



Legislative Calendar 2016: Detour Ahead

BY BURTON ELLER

National Grange Legislative Director | beller@nationalgrange.org

Yes, Congress is on a very long recess; first for the national Republican convention then for the national Democratic convention, both in July, and then for its traditional month-long August recess until after Labor Day.

With that said, we can expect Congress to return to Washington ready to act on priority unfinished business prior to the elections, right?

Well, no.

This is an election year for President, the whole House of Representatives, and a third of the Senate.

Ever try to pin down a politician on a tough political issue during an election? Then, there's really not much time; Congress will work 17 days in September before taking off the whole month of October to campaign. Overlay a high-voltage politically charged environment right now and the result is Capitol Hill gridlock.

Funding the Federal government for FY '17 (which begins October 1) can't wait, so look for an all-encompassing continuing resolution compromise rather than a dozen appropriations bills. A few other critical items such as Zika virus funding and national security authorizations might even receive bipartisan support.

But don't look for much more in September.

Traditionally, Congress comes back to Washington after elections for a "lame duck" session in November and December.

With elections behind them, the House and Senate generally move through a controversial legislative agenda in lame duck, acting more like statesmen than politicians.

Maybe not this year however; it's not business-as-usual in Washington this election cycle. As political timelines go, it's still a long time until November.



We'll just have to wait and see what happens.



Contest Notice – Updated and Upcoming Deadlines

Contest deadline for the 15-Minute One-Act Play Contest has been extended to Sept. 30. Contest rules can be found at [\(link\)](#).

Distinguished Youth Grange deadline has been extended to September 1 [CLICK HERE](#). Distinguished Grange contest deadline has passed.

Deadlines for other National contests are also coming quickly upon us and several rules and entry types have changed from previous years, so please read and share with other members to encourage them to show off their talents and skills.

4-Minute Video Contest Link | [CLICK HERE](#)

Quilt Block Contest | [CLICK HERE](#)

Photography Contest Link | [CLICK HERE](#)

Lecturer's Program in a Box Contest | [CLICK HERE](#)

Membership Recruitment Contest | [CLICK HERE](#)

John Trimble Legislative Youth Experience | [CLICK HERE](#)

National Grange Youth Officer Team | [CLICK HERE](#)



Life Skills Education Vital for Communities, Individual Success

BY AMANDA LEIGH BROZANA

National Grange Lecturer | lecturer@nationalgrange.org

Recently I caused quite a stir – surprise, surprise – by sharing a video on Facebook that suggests schools include in their curriculums things previously taught in what was known as shop and home ec classes.

Many of my friends – hopefully that includes many of you – argued that teaching things like cooking and sewing and finding a stud to hang a picture are the responsibility of parents and other family members.

Yes. Yes, I agree.



But there was much more in those classes that I, as a member of one of the last classes of students in my district to have them under these titles, learned (and a few things I wish I would have).

Sure, most kids can learn how to cook the basics through observation of our parents or grandparents but formally teaching young people how to prepare food in nutritious, safe and appetizing ways is still important. Food safety is second hat to those who cook frequently, but for time-strapped individuals who are just learning, it's so easy to worry about less dishes and choose to use the same cutting board for raw chicken and cucumbers for salad, not knowing the risks.

You can watch someone change a tire and learn or figure out how to sew a button by finding a YouTube video, but more complex subjects you often can't learn just by seeing – like balancing a checkbook, understanding interest rates or planning an investment strategy. These are vital for youth to know, especially before signing for that first college loan or taking out that first credit card. However, many parents – of young kids, teens and beyond – don't understand these topics in detail themselves.

These are the things modern home ec classes were starting to teach as I entered and exited my high school years. But most schools have since done away with these type of classes because of reduced budgets, lack of teachers in their area in that subject, focus on academic areas covered by standardized testing and many other reasons. This is the same for many districts that have cut agriculture education (and FFA) programs.

And with those cuts, there is certainly a noticeable void. People who lack these skills and training often ignore problems because they do not know how to deal with it, or they spend money they often don't have to fix a problem they could have easily taken care of with a little knowledge and training. In the long run, it may help the local economy for someone to call out a plumber to fix a leaky sink for \$100 rather than go to the hardware store and buy a \$1 rubber washer, but there are \$99 fewer dollars for that individual to spend on healthy food, paying down credit card debt, or giving to your Grange Hall fund.

Still, the argument that all of the personal, home and life skills necessary should be taught by parents, or the larger parenting community, and not the burden of already stretched public school budgets is valid.

So, maybe there is a call to action for Grangers to fill this void.

Instead of asking schools to provide this type of instruction on the backs of taxpayers, or expecting parents who sometimes graduated out of schools and homes that did not prepare them in these fields, our Grange members who have an area of expertise could share their knowledge as part of an ongoing Lecturer's series on "Life Skills."

In the coming months, I will be seeking assistance in creating programs in this area and hope Granges will put on their own programs, then share them with me for further distribution. It's time to return to the lives of our community members as educational hubs we were meant to be, and what better time than as we prepare to celebrate our founding and prove our relevance in this new age.

Won't you consider providing ideas for Life Skills Basics and Advanced Lecturer's Programs that could be offered at meetings or on weekends by your Grange? Email your ideas or completed programs, in the form of a Lecturer's Program in a Box, to lecturer@nationalgrange.org, or call 202-628-3507 with suggestions.

Lecturer's Program in a Box Standard Form

Program should be completed on PowerPoint or similar presentation software and must include

- A title slide
- At least 10 informational slides
- A closing slide with author's name, contact information and basic details (ex. Larry Smith has been a licensed contractor with his own business in Hartford, CT, for more than 20 years).
- A handout/stand alone document that includes either a step-by-step guide, tip sheet, frequently asked questions, resource list, comparison guide, activity or other tool or activity to engage the audience and reinforce your instruction

If you are unable to use a presentation software, you can create a speech script with attached photos or illustrations

in addition to the stand alone handout.

