

The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

151st ANNUAL CONVENTION EDITION - DAY 1, NOVEMBER 7, 2017



Photo Credit: Tacy Currey, Communications Fellow

More than 350 Grangers expected to attend the 151st Annual National Grange Convention this week in Spokane, Wash., welcomed by decorations made by the Western Region host committee.

151st Convention kicks off in Lilac City

BY SARA BENZIO

Assistant Communications Fellow

Welcome to the 151st National Grange Convention.

This year the theme is "Border to Border, Coast to Coast" as Grangers travel from far and wide to the chilly West coast Hotel RL at the Park.

We return for the fourth time to the Lilac City – Spokane, Washington – with the energy of a new session and the joy of meeting old friends. But we also return in hopes of rekindling connections and forming new ones with each Granger we meet.

In 1996, the 130th Convention was held in the same hotel.

This year as members came in, they were met with fluffy flakes of snow, and for some like Josh Bethany of Florida who is serving as a Communications Fellow, it was their first time experiencing such an event. Convention attendees to the session 22 years ago, however, woke up to

six inches of fresh powder.

Pennsylvania State Secretary Deb Campbell recalls what it was like at the 1996 Session, when at the time she was the State Junior Director, "At that point, the Juniors didn't go in (to Session) like they do now. But we always had the Junior breakfasts - and that was really neat. I've been to quite a few of the Junior Breakfasts for Nationals; and seeing the kids get awards, so they're all very memorable."

Session was also held in Spokane in 1981, 1954, and in 1912 with Master Oliver Wilson in the chair. National Lecturer Chris Hamp will have memorabilia on display from that session.

Karen Jackson, the Host Coordinator of the National Convention and Overseer of Washington State Grange said she is looking forward to the week.

"We're just really excited to have everyone in Spokane. We just want to focus on renewing friendships and making new ones," Jackson said.

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CONVENTION

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She also shared some of the new highlights of this session.

"Every year we do the same old thing, so we wanted to do something new," Jackson said. "Grangers are known for helping people in the community, but for this session we wanted to help our furry friends. We asked members to bring in items such as coats, collars and other pet related items that can be donated to the local animal shelter. Change doesn't always have to be bad, and we want people to know that."

More than 350 people are expected to attend National Session this year from all across the nation.

Photo Credit: Amanda Leigh Brozana Rios

Communications Fellow Josh Bethany of Florida experiences snowfall for the first time prior to the opening of the 151st Annual National Grange Convention in Spokane, Wash., this week.



Oregon woman serves as Trimble Youth on ag committee

BY JOSH BETHANY
Communications Fellow

Jessie Jo Guttridge from Springwater Grange in Oregon was this year's John Trimble Legislative youth and will be an honorary delegate serving as a member of the agriculture committee.

Guttridge is an active member of her subordinate Grange, which has several community outreach programs; such as, the monthly breakfast they host or the veteran pillowcase project where they help to provide hygiene products and some furnishings for Veterans in transitional housing. She is also very involved in their Words for Thirds program, which donates to four different schools.

"The Grange is a community organization that brings everyone together to better their community", said Guttridge.

Guttridge had this to say about the legislative opportunity to participate as a delegate at the National Convention, "I am incredibly thankful to be doing John Trimble youth. Since the first time I went to convention I've always wanted to be sitting behind the scenes with the delegates, so being able to do that is just incredible."

Guttridge is especially excited to work on a resolution about the use of neonicoti-



Photo Credit: Josh Bethany, Communications Fellow

Jessie Jo Guttridge of Springwater Grange, Oregon, is part of the discussion of the agriculture committee during the 151st Annual National Grange Convention Monday night.

noids pesticides, because she was a part of the state committee that passed the resolution on to the national level.

Grange perseverance tested by shipping delay; faith wins

BY LURAE BENZIO
Communications Fellow

It would not be uncommon to hear Convention guests commenting that their luggage or other belongings did not make it to the final destination and that they will have to do without for a few hours or even days until their items catch up to them.

So is the case with the Convention pallet that has been on its way from Washington, D.C., for more than a week.

The truck was to arrive on Friday prior to Convention, but news came to the staff on Friday afternoon that the truck would not arrive until sometime Tuesday, the opening day of Session.

There was a slight panic at first – with the thought that all delegate sashes, meeting staves, flags and implements and other key items may not make it in time for opening – but staff members immediately went to Plan B and made a list of the items that were needed. They made trips to Walmart and Staples as well as other local stores.

Delegate binders were already printed by the Washington State Grange, so some of the pressure was off because pre-session work could still go on.

A few phone calls were made to area Granges and a few officers who had not arrived yet to help make or bring some items with them. Staves, a Bible and other items have been borrowed from Spokane's local Grange, Five Mile Prairie.

Loretta Washington, National Grange Sales, Programs, Benefits and Membership Recogni-

tion Director said, "Maybe it's a sign that it's OK to not have everything in order or in place and we can still get the job done with the people who make things happen."

She said that perhaps Oliver and Caroline are sending us a message, referring to founders, Oliver Hudson Kelly and his niece Caroline Hall.

Besides sashes, delegates will still notice a few things missing at the start of session, such as name tags, registration packets and state name plates. These items should be in place by late Tuesday afternoon, but could make it just before session opens.

"As is typical with Granges, improvising and making do with what we have is the Grange Way," Stephanie Tiller, Convention Coordinator, said. She said this set back would not affect the workings of the Grange.

Some more personal items are also among the missing. Communications and Development Director Amanda Leigh Brozana Rios had pre-packed much of her clothing and toiletries and loaded it on the palette, bringing only two days worth of clothing, primarily laid back attire.

"Well, thank goodness the local Walmart has a pretty good selection of clothes that can get me over the hump," Brozana Rios said. "I'll make it. This has really been a test of faith, hope and perseverance for all of us, but no panic. It will all come out and we'll all breathe a sigh of relief when the truck finally arrives."

The staff is looking forward to the arrival of the truck and has a plan to get it unloaded and all the boxes delivered to the correct areas.

ENJOY CONVENTION ACROSS MEDIUMS AND ACROSS THE WORLD

Several parts of the 151th Annual National Grange Convention will be live-broadcast through our Facebook page, National Grange, this week.

Also, daily reports and updates will be aired on Grange Radio at grangeradio.org. A digital version of the convention newsletter will be distributed to our email list and posted to the National Grange website.

Tell your friends to tune in!

New, returning delegates excited to work

Several states not represented due to illness, charter suspensions

BY ELIZABETH HINER
Communication Fellow

We would like to welcome the new Delegates to the National Convention from the states of Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Maine and Montana.

Wayne Campbell, Pennsylvania State Master and his wife, Debbie, who is the State Grange Secretary, are excited to be here and represent the more 7,000 of their State Grange. Wayne said he wishes to gain and gather information to take home to his state. He stepped up from Overseer in February when former State Master Elizabeth Downey resigned and he was elected as Master at the recent State Grange Session.

Sherry Harriman, newly elected Maine State Master, is a returning delegate, but a new in her role. She is looking to learn about the challenges of other states, finding solutions and setting goals.

Marilyn Johnson was re-elected State Master of Montana this year, a position she held from 1995-2001. She and her husband, Bill, are returning to many new faces.

Debbie Gegare, formerly the Overseer of Wisconsin State Grange was elected Master in September. She is no stranger to convention, having served as the Senior Communications Fellow in 2013, 2014 and 2016 and a Communications Fellow for the first time in Boise, Idaho in 2012.

David Bryant is serving as the second delegate from the Washington State Grange. Bryant is a Golden Sheaf Member of the Grange and a member of the host committee.

Delegates are also expected to extend a warm welcome to Jesse Jo Guttridge who is this year's John Trimble Legislative Experience participant. She is from Oregon and lives on a cattle farm.

Several of our delegates were unable to attend and will be missed.

West Virginia's State Master Jim Foster had a heart attack just before he, his wife Earlene, and daughter, Barbara, were set to get on the train to come out to Spokane. Barbara has sent her thanks to everyone for their prayers and updated that Jim had a cardiac cath, which showed some blockage and a treatment plan is in the works to begin Wednesday.

Idaho State Master Harold Eshelman will only be attending for a couple of day of ses-

"It is an honor to be serving as a delegate as well as the culmination of a lifetime with the Grange."

David Bryant

Washington State Grange Executive Committee Member and Second Delegate

sion due to illness. He is undergoing treatment for cancer. We wish him well with his continued health issues. Jeannie and Don Billmire, who previously served as Idaho State Grange Master, will represent the state as delegates.

John Benedik is also experiencing health issues, and made the hard, last-minute choice not to attend. In his place will be Joan Smith, who is a New Jersey member as well as Master of Potomac Grange No. 1, Washington, D.C. Pete Pompper is the second delegate.

The charters of Alaska and South Carolina State Granges have been suspended so no delegates will be in attendance from those states. Plans are in the works for membership drives and new Grange formations and we hope to see them represented next year at the 152nd National Grange Convention.

Washington State Master Tom Gwin is back from the hospital here in Spokane after a serious fall while unloading supplies from the convention supply truck. He did not need stitches in his head, but will need to have surgery on his broken wrist after he gets home. He is a trooper and is still attending Session and helping in the Hospitality Room #1102.

There are cards available for signatures for all the delegates not attending due to health concerns and Gwin. Please see the National Chaplain.



Photo Credit: Elizabeth Hiner, Communications Fellow

The Rivers Edge Chorus performs Monday night at the 151st Annual National Grange Convention Host Committee Banquet.

Changes, singers delight banquet attendees

BY LURAE BENZIO
Communications Fellow

The Host Committee for the 151st National Grange Convention played on the convention theme, "Border to Border, Coast to Coast" by depicting where we are from and who we are as Grangers and as Western Region members during the banquet Monday night.

Guests were seated at the usual round banquet tables and were pleasantly greeted with bottles of wine at their place which were from all over the Host Region states. The various wines and some sparkling cider set the mood for the fun evening that was about to happen.

Karen Jackson, Host Committee Chairwoman welcomed all of the guests and introduced Ed Komski, California State Master and Host Banquet Chair to explain how the meal was going to be served.

The food stations were laid out around the room and represented the Regions from around the country from where the Grange members traveled from. The Northeast station featured clam chowder and bread, the Southwest station included veggies in the form of a salad with several toppings to add. The Northwest food station had grilled salmon and rice pilaf while across the room, the Midwest carving station had roast sirloin and garlic mashed potatoes with gravy and horseradish sauce. The desserts presented represented the Southeast station with cheesecake topped with whipped cream and huckle-

berries, bread pudding and pecan pie.

The evening entertainment was provided by the Rivers Edge Chorus, with Sweet Adelines International, from the Spokane area.

Janice Lindgren, one of the members, shared with the crowd that she was familiar with the Grange and what it represented. Her grandparents, parents and many other relatives enjoyed many years as Grange members while living in the Spangle, Washington, area.

Janice and her sister formed a young duo act that went from Grange to Grange sharing their singing talent. Janice also gave a little history lesson about Barbershop Harmony and how it was organized in 1870, just a couple of years after the Patrons of Husbandry was started. Currently there are over 23,000 women among 500 chapters around the world. The group puts an emphasis on Harmony, Education and Friendship.

The ladies interjected some comedy relief between songs that brought chuckles from the audience. During the American Medley tribute, the audience was encouraged to join along and by the end of the medley, everyone in the room was standing proudly.

"Patriotism permeates everything we do," Lindgren said.

Jackson was happy to offer something different for the Host Banquet.

"We wanted to shake it up, jazz it up and make it fun to kick off the week," said Jackson.

Communication Fellows get to task

BY LURAE BENZIO

Communications Fellow

This year four Grange members were chosen to serve as Communications Fellows during the 151st National Grange Convention.

Elizabeth Hiner from Colorado, returns for her second year to serve as the Senior Communications Fellow, leading the new Fellows - Lurae Benzio from Pennsylvania, Josh Bethany from Florida, and Tacy Currey from California - through the ropes.

The group, working under the direction of National Grange Communications and Development Director Amanda Leigh Brozana Rios, will help produce the daily newsletter, gather content for Grange Radio and write for Good Day!™ magazine.

"In this fifth year of the program, we have another amazing group of people so dedicated to the Grange and hardworking. It's kind of incredible to look around and see what the next generation of leaders at the state and national level are doing to prepare to move our organization forward and how talented they are," Brozana Rios said of the group. "I think they will make all their State Masters very proud and really provide our members with great service this week and throughout the year."

This year, the program is funded by a generous donation from the Colorado State Grange.

The Fellows room, Manito, is located in the Lobby behind the wooden step mountain. You can find the Fellows at work reporting, recording and documenting the happenings around Convention throughout the week. As Fellows have been in the past, the group has been assigned a variety of projects and will be reaching out to many of the officers, committee members, staff and delegates to complete their assignments.



ELIZABETH HINER



LURAE BENZIO



JOSH BETHANY



TACY CURREY

Hiner is the Colorado State Publicity Director, Pomona Lecturer and her Community Grange Secretary. She brings a years worth of experience, and new Fellows have said she brings a calmness to any situation, prefers an organized atmosphere and has an overall enjoyment of the whole process.

"I want to have a better knowledge of what I need to do to make my Grange grow and have a stronger base for contacts, questions or ideas," Hiner said.

Benzio is the Pennsylvania State Junior Grange Director, and her local Grange Secretary. Other Fellows have said

she brings to the group a positive outlook on the Grange and a desire to take back to her state some new ideas for growing the membership and encouraging more families to embrace our organization as a friendly family atmosphere.

"My husband, daughters and I joined our local Grange in 2009 and immediately saw the benefits of being involved in the Grange," Benzio said. "We jumped in with both feet and are constantly learning about ways to better our local, county and state Grange. I want to share that enthusiasm with other families".

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FELLOWS

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Josh "Chowder" Bethany, 18, is the Chaplain for the Florida State Grange as well as Overseer for his local Grange. Josh is the lone male of the group and other Fellows have noted though he is young, he is mature and brings great energy and humor to the room. He is also the only Fellow in this year's program with a family Grange legacy, having joined when he was 5.

Bethany wants to take back to Florida a better understanding of promoting the organization and growing the membership through positive media attention.

"We need to show the people in Florida that the Grange is still functioning and relevant in the communities," Bethany said.

Tacy Currey is the California Youth Fair Director and she is serving as the eye behind the lens for all of the photographs taken during Convention. You'll find her in nearly every location capturing the moments and memories of the week. Tacy is bringing "Tigger-like enthusiasm" to the group and has a strong desire to learn as much as possible during the week to take back to her state.

"I'd love to create solid con-

nections with other Granges throughout the nation and learn new ways of reaching out to the communities in my area to engage them in our organization," Currey said.

The Fellows group adopted a helper to assist in a variety of task for the first part of the week. Sara Benzio, daughter of Lurae, is at the Convention as the PA Youth Ambassador and will be competing on Friday in the National Youth Ambassador program at the Evening of Excellence. She is learning several skills and writing a couple of articles as well as helping to deliver newsletters nightly.

Fellows have been thankful for Sara's willingness to help in any way and Sara said she has enjoyed the dynamics of the group.

"It's a fun group of Grangers and it is cool to hang out with them and hear about the different activities going on in their states," she said.

Some Fellows from previous years have also stopped by to visit and offer insights, including National Young Patron Mandy Bostwick, National Grange Junior Director Samantha Wilkins, Oregon State Grange Newsletter Editor Suzy Ramm and others.

Samantha enjoyed her time as a Fellow last year and ben-



SARA BENZIO

efited from the Grange connections and friendships made. "Learning about all the ways of promoting the Grange and sharing the information with my Granges back in my state was a great way of helping to promote the Organization."

National Master, Betsy Huber likes how the Fellows program is helpful to the delegates attending the convention by providing them with information through the daily newsletter and other media formats. "The knowledge and skills that the Fellows take back to their state is helpful when they are called upon to help promote issues in their state."

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ARBOR CREST WINERY
CROSBY HOUSE
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CAMPBELL HOUSE
GREEN BLUFF
MONROE STATE BRIDGE
SPOKANE FALLS

CENNTENIAL TRAIL
JAPANESE GARDEN
MOUNT SPOKANE

GRANGE TRIVIA

What United States President personally invited National Grange convention members to visit him at the White House, acting as a private guide? SEE ANSWER IN DAY 2.

We have a Snapchat filter. Just swipe left!
Don't forget our convention hashtag! #grange151st