



The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

December 18, 2020

A Lesson in Fidelity

By Betsy E. Huber, National Grange President

Continuing from my article in last week's Patrons Chain, the lesson of the Fourth Degree is Fidelity, defined as faithfulness, loyalty, honesty. Fidelity is portrayed in the season of old age and winter, where we rest from the hard work of planting and harvesting and enjoy with our families, friends, and neighbors the good things our labors have brought us.

Early in the degree the Lady Assistant Steward tells the Bible story of Ruth the Moabitess, who pledges her fidelity to Naomi her mother-in-law, even leaving her own country and traveling with Naomi to a foreign land where she knew no one. "Entreat me not to leave thee," is a well-known passage that praises Ruth as an example of faithfulness, love, and dedication.

In the degree this speech is followed by formation of altar circles by the current Grange members, enclosing the candidates around the altar to show "pure friendship, enduring through life, to shield you from harm." This should be a very meaningful part of the degree conferral and is included in the shorter Welcoming Ceremony also to show its importance. Our relationships with our fellow Grange members should always exhibit this pure friendship and loving support – it may be rare in today's world but something that many are searching for especially in these times.

As you prepare for celebrating the holidays with your family, take a few moments to reach out to Grangers and friends who may be struggling with loneliness because they cannot be with their families this year. A friendly greeting showing your fidelity as a fellow Granger will certainly make their day brighter.

Merry Christmas and a Happy, Happy New Year!

Reviving Social Media

By: Kennedy Gwin, National Grange Intern

As the holidays are right around the corner, this is the perfect time to revive your social media pages! Granges around the country are hosting food drives, clothing drives, or other community service projects, and can easily use these as an excuse to post. Often, we are caught up in this idea that we must have the "perfect" post to show our community, when just a simple "Happy Holidays" photo will suffice. As you expand your social media brand, it is not the matter of having "perfect" content, but just getting content out there for people to see that you exist.

Using platforms like Facebook to advertise future events at your local Grange halls are a great way to get the word out in your community to people who you may not traditionally be connected to. Expanding this connection helps bring up your profile as an organization and directly creates positive impact in your communities.

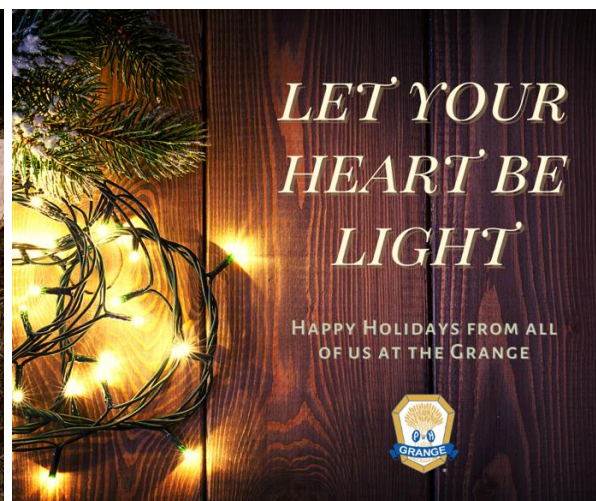
As you are reviving your social media pages start off with a small goal of one to two posts each week and work your way up to consistently posting. Some ideas for posts include holiday posts, legislative updates, community service photos, and event posts.

Getting more active on social media also offers a great opportunity to engage the younger members of your local Grange. Many Youth are very engaged in social media and have often had to use platforms such as these for things such as school projects or in their professional work environment. Taking time to learn from them both helps you both grow. They feel their roles within the Grange expand as they take on new responsibilities, and you learn how to navigate the ever-changing world of social media.

When making posts a great website you can use is www.Canva.com. This website has premade templates that you can use to simply fill in your information, and post or download and post later.

If you would like more direct help, feel free to contact me at kennedy.gwin@grange.org or Amanda Brozana Rios, the National Grange Communications Director at communications@nationalgrange.org so that we may assist in helping you create posts as well as future social media plans.

To get started, we have created a few sample images you can download and post directly to your page! Here are a few options for the holiday season:

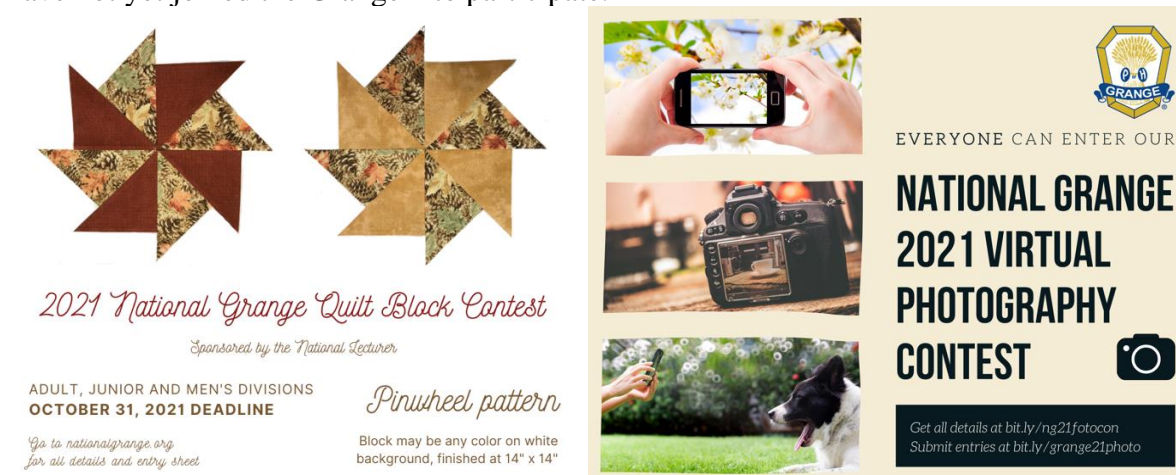




You can even use your social media to promote the Grange's quarterly Good Day! magazine or giving to the Grange Foundation!



You can also take this time to encourage folks to take part in the newly announced 2021 Lecturer's Contests. Here are some prepared posts to encourage everyone – including those who have not yet joined the Grange – to participate.



Grange Store Announcement

By: Loretta Washington Director of Sales

Are you ordering Grange merchandise for the loved ones in your life for the holidays? Check out this important announcement so you receive your packages on time.

National Grange Supply Store order must be received by Dec 16 to be shipped out by 12-22-2020. All orders received after Dec 17 will be shipped out the week Of Jan 4, 2021.

Hope to see your orders soon!

A FEW GREAT MENTIONS

This is a new section we will include each week with a few of the links to articles in which the local, State or the National Grange have been mentioned or our statements have appeared.

- [Agriculture Welcomes Vilsack's Return to Agriculture](#) , Salem, OR
- [National Grange on Vilsack's Nomination](#), Nashville, TN
- [2,500 heart signs purchased in Westport to Benefit Local Food Pantry](#), Westport, MA

GRANGE COMMENTS ON WEEKLY ITEMS OF INTEREST

This is a new section we will include each week with at least one quote from the week prior made about a policy issue or current event by National Grange President Betsy Huber or other Grange leaders for inclusion by media or to spark interest in the rural perspective.

National Grange lists WOTUS as top challenge under new administration

“Recently National Grange Legislative Director Burton Eller was interviewed by Farm World about the biggest challenges facing agriculture that the Biden administration will have to tackle. On the top: WOTUS (a regulation entitled Waters of the US).”

Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Auction results positive step for rural Americans

“The sound regulatory approach and carefully calibrated incentives championed by the FCC have delivered results, yielding \$9.2 billion in support during this first Phase. We applaud the continued efforts of the FCC to expand high-speed internet access to rural communities that are too often neglected or underserved.”

When educating about Grange values is the best response

By Amanda Brozana Rios, National Grange Communications Director

Many Grangers across the nation were rattled when they saw Washington State's largest daily newspaper, the Seattle Times, ran a story early this week alleging Deer Lagoon Grange had become the target of a take over by a “far right group.”

The story can be used to start many discussions about the importance of holding our welcoming and obligation ceremonies, vetting members and ensuring all members are reminded or introduced to our fundamental values, especially inclusivity, nonpartisanship and civility.

It also allows us to take a moment to pause and think about how your Grange would respond not only to an insurgency but also press that paints you in a poor light.

For the Washington State Grange, the response was an op-ed sent to the newspaper – which has not yet been picked up to print – then posted to their social media, sent to members and posted to their website.

Read how Washington State Grange President Tom Gwin talks about the Grange and consider when planning your 2021 programming some efforts to ensure all of your new members and those you retain are reminded of our values.

If you're interested in civil discussion, the Grange needs you

By Tom Gwin, Washington State Grange President

The National Grange and the Washington State Grange are proud of the legacy of our nonpartisan organization, founded more than 150 years ago, to encourage civil discussion and debate while requiring those who join to pledge to "conform to and abide by the laws of your state and nation."

In the article published Sunday, Dec. 13 by Mike Carter regarding the controversy at Deer Lagoon Grange #842, concerns were raised as to the membership and activities at this local chapter, which has over its many years been known for excellent outreach in the community and thoughtful discussions about policies that impact the agriculture industry – from producer to consumer – and rural individuals.

The Grange was founded on the vision of bringing together a fractured nation after the Civil War by creating a fraternity for farmers that would transcend regional and political divisions. Again, today we see our country divided – this time by partisanship and unwillingness to respect others' opinions. The Grange can be as essential today in bridging this gap as it was in 1867.

The Granges of Washington State have a strong history of through our non-partisan legislative involvement. Our Granges have been the champions of rural-free delivery by the U.S. Postal Service. The public power movement, which allowed for the creation of public utility districts, can be traced back to the Washington State Grange. We cannot forget Washington's blanket primary election system, and its successor, the Top Two Primary are both the works of the Grange organization.

There is no place in our Order for individuals who cannot tolerate an open discussion without intimidation – as our Declaration of Purposes states, "difference of opinion is no crime." The Grange is a place where people from all sides are bound, by their own

pledge to membership, to come together to find a way forward for the betterment of our community and our nation.

What is happening in our communities large and small, is straining the American experiment. We cannot foster intolerance of our neighbors or fuel a me-first movement where we see only freedoms without responsibility. Democracy requires certain sacrifice, and the Grange is fundamentally rooted in this idea. Our motto, "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity," is clear and only those who embrace it can be Grangers.

However, stating our principles and standing by our convictions alone is not the end of this story. To ensure the Grange remains the Order it was founded to be – a leader in championing a strong and democratic union – the 150,000 members across the nation cannot stand alone. Our doors are open to anyone of good moral character, interested in preserving the common good and willing to abide by our values and our bylaws – and we hope that this includes you. Only through light can the darkness be vanquished. Only through welcoming new members who mean what they say when they take the oath of membership can we ensure the Grange remains a beacon in our communities.

If you are interested in assuring a brighter future for your community and nation - one that encourages tolerance and civil discourse, innovating solutions to local challenges and helping those need – go to wa-grange.com to identify the Grange nearest you, or contact the Washington State Grange at [\(360\) 943-9911](tel:3609439911).

USDA, EPA, and FDA renew formal agreement aimed at reducing food waste

Press Release

On Thursday, Dec. 17, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced the renewal of the joint agency formal agreement including the Winning on Reducing Food Waste Initiative. The agreement reaffirms the agencies' commitment to improve coordination and communication efforts to better educate Americans on the impacts and importance of reducing food loss and waste. Food loss and waste negatively impact food security, the economy, communities, and the environment.

Since the Trump Administration launched the Winning on Reducing Food Waste Initiative, the collaborative effort has achieved great success. Public-private partnerships, like the United States Food Loss and Waste 2030 Champions, are key to successfully reducing food loss and waste by implementing proven strategies and sharing best practices. In 2020, the Trump Administration welcomed ten new businesses and organizations to the 2030 Champions.

The renewed three-year agreement will continue to build on these successful partnerships and reiterate our shared commitment to work towards the national goal of reducing food loss and waste by 50 percent by 2030.

“The United States is getting a handle on its serious food waste problem,” said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. “The three-year renewal of this joint agency agreement will help our country achieve its ambitious goal of cutting food waste by 50 percent by 2030.”

“Our nation’s agricultural abundance should be used to nourish those in need, not fill the trash,” said U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue. “As the world’s population continues to grow and the food systems continue to evolve, now is the time to continue to educate consumers and businesses alike on the need for food waste reduction.”

“We’ve seen great strides in food loss and waste reduction since first entering the joint agency formal agreement with our federal colleagues, and through collaborative efforts with our public and private partners,” said FDA Commissioner Stephen M. Hahn, M.D. “At FDA, we’ve encouraged food manufacturers and retailers to standardize the way quality-based date labels are used on packaged foods and developed videos and materials to educate consumers. With these continued partnerships and important efforts, we’re on track to see a 50 percent reduction of food waste by 2030.”

As part of the Winning on Reducing Food Waste Initiative, EPA, USDA, and FDA issued its FY2019-2020 Federal Interagency Strategy in April 2019, which identifies six priority areas on which the agencies will focus their efforts to reduce food loss and waste in the U.S. In May 2020, the Federal Interagency Strategy was updated by listing contributing efforts for each of the strategy's six priority action areas:

- ⇒ Priority Area 1: Enhance Interagency Coordination
- ⇒ Priority Area 2: Increase Consumer Education and Outreach Efforts
- ⇒ Priority Area 3: Improve Coordination and Guidance on Food Loss and Waste Measurement
- ⇒ Priority Area 4: Clarify and Communicate Information on Food Safety, Food Date Labels, and Food Donations
- ⇒ Priority Area 5: Collaborate with Private Industry to Reduce Food Loss and Waste Across the Supply Chain
- ⇒ Priority Area 6: Encourage Food Waste Reduction by Federal Agencies in their Respective Facilities

The agencies also launched partnerships with organizations at the forefront of food loss and waste reduction efforts. In April 2019, the agencies signed an agreement with ReFED, a network of the nation's leading business, nonprofit, foundation, and government leaders committed to reducing U.S. food waste. In October 2019, another partnership with the Food Waste Reduction Alliance, formalized collaboration on education and outreach efforts with three major sectors of the supply chain: food manufacturing, retail, and restaurant and food service.

Background

The Winning on Reducing Food Waste Initiative is a collaborative effort among USDA, EPA, and FDA to reduce food loss and waste through combined and agency-specific actions. Individually and collectively, these agencies contribute to the initiative, encourage long-term food waste reductions, and work toward the goal of reducing food loss and waste in the U.S. These actions include research, community investments, education and outreach, voluntary programs, public-private partnerships, tool development, technical assistance, event participation, and policy discussion.

For more information on agency efforts contributing to the Winning on Reducing Food Waste Initiative, visit:

www.usda.gov/foodlossandwaste

www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food

www.fda.gov/food/consumers/food-loss-and-waste

Meeting the national goal of cutting food waste in half by 2030 will take a sustained commitment from everyone. Success requires action from the entire food system.

Facts About Food Waste

- EPA estimates that more food (over 70 billion pounds) reaches landfills than any other material in everyday trash, constituting 24 percent of discarded municipal solid waste.
- Landfills are the third largest source of human-related methane emissions in the U.S.
- Food waste not only impacts landfill space and emissions, it negatively impacts the economy. USDA estimates the value of food loss and waste for retailers and consumers each year to be over \$161 billion.
- Wasted food also results in unnecessary expenditures of U.S. domestic energy resources. Every time food is lost or wasted, all the energy that went into producing that food is also wasted.

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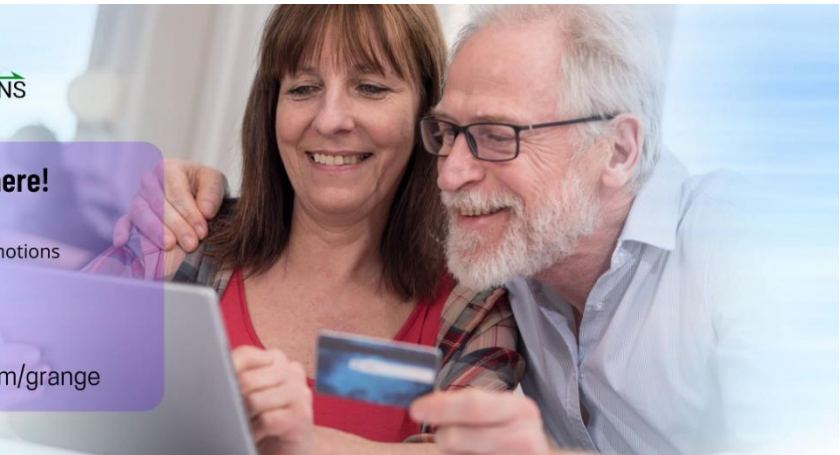
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