



# The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

February 3, 2023

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## Channel your passion into changing the world

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

Sunday was an exciting day for football fans in Philadelphia and Kansas City. I’m not really an Eagles fan until they get this far, but my household was glued to the TV Sunday afternoon and very excited at the result. Now we wait two weeks for the BIG game!

Thousands and thousands of fans filled the Philly streets after the game, a wall-to-wall sea of green. Many downtown high-rise buildings have been bathed in green lights for weeks, and there was [a really cool drone light show](#) in the skies after the win.

It got me thinking about how passionate people are about sports teams and games, things that don’t really matter in the grand scheme of things (except to the players who make millions.) What would the Grange world look like if our members were that excited and motivated? We do activities and serve our communities in a much more meaningful way than just playing a game. Our small numbers, compared to football fans, could change the world if they showed half the enthusiasm and passion.

Your meetings aren’t as exciting as a football game? It’s up to you to change that. Poll your members at the next meeting and ask what would make them excited to attend; then make some changes! You may attract a lot more interest and attendance. I look forward to your report on what you did and the results.

## How “going Fish!” can help your Grange’s morale

By [Philip J Vonada](#), National Grange Communications Director



I recently read the book [Fish!: A Proven Way to Boost Morale and Improve Results](#) by Stephen C. Lundin, John Christensen, Harry Paul, and Ken Blanchard. This parable recounts the tale of a woman who takes over an unenthusiastic, unresponsive, “wasteland” of a department in her corporate office, often called a “toxic energy dump.”

Though the book is meant to be about improving the morale and results of an office, I couldn’t help but think of how it could be applied to Granges,

### FEBRUARY NATIONAL GRANGE EVENTS

TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF  
YOUR MEMBERSHIP

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**FEBRUARY 2023** ALL TIMES  
EASTERN

**14: MEMBERSHIP MATTERS (ZOOM)** 8:30 P.M.  
**Open to all!**  
Contact [abrozana@nationalgrange.org](mailto:abrozana@nationalgrange.org) for more information.

**17-18: NATIONAL GRANGE PRESIDENTS’ CONFERENCE**  
State Grange leaders are gathering on Zoom to discuss Grange issues and department updates.

**19: YOUTH YAMMERINGS (ZOOM)** 9:00 P.M.  
Join National Junior Grange and Youth Development Director Samantha Wilkins for updates about the National Grange Youth department. Contact [youth@nationalgrange.org](mailto:youth@nationalgrange.org) for more information.

**28: LECTURER’S FORUM (ZOOM)** 8:30 P.M.  
National Grange Lecturer Ann Bercher will lead a discussion on contests, programming, and more in the Lecturer’s Department. Contact [lecturer@nationalgrange.org](mailto:lecturer@nationalgrange.org) for more information.

**JUNIOR GRANGE FOCUS AREA:**  
ADVOCACY  
**YOUTH PILLAR FOCUS AREA:**  
GROWTH

Join National Grange staff and leaders online during the month of February!  
Zoom links will be posted on Facebook and other social media.

too. I'm sure some of you know the Grange (or Grange members) in question – the “toxic energy dumps,” who barely do enough to scrape by or who insist that there's no way to change or improve and they might as well throw in the towel.

Perhaps the ideas and practices outlined in this book could be of assistance:

- 1) Choose your attitude
- 2) Play
- 3) Make Their Day
- 4) Be There

While it doesn't seem like much, it's somewhere to start.

To me, it truly does start with “**choosing your attitude.**” It's easy to be upset, disheartened, impatient, or bored. But it's also easy to make the decision to be “the best” or “top of the line.” If you believe that your Grange or the programming you offer is subpar, then the community may view it as such, too. But if you choose to take pride in your work, if you believe that your work has value and your programming is sensational, then you will put the work in to make sure it's over-the-top good!

The idea of “play” may seem absurd to some adults. “What does it even mean?” It means... how can we add more fun to our work? Nothing makes me happier than being a Grange Hall full of laughter. At my local Grange's take-out meals, the laughter and fun that we have while preparing the meal is just as important as the fun and positive attitude that we have with the people who come through our doors. In my “other life” as Pennsylvania's Junior Grange Director, I had the pleasure to visit a Grange and provide a program *all about* having fun, by presenting a series of [minute-to-win-it](#) style games for the members in attendance. Have you ever seen somebody in their 80s try to move an Oreo down their face without using their hands? Or try to loop Cheerios onto a piece of spaghetti while using only one hand? The laughter and fun in the room led to a positive environment for the rest of the meeting. (This is also why I say it's perfectly fine to request a quick “game recess” in the middle of your meeting...)

So, what does “make their day” mean? This is about **engagement**. If you weren't brought up in the Grange, it can be a daunting idea to enter a Grange Hall for the first time – *will I fit in? Will anyone like me?* As Grange members, it should be part of our pleasure to bring people in and create positive energy in our interactions. “Making their day” involves listening and making an honest effort to get to know the people who come to your events or meetings. One drop of kindness can truly make somebody's day.

Finally, **be there**. Be present with your fellow members, be present with your customers, be present with your work. In every hour of every day, we can be pulled a hundred different directions by the many tasks we have in store. But by focusing on your Grange, your event, your ideas for the duration of your time, you can make a real difference by showing that this is truly important.

*Fish!* may not be a book for everyone, but the four ideas are easy enough to start a conversation in your Grange. If you could ask each of your members to give an extra 25% of each of the four principles at your next event, then 25% more at the one that follows... your Grange's energy and growth could be unstoppable!

## **The disproportionate impact of cancer on rural communities**

*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.](#)**

## **February Heirloom**



*"May our friendship be as firm as the stone itself." – Grange President, Fourth Degree*

Use the Heirloom Program to enhance your Grange's connection to the ritual and history of the Grange, and to also introduce your community to the work and background of the Grange!

**[Download the February "Year A" Heirloom Program materials here.](#)**

## **Making plans for disasters**

*ByCarolynn Chamlee, Communication Fellow / Battle Born Stockton Well Grange #29 (NV)*

Natural disasters can strike any of us at any time. Disasters can be earthquakes, massive fires, and extreme weather that knocks power and other utilities out entirely. Communities in the

Reno/Tahoe area shared a unique and unplanned start to the 2023 new year – 96 hours of no power due to severe damage caused by an unprecedented winter storm.

The outage further proved to be a challenge to those in the rural areas on wells and with livestock. In the Silver Springs, Nevada area, the complications from the disaster were compounded due to the power company's system. One neighborhood had people report two downed power lines for two days, but the power company's computer system showed the houses had power. As a result, the company continued to dismiss the reported outages. That delay in responding to the downed power lines for two days caused temperatures in many of the houses to drop to near freezing.

Being prepared starts at home. The recommendation from FEMA and CDC is a minimum three-day supply for each member of the household. Three days is the average time it takes services to get into a community for relief.

A kit should be stored in a water-tight container and contain these basics:

- Three-day supply of non-perishable food and water – one gallon of water per person, per day.
- Portable, battery-powered radio or television and extra batteries.
- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- First aid kit and manual.
- Sanitation and hygiene items (moist towelettes and toilet paper).
- Matches and waterproof container.
- Whistle.
- Extra clothing.
- Kitchen accessories and cooking utensils, including a can opener and a way to cook meals.
- Photocopies of credit and identification cards.
- Cash.
- Special needs items, such as prescription medications, eyeglasses, contact lens solutions, and hearing aid batteries.
- Items for infants, such as formula, diapers, bottles, and pacifiers.
- Other items to meet your unique family needs.
- If your area is subject to cold temperatures add jackets, blankets, and other items to help keep you warm to your kit.

Local municipalities may offer emergency shelters during disasters to those displaced or without power. Depending on the disaster, weather, or location, they may not be easily accessible or available.

Here in Nevada, there was confusion stemming from the power company's restoration estimates versus the real-world needs of the community. In addition, emergency shelters may accept pets in them but not livestock. In addition to having emergency supplies for the household, emergency supplies, transportation, and a facility to evacuate your livestock should be considered.

Read more about being prepared for disaster in the next issue of [\*Good Day!\*](#) magazine.

## **Rural Americans aren't included in inflation figures – and for them, the cost of living may be rising faster**

*by Stephan Weiler and Tessa Conroy*

*Courtesy of [The Conversation](#)*

When the Federal Reserve convenes at the end of January 2023 to set interest rates, it will be guided by one key bit of data: the U.S. inflation rate. The problem is, that stat ignores a sizable chunk of the country – rural America.

Currently sitting at 6.5%, the rate of inflation is still high, even though it has fallen back slightly from the end of 2022.

The overall inflation rate, along with core inflation – which strips out highly volatile food and energy costs – is seen as key to knowing whether the economy is heating up too fast, and guided



the Fed as it imposed several large 0.75 percentage point interest rate increases in 2022. The hope is that raising the benchmark rate, which in turn increases the costs of taking out a bank loan or mortgage, for example, will help reduce inflation back to the Fed target of around 2%.

But the main indicator of inflation, the consumer price index, is compiled by looking at the changes in price specifically urban Americans pay for a set basket of goods. Those living in rural America are not surveyed.

As economists who study rural America, we believe this poses a problem: People living outside America's cities represent 14% of the U.S. population, or around 46 million people. They are likely to face different financial pressures and have different consumption habits than urbanites.

The fact that the Bureau of Labor Statistics surveys only urban populations for the consumer price index makes assessing rural inflation much more difficult – it may even be masking a rural-urban inflation gap.

To assess if such a gap exists, one needs to turn to other pricing data and qualitative analyses to build a picture of price growth in nonurban areas. We did this by focusing on four critical goods and services in which rural and urban price effects may be significantly different. What we found was rural areas may indeed be suffering more from inflation than urban areas, creating an underappreciated gap.

### **1. The cost of running a car in the country**

Higher costs related to cars and gas can contribute to a urban-rural inflation gap, severely eating into any discretionary income for families outside urban areas, a 2022 report found.

This is likely related to there being considerable differences in vehicle purchases, ownership and lengths of commutes between urban and rural Americans.

Car ownership is integral to rural life, essential for getting from place to place, whereas urban residents can more easily choose cheaper options like public transit, walking or bicycling. This has several implications for expenses in rural areas.

Rural residents spend more on car purchases out of necessity. They are also more likely to own a used car. During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a huge increase in used car prices as a result of a lack of new vehicles due to supply chain constraints. These price increases likely affected remote areas disproportionately.

Rural Americans tend to drive farther as part of their day-to-day activities. Because of greater levels of isolation, rural workers are often required to make longer commutes and drive farther for child care, with the proportion of those traveling 50 miles (80 kilometers) or more for work having increased over the past few years. In upper Midwest states as of 2018, nearly 25% of workers in the most remote rural counties commute 50 miles (80 kilometers) or more, compared with just over 10% or workers in urban counties.

Longer journeys mean cars and trucks will wear out more quickly. As a result, rural residents have to devote more money to repairing and replacing cars and trucks – so any jump in automotive inflation will hit them harder.

Though fuel costs can be volatile, periods of high energy prices – such as the one the U.S. experienced through much of 2022 – are likely to disproportionately affect rural residents given the necessity and greater distances of driving. Anecdotal evidence also suggests gas prices can be higher in rural communities than in urban areas.

### **2. Rising cost of eating at home – and traveling for groceries**

As eating away from home becomes more expensive, many households may choose to eat in more often to cut costs. But rural residents already spend a larger amount on eating at home – likely due in part to the slimmer choices available for eating out.

This means they have less flexibility as food costs rise, particularly when it comes to essential grocery items for home preparation. And with the annual inflation of the price of groceries outpacing the cost eating out – 11.8% versus 8.3% – dining at home becomes comparably more expensive.

Rural Americans also do more driving to get groceries – the median rural household travels 3.11 miles (5 kilometers) to go to the nearest grocery store, compared with 0.69 miles (1.1 kilometers) for city dwellers. This creates higher costs to feed a rural family and again more vehicle depreciation.

Rural grocery stores are also dwindling in number, with dollar stores taking their place. As a result, fresh food in particular can be scarce and expensive, which leads to a more limited and unhealthy diet. And with food-at-home prices rising faster than prices at restaurants, the tendency of rural residents to eat more at home will see their costs rising faster.

### 3. The cost of growing old and ill outside cities

Demographically, rural counties trend older – part of the effect of younger residents migrating to cities and college towns for either work or educational reasons. And older people spend more on health insurance and medical services. Medical services overall have been rising in cost too, so those older populations will be spending more for vital doctors visits.

Again with health, any increase in gas prices will disproportionately hit rural communities more because of the extra travel needed to get even primary care. On average, rural Americans travel 5 more miles (8 kilometers) to get to the nearest hospital than those living in cities. And specialists may be hundreds of miles away.

### 4. Cheaper home costs, but heating and cooling can be expensive

Rural Americans aren't always the losers when it comes to the inflation gap. One item in rural areas that favors them is housing.

Outside cities, housing costs are generally lower, because of more limited demand. More rural Americans own their homes than city dwellers. Since owning a home is generally cheaper than renting during a time of rising housing costs, this helps insulate homeowners from inflation, especially as housing prices soared in 2021.

But even renters in rural America spend proportionately less. With housing making up around a third of the consumer price index, these cost advantages work in favor of rural residents.

However, poorer-quality housing leaves rural homeowners and renters vulnerable to rising heating and cooling costs, as well as additional maintenance costs.

### ***Inflation – a disproportionate burden***

While there is no conclusive official quantitative data that shows an urban-rural inflation gap, a review of rural life and consumption habits suggests that rural Americans suffer more as the cost of living goes up.

Indeed, rural inflation may be more pernicious than urban inflation, with price increases likely lingering longer than in cities.



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## Grange Member Benefit: ODP Business Solutions

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A successful New Year starts right now when you use your Grange ODP Business Solutions™ Savings Program to keep you organized and on budget all year long. Whether you're organizing your to-do lists and turning them into to-done lists, prepping for tax season, planning for the future or need to stock up on essentials. ODP is here to pave the way for a new (organized) day.

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## GRANGE JEWELRY



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!

*Some jewelry is now on clearance!*

**Prices vary**

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

[www.grangestore.com](https://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