



# The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

## In this Issue:

August 25, 2023

### [Be a part of connecting rural America](#)

by Betsy E. Huber

### [National Lecturer's contests and events](#)

by Ann Bercher

### [Deadlines approaching for National Grange](#)

#### [Contests](#)

### [Congratulations to the 2022-2023 Distinguished Granges!](#)

### [Participate in a National Grange service project](#)

### [Register for National Grange Convention – Early](#)

#### [Bird registration closes next week](#)

### [Convention Feature: Niagara Falls Culinary Institute](#)

### [Participate in Multigenerational Panel Discussion on Rural Mental Health](#)

### [Rural Minds presents suicide awareness webinar](#)

### [Grange Supply Store: New Junior Grange pin](#)

### [Grange Supply Store offerings](#)

### [Grange Member Benefit: Start Hearing](#)

## Be a part of connecting rural America

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

As we are fully in fair season, along with many other summertime Grange activities, I hope you are getting out there with the **ACP** materials that your Grange has ordered and received.

**What?** You don't know what I'm talking about? Each week in this Patrons Chain we run an article about the Affordable Connectivity Program from the Federal Communications Commission and how Granges can help lower-income residents in their communities receive a subsidy for internet service and even \$100 toward the purchase of a device to connect to the internet.

Many Granges have already signed up at [acprc.org](https://acprc.org) to order the many types of printed materials we have available, from business cards and labels to large banners and yard signs. For more information, see the article in this issue.

For over 20 years, the Grange has been lobbying for rural broadband access, and we are finally seeing results with the huge amount of money being distributed for this purpose. Now it's time for Grange to work on affordability for our members and neighbors.

**And it's simple!** Just go to [acprc.org](https://acprc.org), register your Grange, and talk to a Community Navigator to order all the printed materials you can use. **They're free!** All you need to do is distribute them in your community, at events you're probably already having. Please help us fulfill this grant and help your neighbors get fully connected.



At the Grange membership and information table at the Centre County (PA) Grange Fair, Grange Fair Queen Teaghan Bair, a member of Progress Grange #96, talks to visitors about the benefits of Grange membership and the Affordable Connectivity Program.

## National Lecturer's contests and events

By [Ann Bercher](#), National Grange Lecturer



The September 1st deadline for the Lecturer's contests is fast approaching. It's still not too late to enter! All contests are open to Grange members and non-members alike. Here is a quick reminder and rundown of the contests and rules:

**The Virtual Photography Contest** submissions are in one group with no age limitations. Each person may send up to three photos as a single file each no larger than 10MB via Google forms at <https://bit.ly/grangephoto2023>.

Divisions are: Farm machinery, Potluck Activity, Gardens and Grange Family.

The **Quilt Block Contest** submissions are in two groups: Junior (age 13 and under) and Adult (age 14 +). There is no limit to the number of blocks that may be submitted, but only one will be judged. Block making instructions and submission directions can be found here:

<https://www.nationalgrange.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Quilt-Block-2023-Directions.pdf>

The entry form can be found here: <https://www.nationalgrange.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Quilt-Block-2023-Entry-Form.pdf>

Entries post-marked by September 1 will be accepted for judging! You still have time!

The **Garden Design Contest** has 3 groups: Individual Junior (Age 5-13), Individual Adult (Age 14+) and Group (all ages). Divisions are Container Garden, Raised Beds and Ground Space. Submission instructions can be found here: <https://www.nationalgrange.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Garden-Design-Contest-2023.pdf>

The **Weather Watcher Contest** is more a Challenge than a Contest. The on-line instructions are a little confusing. I had intended folks to watch the weather for longer than a week, but all submissions will be considered. You can find the instructions and entry form here: <https://www.nationalgrange.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Weather-Watcher-Challenge-Guide-and-Entry-Form.pdf>

While the **Evening of Excellence** is not a Lecturer's contest, it is an event hosted by the National Lecturer and I am looking forward to the entries! With many states holding their annual meetings through October, the deadline for entry/submission is October 31 and instructions and forms may be found here: <https://www.nationalgrange.org/evening-of-excellence/>

The **Quilts of Valor** presentation is scheduled for Wednesday evening at our National Convention. I still need to hear from people who have quilts to donate and the names and bios of veterans who qualify for a quilt. I also have more Quilts of Valor quilt labels that are attached to the quilt that I can mail to you.

Please contact me if you have any comments or questions about any of these contests or events. [lecturer@nationalgrange.org](mailto:lecturer@nationalgrange.org).

## **Deadlines approaching for National Grange contests**

The deadlines for many National Grange contests are approaching!

**Due by September 1st are:** Cape of Honor (Juniors), Garden Design Contest (Lecturer), GRANGE Youth Pillar Project (Youth), Grange in Action (Programs/Membership), Grassroots Advocacy Award (Legislative), Horizon Leadership Ambassador/Young Patron applications (Youth), John Trimble Youth Legislative Experience (Youth), Junior Mentor Award (Youth), National Junior Grange Ambassador applications (Juniors), Publicity Item (Communications), Quilt Block Contest (Lecturer), State Junior Director Reports (Juniors), Virtual Photo Contest (Lecturer), Weather Watcher Challenge (Lecturer), Wib & June Justi Community Service Award (Youth/Community Service), Youth Membership Recruitment Award (Youth/Membership), Youth Officer Council applications (Youth), and the Youth Officer T-Shirt Design (Youth). That's a lot!

More information on all of these can be found in the [2023 Guide to Contests](#) or in the Junior & Youth Program Handbooks.

## **Congratulations to the 2022-2023 Distinguished Granges!**

Each year, the **Distinguished Grange** program recognizes the Granges around the country who have worked extremely hard to reach out to their community, present timely and actionable programs, and increase the reach and influence of the Grange. For 2023, 25 Community Granges and 3 State Granges have qualified to be elite as Distinguished Granges.

For the first time this year, several Granges will also be recognized as **GOLDEN** Distinguished Granges, for presenting a workshop, seminar, or program on mental health in rural America.

### State Granges

- Maryland State Grange
- Oregon State Grange
- Pennsylvania State Grange\*

### Community Granges

- Bethlehem #137 (NY)^
- Burns #160 (MI)
- Central Union #559 (CA)^
- County Line #1751 (IL)
- Creswell #496 (OR)\*^
- Deer Lagoon #846 (WA)
- Eagle #1 (PA)^
- Five Mile Prairie #905 (WA)^
- Goldendale #49 (WA)
- Grantham #968 (NC)
- Gratiot #1898 (MI)
- Harveys-Aleppo #1444 (PA)
- Linganore #410 (MD)
- Marys River #685 (OR)^
- Mica Flats #436 (ID)
- New Market #362 (MD)
- Redland #796 (OR)
- Rio Linda #403 (CA)^
- Russellville #91 (PA)^
- Springwater #263 (OR)
- Stanford #808 (NY)
- St John's #729 (NC)^
- Thurmont #409 (MD)
- Turkey Hill #1370 (IL)
- Valley #1360 (PA)\*\*^

\* 5-year Recipient

\*\* 10-year Recipient

^ Golden Distinguished Grange

If you submitted an application but your name is not listed here, please contact Loretta at [lwashington@nationalgrange.org](mailto:lwashington@nationalgrange.org).

## Participate in a National Grange service project

For 20 years, the Grange has been the leading voice advocating for the expansion of broadband into rural communities. Most frequently, we focus on the infrastructure of build-out, which is still a major factor keeping millions of Americans from high-speed, reliable internet to their homes. However, for others, broadband is available but unaffordable.

For this reason, the National Grange is actively working to promote the [FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program](#), which provides a discount benefit for broadband to low-income and other eligible individuals. After receiving a grant to assist with the program's promotion, we have begun registering Granges to take part in the work to inform people in the communities in which Granges are located, and beyond, about ACP.

Please remember that taking part in this outreach program is **community service**.

Certainly, we want all Grange members to know about the benefit and sign up if they are eligible, but this cannot stop within our doors. Just like giving nonperishable items to the food bank is important, so is taking the information about ACP to the director of the food bank and asking for it to be placed in the boxes and bags of recipients.

Please take the time to register your Grange to take part in this outreach service, which will allow you to receive free materials to give to your local food bank, to senior centers, to veterans' organizations in your hometown, to place on bulletin boards in your halls and in other community spaces, to put on tables at events your Grange takes part in and more. From placemats that can be used at your community breakfasts and dinners to yard signs that can be placed on the lawns of members whose properties are on well-traveled roadways, there are many ways your Grange can increase awareness about the ACP program.

When you register through [grange.biz/signupgrange](http://grange.biz/signupgrange) or by texting or calling National Grange Membership and Leadership Development Director Amanda Brozana Rios at 301-943-1090 and leaving a message, you will be assigned a Community Navigator - an individual that works with our partner, Oregon Institute for a Better Way, to help Granges plan for the outreach, order and packaging the materials, perform data collection and more.

Navigators - all of whom are also Grange members - will also work to collect more information about your Grange, its outreach, goals, and needs. This data will help us create future grant proposals and allow us to search for grants and other funds that may directly benefit individual Granges.

Granges that take part in this program may even be eligible for a small financial incentive, but it all starts with the first step of registering your Grange to become an outreach partner. Registering through this link does not commit your Grange, but will instead allow you to receive further information and connect with a navigator to brainstorm and talk about your Grange.

## **Register for National Grange Convention –Early Bird registration closes next week**



We are just three months away from when we “Flow into the Future” in Niagara Falls, New York as we celebrate the 157<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the National Grange. ***We want you to be there!***

This year's Convention will be just blocks from the Falls! The [Sheraton Niagara Falls](#) is an incredible hotel which will also house the hospitality room, and the convention itself and many of the evening activities will be held at the [Niagara Falls Convention Center](#), just across the street!

Use [this link](#) to book your stay at the main Convention Hotel using our group rate.

For guests who would prefer to call, as opposed to making their reservations online, please call **716-285-3361 x2295** to reach Reservation Coordinator Cierra Duck. She is typically in the office Monday through Friday 8am – 4pm Eastern).

We invite ALL Grange members to participate in the Convention activities, so please make plans to attend from November 14-18, 2023.

Stay tuned over the coming weeks and months for more information about speakers, tours, and other opportunities (both fun and educational!) for all Grange members during the Convention.

Learn more about this year's Convention and register today on the National Grange website!

**Early Bird Registration** - \$32 – open through September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Standard Registration - \$37 – September 5<sup>th</sup> - October 20<sup>th</sup>

Late Registration - \$42 – October 20<sup>th</sup> through convention - *no meal ticket options available*

**[Register for Convention](#)**

The Host Committee has chosen [Community Missions of Niagara](#) as the recipient of this year's community service collection. Granges and attendees are encouraged to send or bring socks, hats, or mittens for men or women to this year's Convention. If you would rather make a financial contribution, please contact Paula Turner.






## Convention Feature: Niagara Falls Culinary Institute

A special addition to this year's Convention is a partnership with Savor Restaurant and the Niagara Falls Culinary Institute, just a block closer to the falls from the host hotel and convention center. This 70-seat student-run restaurant is a great addition to the local restaurants for meal breaks. They are not open every day, and only have a few seats inside, but "they have offered to set up extra tables so that you can eat in the Atrium if you wish," said Linda Sanderson, Northeast Region Host Committee co-chair. The culinary students will also prepare "to-go" breakfast boxes if you call a day in advance, which will be available to pick up at 8:00 a.m.

Lunch is served Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 11:00am-1:30pm. The National Grange has 30-45 chairs reserved for lunch each day, but you must call in your reservation by 10:00am.

Dinner reservations can be made on the Savor Restaurant website - but reserve early. Visit <https://www.niagaracc.suny.edu/nfci/savor/> to make your dinner reservations.

The Niagara Falls Culinary Institute is part of the Niagara County Community College at the State University of New York. "They will also offer tours on the same days they serve meals between 9 & 3," said Sanderson.



### LUNCH CHOICES

prix fixe - 1 starter & 1 main - \$17  
Lunch is served 11-1:30 (M/W/F)

**Starters:** Apple & Arugula Salad (GF), Crushed cucumber Salad (Vegan & GF), Beets & Tahini (Vegan & GF), Hush Puppies, Roasted Broccoli & cheddar soup (Vegetarian) and Lentil Chili (Vegan, GF)

**Main Dishes:** Savor Burger, Shrimp Po'boy, Fish & Chips, Panna Alla Vodka (Vegan), Chicken Piccata, Curried Chickpeas (Vegan, GF), Mediterranean Rice Bowl (GF), Savor Salad (GF) White Broccoli Pizza, and Traditional Pizza

### DINNER CHOICES

prix fixe - 1 each starter, main, & dessert - \$30

**Starters:** Warm Goat Cheese and Quinoa Salad, Bruleed Pear & Walnut salad (GF), Beets & Tahini (Vegan/GF), Student Featured Soup, Flatbread of the Day, Pan-seared Lump Crab Cake

**Main dishes:** Sweet & Spicy Peperonata Pizza, Bacon Mushroom Swiss Burger, Smoked Chicken & Sausage Gumbo, Hearth Roasted Walleye (GF), Shrimp Cavatelli with Peruvian Green Sauce, Seared Polenta Cake with Glazed Vegetables (Vegan & GF), Culinary 133's Cut of the Day (GF), Traditional Pizza.

**Desserts:** Peanut Butter Bar, Mixed Berry Tart (Vegan), Crème Brulee (GF), & Lemon Blueberry Bomb.


menu & prices subject to change

## Participate in Multigenerational Panel Discussion on Rural Mental Health

Everyone attending the National Grange Convention is invited to attend a session about rural mental health conversations, featuring panelists representing several generations. If you will be attending the convention on Thursday, November 16 from 3:00 – 4:30 pm ET and are interested in being considered as a panelist, please complete [this form](#).

This panel is co-presented by the National Grange, [Rural Minds](#), and [NY FarmNet](#).

**Note** that due to a limit on the number of panelists, your reply does not confirm your participation as a panelist. We will follow up with an email to provide you with more information.



Coming to the Showcase at National Grange Convention...

## Milk Chocolate Grange Emblems

3.5oz chocolates  
**\$5 each or \$4 each for 12+**  
plus shipping  
Meets possible in Pennsylvania

**Pre-Order now for pickup in  
Niagara Falls!**

Contact **Linda:** (717) 250-1480

**Victor Grange #159 (PA)**

exclusively  
Pennsylvania made



## Rural Minds presents suicide awareness webinar

*The next webinar in Rural Minds' Rural Mental Health Connections Webinar Series  
Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training*

[Rural Minds](#), the National Grange, and the [National Association of Wheat Growers](#) are pleased to present another *Rural Mental Health Connections Webinar* – the third FREE webinar in the 2023 series.

**Tuesday, September 19**  
**2:00 pm ET | 1:00 pm CT | 12:00 pm MT | 11:00 am PT**

**[Click here for more webinar information and free registration](#)**

This webinar will provide suicide awareness and prevention training from NY FarmNet Family Consultant [Jennifer Schwyzter, LMSW](#), a mental health professional with an approach that's relevant to people living in rural communities.

Learn about:

- What causes people to consider suicide
- Warning signs that someone may be considering suicide
- Strategies for managing one's own mental health
- How to get help for someone in a suicidal crisis.

The webinar will be moderated by Rural Minds Vice President of Communications Julie Lux and presented live via Zoom with the option to hear audio as listen-only.

To honor the confidentiality and privacy of those attending this webinar, attendees will only be able to see the webinar presenters and no one watching the webinar will be able to see the name or image of any other person who is watching the webinar.

**[Register Now!](#)**





**SUPPLY STORE**

[www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org)

**\*NEW\* JUNIOR GRANGE PINS**



**\$5.00**  
PLUS SHIPPING

Show off your Junior Grange pride with this new 1" soft enamel Junior Grange clutch-back pin!

The seven-sided JG emblem will be sure to stand out, whether you're wearing it at a fair, at a meeting, or just to show off how proud you are to be a Junior member or supporter!

Order at [www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org) or by calling Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109.



## SUPPLY STORE

[www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org)



### \*NEW\* GRANGE SOCKS

*Limited quantity available!*

**Show and wear your Grange Pride at various events and activities, especially at State Session!**

These Grange socks feature the Grange emblem on a navy blue sock.

They are 80% combined cotton, 15% nylon and 5% elastane.

**One size fits most**

*For each pair purchased, National Grange will donate a pair of socks to the National Grange Community Service Project - Community Missions of Niagara*

**\$16.00** plus shipping

Get yours by ordering online through the Grange Supply Store at [grangestore.org](http://grangestore.org) or by calling Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109.



## SUPPLY STORE

[www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org)

### "A GRANGE STORY" COMIC BOOK



This newsprint comic book is a perfect introduction for children, new members, or potential members to tell them about what the Grange is and how YOU can find your place in it!

The perfect giveaway item for fairs, dinners, carnivals, or other special events.

Order by calling Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109 or emailing

[Lwashington@nationalgrange.org](mailto:Lwashington@nationalgrange.org)

**FREE!**

*(just pay shipping)*



## SUPPLY STORE

[www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org)

### "RAISED RIGHT HERE" VINYL STICKERS



**Great way to celebrate Grange month and to have at other Grange activities and events.**

**Die-Cut Vinyl Stickers** - in two designs, celebrating the National Grange "Raised Right Here" theme

*25 stickers of each design*

**\$12 for 50 stickers** plus shipping

Get yours by ordering online through the Grange Supply Store at [grangestore.org](http://grangestore.org) or by calling Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109.

## Grange Member Benefit: Start Hearing

**START HEARING**

Helping you find the best solution for your hearing needs and lifestyle – at the best value.

Grange Members and their families receive:

- Discounts up to 48% on today's latest technology, including hearing aids and tinnitus options
- FREE annual hearing consultations
- Access to a nationwide network of 3,000+ hearing professionals
- Three-year supply of FREE batteries (40 cells per hearing aid purchased per year)
- One year of free office visits (limit of six)



- 60-day risk-free trial period
- FREE Deluxe Warranty Plan, including loss and damage
- Financing plans available (subject to credit approval)

With Start Hearing, their Hearing Care Advisors are with you each step of the way. To find out more and to schedule your hearing consultation, please call 888-461-3209 or visit [www.starhearing.com/partners/grange](http://www.starhearing.com/partners/grange).

SUPPLY STORE



## 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.org](http://grangestore.org) or by calling Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109.

[www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org)

## NATIONAL GRANGE

HEADQUARTERS: 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 [pjonada@nationalgrange.org](mailto:pjonada@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** Burton Eller, Legislative Director. National HQ, ext. 114 or email [beller@nationalgrange.org](mailto:beller@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, IT Director. National HQ, ext. 101 or email [swilkins@nationalgrange.org](mailto:swilkins@nationalgrange.org)

**Junior and Youth Programming** Samantha Wilkins, [samantha@nationalgrange.org](mailto:samantha@nationalgrange.org) or (210) 838-7892

**Lecturer** Ann Bercher, [lecturer@nationalgrange.org](mailto:lecturer@nationalgrange.org) or (612) 501-1231

**Community Service** Pete Pompper, [communityservice@nationalgrange.org](mailto:communityservice@nationalgrange.org) or (609) 820-6239

**Grange Foundation** Joan C. Smith, Chairperson. [ngfb@grange.org](mailto:ngfb@grange.org) or (571) 662-7220

