



# The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE



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October 20, 2023

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## Convention registrations have filled the hotel

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

Only three weeks until Grangers start arriving in Niagara Falls! I spent last weekend at the New York State Grange 150th anniversary session and New York members are very excited to welcome you all to their beautiful state. It seemed that almost all Grangers who attended their State Session will be attending the National Grange Convention in just a few short weeks.

If you haven't yet registered for the convention **please do right away!** It helps us to prepare materials and spaces, and it helps the Host Committee to be ready for you all with goody bags and food in the hospitality room. If you have not registered for a hotel room or tour, I'm sorry (but very happy!) to say that **all are sold out!**

The Sheraton at the Falls is full, but an extra block of rooms has been reserved at the **Wyndham Hotel**, just two blocks from the Convention Center. The hotel link and phone number appear below. Please spread the word to members that they will need to call the Wyndham directly to reserve rooms.

We've been providing information weekly in the Patrons Chain on various workshops and special speakers appearing at the convention, so you know what a great, educational, fun event this will be. I very much hope that I'll see you in Niagara Falls!

**Wyndham Garden Inn** – 443 Main Street, Niagara Falls – (877) 999-3223

<https://www.wyndhamhotels.com/wyndham-garden/niagara-falls-new-york/wyndham-garden-at-niagara-falls/overview>

## Making our National Grange Convention an Amazing Experience!

By [Chris Hamp](#), National Grange Vice President; Chair, Convention Advisory Work Group

Attendees to our 2023 National Convention in Niagara Falls, New York will have access to a new and improved document entitled, "An Introduction to Your First National Grange Convention," and intended to assist first-timers, with the jargon and activities found on the convention's daily schedule. Also, the engaging and fun Bingo-style Attendee Passport, aimed at encouraging all session attendees to see a wide range of functions and meet new people, will make a return with a prize for everyone who checks every box.

New for our 2023 convention in Niagara Falls will be the Connector Crew. The Connector Crew is comprised of Grange members charged with ensuring that each and every registrant feels connected and that their attendance gets off to a great start. You will find the Connector Crew folks, apparent by their blue vests, in the convention registration area and the hospitality room.

Additionally, the National Grange Convention Advisory Work Group's National Grange Convention Assessment Report will be out on November 1, 2023. The Advisory Work Group is excited to present this comprehensive report outlining strategic action items aimed at elevating and revitalizing our National Grange convention – a report that reflects an all-out effort dedicated to ensuring that our National Grange convention is an impactful and engaging event for all members.

The National Grange Convention Advisory Work Group was formed in August of 2022 by National Grange President Betsy Huber, with Vice President Christine Hamp as the lead. This Advisory Work Group was charged with evaluating all aspects of our current National Grange convention.

The National Grange Convention Advisory Work Group is comprised of National Grange Vice President Christine Hamp, Oregon State Grange President Jay Sexton, North Carolina Youth and Young Adult Director Jennie Gentry, Illinois State Grange Vice President Karie Blasingame, and California State Grange Steward Chad Smith.

## National Grange Convention is nearly here



We are just **THREE WEEKS** 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!***

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

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

The main Convention Hotel is **completely booked**, so a new block of rooms has been reserved at the [Wyndham Garden at Niagara Falls](#), just a few blocks from the Convention Center. Call the hotel at (877) 999-3223 to book your rooms today.

**General Registration - \$37 – *Closes Today!***

**Late Registration - \$42 – October 20<sup>th</sup> – November 8<sup>th</sup>**

**Registration on Site - *will be available at the late registration cost, however, you will not be able to obtain tickets to any meals***

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

## Convention Livestream Schedule

If you are unable to be in Niagara Falls, we hope you'll be able to join us on our livestreams, which you can watch on our [YouTube Channel](#), [Facebook Page](#) (with some streams to the National Grange Youth or National Junior Grange pages), [X \(aka Twitter\)](#), or [LinkedIn](#). The schedule below includes many of the speakers at meals, workshops, and public events. Other events will be recorded and may be released at a future date.

By tuning in for these events, you will also have the opportunity and ability to ask questions and interact with the speakers or presenters.

*Please note that all times are in the Eastern Time Zone.*



**157th National Grange Convention Livestream Schedule**  
All times are Eastern Time Zone

**Tuesday, November 14**

12:30 pm – **Advocacy Luncheon**  
**Speakers:** Mayor Robert Restaino of Niagara Falls, New York;  
 NY State Assemblyman Brian Manktelow  
 2:40 pm – **“State of the Grange” Address**  
 by President Betsy E. Huber

**Wednesday, November 15**

12:45 pm – **Salute to Agriculture Luncheon**  
**Speakers:** The Lamb Family, Lamb Farms;  
 Richard Ball, NY Commissioner of Agriculture  
 4:00 pm – **Communication Fellows Workshop**  
 7:30 pm – **Grange Hall of Fame presentation**

Tune in on:






@nationalgrange  
#ng157

**Thursday, November 16**

9:30 am – **Communication Workshop**  
 presented by the US Patent & Trademark Office  
 10:20 am – **Membership Workshop**  
 presented by the SHIPmates  
 11:10 am – **Revitalizing the Grange in your community**  
 2:00 pm – **Rural Minds, NY FarmNet, & Travis Carlson**  
 - mental health in rural America

**Friday, November 17**

8:30 am – **Opening of the Business Session by National Grange Youth Team**  
 3:00 pm – **Installation of Officers**  
 7:30 pm – **National Grange Honors Night**

**Saturday, November 18**

9:00 am – **Youth Workshop - “Leadership Dialogue”**  
 presented by Dr. Daniel Pinti, Niagara University  
 11:00 am – **Lecturer Workshop**  
 with Ann Bercher, National Grange Lecturer  
 8:00 pm – **Evening of Excellence**



## Convention Speakers & Presenters

### Monday, November 13 (Pre-Convention)

*Rachel Mosbacher, Senior Program Officer, Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute*

During the All-Delegates meeting on Monday, November 13, **Rachel Mosbacher** from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Initiative (PCORI) will join virtually via Zoom to discuss the National Grange’s new grant for “Reaching Rural Surgical Seniors.” Information about the R2S2 initiative has been appearing in the Patrons Chain since early September. This grant will allow us to connect with local and State Granges to share pre-surgical guides, instructional videos, and “Planning My Future” information that is beneficial to any senior in rural – and even urban – areas.



### Tuesday, November 14

*Robert Restaino, Mayor of Niagara Falls, and Brian Manktelow, NY State Assemblyman*



#### **Robert Restaino**

*Mayor of Niagara Falls, New York*

Bob Restaino was born and raised in Niagara Falls. After graduating from Niagara Catholic and studying history and political science at NCCC and Niagara University for undergraduate studies, Bob completed law school at UB.

From the beginning, Bob always intended to stay and practice law in his hometown. After admission, he developed his legal practice based on a philosophy of honesty and hard work. Together with his wife Diana, Bob embarked on a successful legal and judicial career in Niagara and Erie counties while raising his growing family.

In the spirit of community, Bob has volunteered and participated in many civic activities and community organizations over the years. He continues that civic engagement today, while also enjoying the occasional game of golf, cooking, and spending time with family and friends



## **Brian Manktelow**

*New York State Assemblyman*

Brian Manktelow was elected to the New York State Assembly in 2018. The district includes all of Wayne County and the Town of Webster in Monroe County.

During his time as an Assemblyman, Brian has fought hard for policies that encourage economic growth, push to reduce unfunded state mandates and high taxes, advocate for resources to battle the growing opioid epidemic, as well as address the need to protect the natural resources in his district.

Brian served in the U.S Army, attaining the rank of sergeant. He has owned and operated Manktelow Farms in Lyons for more than 30 years, and has been an active member of the Wayne County Farm Bureau. Brian's background gives him a unique perspective on the challenges faced by everyday New Yorkers.

Brian currently resides in Lyons with his wife, Crystal, with whom he shares five children. He is dedicated to family life and community. As supervisor of the Town of Lyons, he worked to protect the interests of his fellow residents during the dissolution of the village of Lyons in 2015, ensuring a positive impact on the municipality's future.



**Wednesday, November 15**

*The Lamb Family of Lamb Family Farms, and Richard Ball, New York Commissioner of Agriculture*

## **The Lamb Family**

*Lamb Family Farms*

Lamb Farms is a family dairy operation owned and operated by the Lamb and Veazey families. The farm has grown over time – in size, in cows, in people and in responsibilities! Lamb Farms was founded in Oakfield in 1966 when (Grandpa) Leslie and (Dad) Gordon sold their Darien Center farm to Darien Lake State Park. They purchased what is now our home farm from Roy Woller and started out milking 110 cows. Ten years later, Leslie and Gordon added Jim Veazey as a partner in the farm.

Today, they have two generations and 13 family members involved in our blended family business. This arrangement allows everyone to have an area of expertise. The Lambs tend to be cow people – they enjoy managing the herd and making sure all the ladies are in tip-top shape, while the Veazeys are crop people – they make sure our crops are in order, that we have ample feed for our animals, and they also handle the farm office. Farming is a complex operation, and we feel blessed to have so many talented people in our family to help steer our ship so that one day the next generation will have the opportunity to live this fulfilling lifestyle.

## **Richard Ball**

*New York Commissioner of Agriculture*

A native New Yorker, Mr. Ball has made a living in agriculture his entire life. His inspiration to become a farmer came from his grandparents, who were lifelong dairy farmers. At 18 years old, Mr. Ball began his own career in agriculture as a farm worker on a vegetable farm. He later became operations manager of that same farm. After 20 years there, in 1993 the opportunity arose to be a farm owner and for the past 30 years, he has been the owner and operator of Schoharie Valley Farms in Schoharie, NY, which consists of 200 acres and produces a wide range of vegetable crops, small fruits and greenhouse crops. The farm serves both retail and wholesale consumers through an onsite farm market and ships to brokers and restaurants in the local area as well as New York City.

Mr. Ball has held a number of positions within agriculture and community organizations at the local, state and national level, including the New York State Vegetable Growers Association, the New York Farm Bureau, the American Farm Bureau and the Schoharie County Chamber of Commerce.

He was honored to serve as the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) 2021-2022 President, where he helped guide the implementation of NASDA's priorities and additional policies adopted at NASDA's 2021 annual meeting. He is also the former President of Food Export Northeast.

Mr. Ball along with his wife, Shirley, reside on the farm in Schoharie and appreciate having three generations engaged in the farm operation.



Thursday, November 16

*Speakers from U.S. Patent & Trademark Office, Rural Minds, NY FarmNet, and filmmaker Travis Carlson*

### **Elizabeth Dougherty**

*Eastern Region Outreach Director, U.S. Patent & Trademark Office*

As the Eastern Regional Outreach Director for the [U.S. Patent and Trademark Office](#) (USPTO), Elizabeth Dougherty carries out the strategic direction of the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the USPTO, and is responsible for leading the USPTO's East Coast stakeholder engagement. Focusing on the region and actively engaging with the community, Ms. Dougherty ensures the USPTO's initiatives and programs are tailored to the region's unique ecosystem of industries and stakeholders.



### **Jeff Winton**

*CEO/Founder, Rural Minds*

Jeff Winton is founder and chairman of [Rural Minds](#), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to serve as the informed voice for mental health in rural America, and to provide mental health information and resources.

When his nephew, Brooks Winton, died by suicide in 2012, Jeff's late mother, Elaine, who helped raise Brooks, courageously ignored the guidance of some local community members and urged Jeff to speak at the funeral about Brooks' struggle. An outpouring of support and hearing from other farm families about their own struggles around mental health convinced him to devote a significant portion of his energies to connecting rural Americans to much-needed mental health services.

In addition to being the founder and chairman of Rural Minds, Jeff is the founder and owner of Wall Street Dairy LLC, a working family dairy farm in Chautauqua County, New York, and a member of a multigenerational farm family. He has worked four decades as a communications and corporate affairs leader with Fortune 100 corporations and respected public relations and advertising agencies. This global experience spans highly diverse and dynamic industries, including the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, animal health, agricultural and consumer arenas.

Winton is also chief executive officer of Jeff Winton Associates, a full-service communications and corporate affairs agency he co-founded in 2020. He has deep experience – on both a professional and extremely personal level – with efforts to educate about depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, substance use disorder and other forms of mental illness that has led him to create Rural Minds.

Jeff graduated with distinction from Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, with a bachelor's degree from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and completed graduate level courses at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. He also served on the Cornell University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Dean's Advisory Council and was named Outstanding Alumni 2020. Winton belongs to a number of agricultural organizations including the American Farm Bureau, Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Holstein Association USA, and many others.

### **Travis Carlson**

*Filmmaker, Mother's Day*

Travis is a writer and independent filmmaker from Gerry, NY, a rural town south of Buffalo. Having been raised on a small horse farm near Amish country, he began making films with his friends before graduating from Buffalo State University. Afterward, he spent over a year volunteering on farms in Switzerland and Portugal. For five years he created films, commercials, and documentaries for the NFL's Buffalo Bills, NHL's Buffalo Sabres, and numerous national brands. His work won over a dozen NYS Emmy's. Under his company, Pan-American Film Division, he adapted three feature plays to the screen and created over fifteen short films, three of which won international competitions earning entrance to the Cannes Film Festival SFC. In 2021, Travis wrote and directed the "one-shot" feature film *Mother's Day* based on his lived experience with his mother's struggle with mental illness.



**Becky Wiseman***Family Consultant Case Supervisor, NY FarmNet*

Becky Wiseman, LCSW-R, is the Family Consultant Case Supervisor for Cornell University's [NY FarmNet](#) Program. She has worked in the agricultural industry for nearly 30 years, as the Associate Director for Long Island Farm Bureau, the Agricultural Stewardship Coordinator at Cornell Cooperative Extension, Suffolk County, and for the past six years as a NY FarmNet Family Consultant. She is a graduate of Boston University with a Master of Social Work, and has experience working with adults, families, and adolescents in county mental health, in-patient psychiatry, and private practice. Becky lives in Westhampton, New York, with her husband and two cats.

Saturday, November 18

*Dr. Daniel Pinti, Niagara University*

**Dr. Daniel Pinti***Associate Professor, Niagara University*

Dr. Pinti has been a Professor of English at Niagara University since 2001, when he and his family moved from New Mexico. In addition to his work at NU, he is also a priest at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Eggertsville, New York. Dr. Pinti holds an MA and Ph.D. in English from The Ohio State University and an M.Div. from Christ the King Seminary, and previously taught at New Mexico State University. His favorite topics include the literature of the American West, Old English, Dante, the Bible as Literature, and Comics/Graphic Novels. Dr. Pinti's current research is in two areas: nonfiction writing about New Mexico and the desert Southwest, and the Grateful Dead as a musical and cultural phenomenon.

**Visit the Showcase!**

The Showcase room at the National Grange Convention is always a fantastic spot to get ideas, learn about the work of the Grange, and even do a little bit of shopping. This year, the Showcase will be located in the Cataract Room, just inside the Niagara Convention Center, and will feature highlights of the work done in the seven states in the Northeast Region, the Grange Supply Store, partners of the National Grange, the National Grange's grant work, and more!

Here's a taste of what you can find in this year's Showcase:

- The [Affordable Connectivity Program](#)
- [The Dictionary Program](#)
- The [Federal Communications Commission](#), the grantor of the Grange's work with the Affordable Connectivity Program
- [The Grange Supply Store](#)
- The [Jordan Porco Foundation](#), a peer-to-peer program aiming to prevent suicide and promote mental health
- The [Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute](#) (PCORI), the grantor behind the "Reaching Rural Surgical Seniors" program
- [Rural Minds](#) & [NY FarmNet](#), Grange issues partners who will be presenting about mental health in rural America; they will also moderate a panel on Thursday afternoon, as well as Saturday morning's "Talk Saves Lives" seminar
- The [United States Patent & Trademark Office](#), who will also be presenting a workshop on Thursday morning
- [USAging](#), the grantor who helped the National Grange provide more than 3500 vaccines at The Big E in late September
- Victor Grange #159 (PA), who will be selling chocolate Grange emblems (they make a great gift!)
- The collection point for the National Grange's Community Service project for [Community Missions of Niagara Frontier](#)
- *And more!*

Be sure to check out the Showcase, which opens the evening of Wednesday, November 15, and will be open all day on Thursday and Friday, as well as Saturday until noon.



Coming to the Showcase at National Grange Convention...

### Milk Chocolate Grange Emblems

3.5oz chocolates  
**\$5 each or \$4 each for 12+**  
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## Community Service Project



The Host Committee for this year's National Grange Convention has chosen [Community Missions of Niagara Frontier](#) as the recipient of this year's community service collection.

Community Missions of Niagara Frontier has provided a unique blend of services to address the needs of the Niagara community since its

founding in 1925.

The initial population served was homeless individuals and families. Since its founding, CMI programs have evolved to meet the needs of its community. The agency now provides 21 programs between its four divisions: Crisis & Community Services, Mental Health Housing Services, Mental Health Recovery Services, and Youth Services.

The agency serves a diverse set of populations including youth, adults, families, homeless, juvenile justice involved youth, youth and adults with psychiatric challenges, persons living with HIV/AIDS, trafficked youth and adults, and ex-offender parole individuals. In general, CMI serves a vulnerable population of individuals who, through a variety of circumstances, have been marginalized, overlooked, or challenging in their presentations and behaviors. Granges and attendees are encouraged to send or bring socks, hats, or mittens for men or women to this year's Convention.

Through a partnership with [Franklin Morrow](#), the National Grange has already made the first donation to this important endeavor. Franklin Morrow is the manufacturer of the new [Grange Socks in the Supply Store](#). Through their efforts, for every pair of socks sold by the National Grange a pair of socks is donated to a good cause. In late September, Alex Goodman, owner of Franklin Morrow, delivered 300 pairs of socks to the Community Missions, with 100 pairs being donated by the National Grange and an additional 100 pairs donated by the company.

If you would rather make a financial contribution, please contact [Paula Turner](#).

Convention attendees who go on the Youth Tour will also be visiting Community Missions to participate in an in-person service project.

## Youth & Junior Events bring fun to Convention

For any Juniors (age 5-14) or Youth (age 14-35) attending this year's Convention, there is a great amount of fun to be had!

On Friday, November 17, all Juniors are invited to register for the Junior Activities Day, led by Junior & Youth Director Samantha Wilkins, National Junior Grange Ambassador Nettie Hartley, and this year's Junior Grange Ambassador candidates.



On Thursday, everyone is invited to attend the Grange Baseball contest! Come be a supporter of the teams as they compete for both team and individual prizes with the Youth and Juniors. Grange Baseball is a fun and interactive trivia contest – contestants come from regional winners – and YOU can make a great cheering section!



All Youth (and young-at-heart attendees) are invited to this year's Youth Dance – a silent disco! *What's a silent disco?* It's a dance where – instead of music being played for all to hear – each attendee will be given a set of wireless headphones where they can “jam out” at a comfortable volume level. It's a ton of fun to participate in, and quite fun to watch for others, too! This will be held on Thursday evening, November 16.

Finally, all youth are invited to attend a **Youth Roundtable** on Saturday, November 18. We are soliciting *honest, unfiltered feedback* about current and future Youth and Young Adult programming. Anybody with a vested interest in these programs is both welcome and *encouraged* to attend.

## Preview the Convention Program Book

[A draft of the 157<sup>th</sup> Convention Program Book can be located here.](#)

This book contains speaker bios, the full schedule, and details about this year's Convention in Niagara Falls. There may still be updates in the coming weeks, but use this to plan your time at the Convention!

We encourage attendees to use this digital version of the program book throughout the week of the Convention!

*A new link will be provided for the week of the Convention, once any changes have been made.*



## There's more around the area

In the October 2023 issue of [Good Day!](#) magazine, we highlighted a few other nearby attractions. We know that many Grangers love taking day trips during the week of session to support local businesses, visit tourist attractions, and even do some fun shopping in the region.

As you make your plans to attend, of course, the wonder of Niagara Falls is worth taking the time to visit, but consider these other local attractions:

- Aquarium of Niagara
- Albright-Knox Art Gallery
- Artpark
- Asha's Farm Sanctuary
- Becker Farms & Vizcarra Vineyards
- Blackman Homestead Farm
- Buffalo & Erie County Botanical Gardens
- Buffalo Museum of Science
- Buffalo Zoo
- Carnegie Art Center
- Herschell Carrousel Factory Museum
- Hidden Valley Animal Adventure
- National Comedy Center
- Niagara Adventure Theater
- Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Center
- Riviera Theatre & Performing Arts Center
- 7 Gates Screampark (for those who want a bit of a scare)

Some of these locations require tickets in advance - so don't wait too long to make your plans. In addition, there are hundreds of nearby farms, wineries, breweries, shopping centers, and more that



are waiting for you to discover in the region. If you don't want to drive (or won't have a car), you can consider hopping on the Discover Niagara Shuttle.

Read more about what's in store at the Convention in [\*Good Day!\*](#).



## 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

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