



# The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

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## **National Grange President pushes for a stronger tomorrow**

National Grange President Christine Hamp has continued an introductory media tour over the past week. A unifying theme in all her interviews has been building a stronger Grange for tomorrow.

Hamp was interviewed by KRVN, the Nebraska Rural Radio Network, and was featured in the *Spokesman-Review*.

"The Grange is at work... in hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of communities across this country, communities that – not always – are focused in agriculture," Hamp said. "More and more, we see Granges where the majority of members... have that desire to make their communities stronger and to ensure... the values of those small towns and communities continue into the future." – Interview with KRVN. [Listen here.](#)



Hamp poses at her home Grange, Five Mile Prairie #905 in Spokane, Washington.

*Photo courtesy of the Spokesman-Review*

In [her interview with the Spokesman-Review](#), Hamp also discussed the Grange's political grassroots power.

"Our organization has never been a one-trick pony," Hamp said. "It's always had a broad range of legislative priorities. You can't just say that it's about getting the next farm bill passed, because there's so much more we're working on as well."

Those legislative priorities aren't set by the president of the national organization, Hamp said, but adopted at the national convention after being introduced by state chapters, which bring priorities brought forward by local chapters.

"Grange leadership starts at the grassroots," Hamp said.

Hamp continues to highlight that the strength of the Grange lies within our ability to work together. "That's what I'm 100% engaged in and ready for is taking this organization into tomorrow, making sure that we're stronger tomorrow than we are today." – Hamp's interview with the *Spokesman-Review*.

## Reminder – Bonding applications are due

**Attention all State and Community Granges:** The deadline for 2024 bonding is **December 31, 2023**. All Granges should be bonded for the safety of their Grange.

*\*As a reminder, we will continue to require the Granges that opt in for coverage to be listed. We will compare the current list to the next term renewal list. If any Granges that have opted in for coverage in 2023 and they opt out of coverage in 2024 we cannot include them in the policy for three policy terms.*

[Read the Q&A about Bonding here](#)

[Download the Bonding Application here](#)

[View the Bonding Questionnaire here](#) (for Granges requiring bonding over \$50,000)

## National theme “Grange Strong” highlights unity

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



National Grange President Chris Hamp has announced the 2024-2025 theme that will be used by the National Grange and Granges around the country:

### **“Grange Strong: Rooted. Resilient. United.”**

**Grange Strong** is “a powerful expression that embodies the strength, unity, pride, and resilience of the Grange,” said Hamp, “It reflects our collective power, shared values, and enduring spirit. This phrase signifies a commitment to supporting one another, facing challenges with resilience, and working together to achieve common goals.”

Throughout the next two years, Granges are encouraged to use the “Grange Strong” theme in their programming, displays, exhibits, and more. We encourage Grange members to use the hashtag

#GrangeStrong in your posts, so we can connect with one another.

### ***Here are some suggestions for using the theme:***

#### **Grange Strong**

- Highlight the strengths of your Grange and your Grange members. Encourage your members to take pride in the things they are good at or feel “strong” while doing.
- A literal “strong” event. The Grange encourages health and wellness, perhaps partner with a local gym for an all-levels strength training night for your Grange and the community.

#### **Rooted**

- Use “rooted” to share the Grange’s agricultural roots. How about a seed swap night? A connection to local farms and farmers? Supporting your local FFA or 4-H clubs?
- You can also use “rooted” to show how your Grange has deep “roots” in the community. Whether your Grange is 150 years old or newly chartered or reorganized, putting down roots for the benefit of your community is important. How has your Grange made a difference where you work?

#### **Resilient**

- Has your Grange, your community, or somebody within weathered a storm? Has your Grange stood by them? Come out stronger? Be proud of how you’ve come out stronger or with a more defined purpose!
- With a 150+ year history, the Grange has seen and done a lot throughout history. Show our resilience by showcasing how we have adapted through our history while working to make communities and the country better and stronger.

## United

- The Grange is a network of 1,400 Granges around the country. “United” with one another in creating shared programs and events, working together to show that there is no “I” in GRANGE.
- Come up with a project, fundraiser, or event that can use the talents of each of your Grange members – from the youngest to the oldest.

No matter what you come up with, **Grange Strong: Rooted. Resilient. United.** can be our National rallying point for the next two years, bringing together each of our members, building up the Grange, and highlighting the good that is being done around the country.

In January, we will be launching a “Grange Strong” fundraiser that can help you highlight our theme during Grange Month (April) and beyond. But we want to hear from you! Will you take our survey to let us know what you’d like to see?

**Take the “Grange Strong” survey!**

## Are you effectively using your platform?

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



In our current digital age, harnessing the power of social media and press connections has become essential for community organizations like the Grange to amplify their impact and engage communities effectively. By strategically leveraging online platforms, you can broaden your reach and inspire active participation in community causes.

Establishing a strong online presence is crucial. Granges should create and maintain profiles on popular social media platforms such as Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram; even sites or platforms like LinkedIn, Snapchat, WhatsApp, and TikTok can be viable options with the right management. Regular updates of compelling content related to initiatives or events, and highlighting your success stories keep followers informed and engaged. Utilizing multimedia content, such as images and videos, can add vibrancy to posts and capture the attention of a wider audience.

Engagement is a two-way street, and Granges should foster a sense of community by encouraging interaction. Encouraging followers to share their thoughts, experiences, and suggestions creates a dynamic online dialogue. This not only strengthens connections with existing supporters but attracts new ones who may resonate with the organization's mission or events.

Effective use of hashtags is another powerful tool. Granges can create and promote unique hashtags for their campaigns (**#GrangeStrong**), encouraging supporters to use them in their posts. This not only helps in tracking conversations related to the cause but also increases the visibility of the organization across social media platforms.

Connecting with local press outlets is equally vital. Granges should strive to cultivate relationships with journalists and media outlets (newspapers or newsletters, websites, blogs, etc.) in their community. Offering exclusive interviews, press releases, or inviting media representatives to cover events can result in valuable coverage that reaches a broader audience. Local news outlets often appreciate stories that highlight positive community impact, making Granges an attractive feature.

Collaborations with local influencers, media personalities, and community or school leaders can also amplify Granges' messages. Identifying individuals who share the organization's values and have a significant following can extend the reach of campaigns and create a ripple effect of support.

By strategically navigating the landscape of social media and forging connections with the press, Granges can maximize their outreach, inspire community engagement, and ultimately make a more significant impact on the causes they champion. In the interconnected world we live in, the digital realm serves as a powerful ally for organizations (like the Grange) that seek to create positive change.

## House overwhelmingly passes bill to allow whole milk back in schools

By Jacqui Fatka, for [Agri-Pulse](#)

Bipartisan members of the House voted 330-99 in support of the [Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act](#) allowing whole milk and 2% milk to again be allowed in school lunches.

The Obama administration removed whole milk from school meals in 2012 in an effort to keep allowable fat levels lower. The bill would allow fat from milk to not be counted towards the total fat levels allowed in each meal.

Speaking on the House floor in support of the bill, Rep. Virginia Foxx, R-N.C., said it “isn’t about advocating for one type of milk over another, but providing parents, schools and service providers with the option to choose what’s best for our children’s nutrition.”

House Agriculture Committee Chairman Glenn Thompson, R-Pa., entered into the record 15 academic studies from researchers around the world that show that full fat dairy foods have little to no association with high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease or obesity. “Several of these studies show full fat milk helps improve or lower negative health outcomes for children,” Thompson said.

Ahead of the vote, International Dairy Foods Association President and CEO Michael Dykes said it’s important for children to have access to choices. “We know that the majority of the milk sold – 75% of all retail sales – are whole and 2% milk.”

Three amendments were each approved by a voice vote.

An amendment from Rep. Tom Tiffany, R-Wis., prevents USDA from issuing any rule that bans varieties of milk. Currently, [USDA has proposed one option to limit availability of flavored milk](#) to high school students, and elementary and middle schools would no longer have access to flavored milk. Another option would continue to allow flavored and unflavored milks for all grades with only fat-free and low-fat milk varieties.

“USDA has its sights on getting rid of chocolate milk in schools,” Tiffany said.

USDA’s proposed rule would impact 30 million students who participate in the school lunch program. A recent study found removing flavored milk for kindergarten through fifth grade would result in a 62-63% reduction in milk consumption and a 50% reduction for 6-8<sup>th</sup> grade students, Tiffany said.

USDA’s proposal for milk would be limit added sugars to no more than 10 grams per 8 fluid ounces or, for flavored milk sold as a competitive food for middle and high schools, 15 grams of added sugars per 12 fluid ounces. Dykes also noted that as a dairy industry, 37 processors supplying the vast majority of school milk have made a commitment that flavored milk would contain a maximum of 10 grams of added sugar. Today, the average is 8.2 grams, showing the industry is already ahead of its commitment, Dykes said.

The National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity – including the American Heart Association, American Academy of Pediatrics and National WIC Association – urged House members ahead of the vote to oppose the bill because it does not align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The letter says USDA’s proposed rule attempts to more closely align school nutrition standards with the 2020-2025 DGAs.

“Singling out milk – in this case, whole and reduced-fat milk – to be exempt from the recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines is a slippery slope for allowing special interests to carve out exemptions in school meal program rules,” the letter says.

An amendment that allows whole milk to be organic or non-organic introduced by Rep. Anna Paulina Luna, R-Fla., passed by a voice vote.

Another amendment from Rep. Cory Mills, R-Fla., prohibits schools participating in the school lunch program from purchasing or offering milk produced by China state-owned enterprises. Jim Mulhern, president and CEO of the National Milk Producers Federation, said House passage is a critical step and urged the Senate to consider the bill immediately.

Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, told *Agri-Pulse* he doesn’t anticipate the Senate companion bill to get a standalone vote, but is more likely to be included in the farm bill or as part of an omnibus spending bill.







# Congratulations

to these State Granges who have posted a quarterly net gain in membership!

**Connecticut**

**Idaho**

**Maryland**

**Massachusetts**

**New York**

**Oregon**

**Pennsylvania**

**Washington**

## Recap of the Nevada Grange Livestock Youth

*By Carolyn Chamlee, Senior Communication Fellow*

The 2023 Livestock Show year was bursting at the seams for Nevada Grange Juniors and Youth members. Livestock Market Youth show Market animals and sell them at various shows, while others have breeding programs that run all year long. Some youth will attend fifteen or more shows between February and the end of October.

**Market Classes** include Steer, Swine, Lamb, Goat, Poultry, and Rabbit.

**Breeding Classes** include Breeding Beef, Dairy Cows, Breeding Swine, Breeding Sheep, Breeding Ram, Breeding Doe, Breeding Buck, Breeding Poultry, Breeding Rabbits, Cavies, and Dairy Goats.

Nevada's Granges also have Youth that shows at Horse Shows, Horse Judging, and Hippology.

Let's touch base with the youth we highlighted [earlier in the year in Good Day! magazine](#).

### **Name: Caitlyn Dock | Level: Senior | Project: Market Beef | Year in Project: 3**

This show season went well for me! I learned a lot about cattle and showmanship tips that I can carry into this next show season. My main goal from last year was to improve my showmanship. I improved every show that I went to and some of the judges even gave me pointers that could help me. Some were about the way I hold the animal and how to properly use the show stick. My goal for my market steer was to get him over 1250 lbs. He weighed in at 1275 lbs at the show and was the heaviest steer at the Churchill County Junior Livestock Show.

In total, I went to 13 livestock shows this year. That includes the ones that have sales and fun jackpots throughout Nevada. My favorite one was the Silver State Youth Livestock Show and Sale because of the fun atmosphere. People were friendly, the beef judge was amazing, and the animals were happy in the show ring. After this year, I am excited to see what the future of showing beef will hold for me!

### **Name: Tylee Homan | Level: Intermediate | Project: Horse | Year in Project: 2**

My show season was a bit rough. I was only able to attend 1 show this season because my horse got very sick. She is much better now, but I did not meet my goals due to her health. However, I do feel that I have improved my riding skills throughout the year, so I am proud of that. I also did not have a favorite show because I was not able to attend many.

### **Name: Kadence Ortiz | Level: Senior | Project: Dairy Goats | Years in project: 3 years**

The show season went pretty well. My goat Opal and her daughter Mira both won the Grand Champion this year, I was so proud of them. It was cool because Opal and Mira are both goats that I bred for next season. This year was also my first year showing as a senior, and I was happy with my placing at each show.

I did not meet my goals this year. I wanted to get more championship legs on my goats, but they didn't get any at the sanctioned show. I'm hoping that next year my does will mature a little bit more and get a better udder.

I was in six shows. There were two jackpots, our state Nevada Junior Livestock Show, and two local shows, and this year we traveled to Oregon for a TMGR/MDGA-sanctioned dairy goat show.

This year my favorite shows were the dairy goat show at The Breeders Cup or the Roseburg Dairy Goat Show we went to in Oregon. The Roseburg Dairy Goat Show was really fun, it was a breeders-only open show, which means that youth and adults show together and there is no showmanship. I learned a lot and met some other goat breeders. The dairy goat show at the Breeders Cup I also enjoyed. I showed my does in the miniature class and they all did well.

**Name: Lina Baughn | Level: Junior | Project: Turkeys/Poultry | Years in project: 2 years**

My show season was awesome and fun. I got in the round-robin a couple of times. I also brought home nearly 80 ribbons, some were really big ribbons! I went to 9 shows, my goal was to have fun and learn. I learned a lot at all the shows so it is hard to pick a favorite show.

**Name: Laurin Chamlee | Level: Intermediate | Project: Breeding Rabbits, Havana | Years in project: 3 years in Grange, but I've been raising them for 8 years total.**

My show season went well this year and I got to achieve lots of things with my rabbits. We bred my Havana doe, DS Semi-Sweet aka Rita to our buck Dark Phillip twice. Rita had 5 babies each time with 9 boys and 1 girl for a total of 10 babies this year. She is an excellent mother. We sold many of them to new Grange members looking to start their rabbit projects.

My very first rabbit, Miles, made it to 2 shows this year. He was almost 9 years old when he passed away, that was hard. I had owned and shown him since I was 5 years old, for his whole life. He moved from California to Nevada with me and was my go-to for showmanship. I had to do extra work with Phillip because he's who I use for Showmanship now.

I improved immensely on my showmanship skills and my rabbits always placed in the top 5 for Best of Show and the babies we sold that showed also received high marks. My favorite show this year was the Fernley Little Critters Show which was held in September.

**Name: Dimizio Starks | Level: Intermediate | Project: Hippology | Years in the project: 2**

The season was good, but wished I had also done horse judging as well. I did mostly meet my goals. I went to one competition, the Nevada Agricultural Fair.

**Name: DiMitri Starks | Level: Junior | Project: Hippology | Years in the project: 2**

My year went ok. I met my goals and showed at one show, the Nevada Agricultural Fair.

**Name: Richie Gomez | Level: Senior | Project: Breeding Sheep | Years in project: 5**

My show season went well. I got some of the information I needed to improve my flock. We did not meet this year's goal at the show. We did, however, meet our goal of AI. I showed at 7 shows this year. SilverState Youth Livestock Show in Yerington is my favorite there are always things to do while we wait for animals to show.

**Name: Lila Mae Montero Rodrigues | Level: Intermediate | Project: Cavies | Years in the project: 3**

I feel like my show season went very well. I met some but stayed the same with other goals. I've attended 5 shows this year. I enjoyed the Fernly Little Critter show.

**Name: Sabella Thompson | Level: Intermediate | Project: Market Sheep | Years in project: 1**

I did pretty well! The only thing I remember being genuinely bummed about was not placing well with my sheep. I did well at the Nevada Ag Fair. My main goal was to have fun, I think I succeeded! I attended two Shows Nevada Junior Livestock Show and the Nevada Agricultural Fair, which was probably my favorite.

At the Nevada Junior Livestock Show, I showed my turkey, CaraCara, and my sheep, Popsicle. I placed grand champion in market with my turkey, and although I did place in showmanship, I think I placed low. With my sheep, I didn't place in showmanship, and I don't know if we placed in market. This was a bit upsetting, but not the end of the world. It was the first sheep I had ever done, and the first sheep project in my Grange.

At the Nevada Ag Fair, I showed a goat, chicken, and a pen of 3 meat chickens. I placed grand champion in meat chickens, and champion in intermediate showmanship for chickens. I think I placed average with my goat in both market and showmanship, but I can't quite remember. At the Nevada Agricultural Fair, I placed champion in two things I had never done before, chicken showmanship and meat chickens!

**Name: Taylee Homan | Level: Intermediate | Project: Dairy Goat | Years in the project: 2**

My show season was excellent this year. I was able to show at 8 shows this year which is 2 more than last year. I improved my showmanship and was able to win several of my showmanship classes, but I also won the round-robin class at one show. I won 4 buckles this year. I worked to look at my herd and am hoping through my breeding selections that my herd will show improvements for next season. My favorite show was the Nevada Junior Livestock Show.

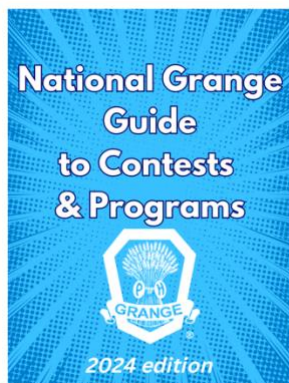
**Name: Conner Simerson | Level: Intermediate | Project: Breeding Market Goat | Years in the project: 3**

I had a good show season. I wanted a Grand Champion goat or turkey, but it ain't in the cards this year. I went to 2 shows and my favorite is the ag fair.

**Name: Derek Simerson | Level: Junior | Project: Breeding Market Goat | Years in the project: 2**

I did meet his goal by getting a blue ribbon market Turkey and winning the Junior Poultry Showmanship at NJLS. My favorite show is the ag fair because of the derby and I like the feel of the show.

## 2024 National Grange Contest Guide



The National Grange Guide to Contests & Programs has been released on the National Grange website for all members. This guide incorporates the contests and programming from the Junior, Youth, Lecturer, Communications, Membership/Leadership, Legislative, Community Service, and Member Programs Departments.

Take a look at all of the new contests for the 2023-2024 Grange year, with most contest and program deadlines set for September 1, 2024 (please look at each contest outline for finalized information).

[View and Download the 2024 National Grange Contest Guide here](#)

The contests are also listed on each department's page on the National Grange website for easier viewing.

## Spotlight Your Grange

*Do you want to see your Grange in the Spotlight? Send a brief write-up of an event at your Grange with a few pictures to Philip Vonada, Communications Director, at [pvonada@nationalgrange.org](mailto:pvonada@nationalgrange.org). It may be printed immediately, or may be held for a future Patrons Chain or Good Day! magazine.*

**SUPPLY STORE**  
[www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org)

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\$5.00 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 note:** All orders made by December 20<sup>th</sup> will be shipped out before Christmas – orders placed after December will not ship until after the New Year.

If you would like to try to ensure delivery by Christmas, please call Loretta at (202) 628-3507 x109.

## Grange Member Benefit: American Income Life

*Accidental Death & Dismemberment benefit is available for ALL Grangers, including Juniors!*

### Additional Member Benefit at No Cost!

Through a partnership with American Income Life Insurance Company, an AD&D benefit and other no-cost offers are being provided to all members of National Grange.

#### Included:

-  Group Accidental Death & Dismemberment Benefit
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-  Child Safe Kit®
-  Needs-Based Analysis

Since 1990, American Income is proud to have paid over over \$1.5 million in life, health and no-cost AD&D benefits to Grange Members and their families.

All National Grange members should have received a letter of introduction to the no-cost offerings provided by the National Grange at no cost!

Learn more at **MyBenefits.AILife.com**

Enter access code: **SGLHD**

\*AILPlus Health Services Discount Program is not available in NY. Lab Testing not available in MD, NJ, or RI.

This is a solicitation for insurance.

An AIL representative will contact members who return the reply card by mail or respond online to arrange a convenient time to deliver their certificate of coverage and other no cost offers and review other supplemental insurance benefits that may be available.



**Travis Daniels**

AIL Public Relations

814.319.2535 | [tgDaniels@AILife.com](mailto:tgDaniels@AILife.com)





## 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** Christine Hamp, National Grange President. Available to members at [champ@nationalgrange.org](mailto:champ@nationalgrange.org) or by phone at (509) 953-3533

**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, social media, 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** 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 [Lwashington@nationalgrange.org](mailto:Lwashington@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** Tom Gwin, [lecturer@nationalgrange.org](mailto:lecturer@nationalgrange.org) or (360) 581-0177

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

