



The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE



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December 22, 2023

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Go Team Grange! Enthusiasm and positive attitudes build momentum

By [Christine E. Hamp](#), National Grange President

The first month of serving as your National Grange President is in the rear-view mirror, and learning has and continues to occur! I am thrilled with the excitement, willingness to be part of the solution, and all-around "let's get it done" attitude – all of which is exponentially building momentum and relevance across the country. **Go Team Grange!**

Duane, the first, First Dude and I, wish you all the happiest of holidays, a very Merry Christmas, and an amazing New Year.

Speak Like a "CHAMP" – Phrase for
December 2023

Grange Strong!

Please use this phrase in your newsletters, at your conferences, and as part of your social media presence.

Junior Team

I am excited to announce the creation and launch of our new **National Grange Junior Team**. This team has been created and empowered to review and manage the Junior Department for 2024 and beyond. Team members include Adam Ellwanger (IL), Laura Gotauco (RI), Tom Gwin (WA), Emily Hartsell (NC), Molly Newman (KS), and Liz Tolley (OH).

SPEAK LIKE A "CHAMP"

Speak like a "CHAMP" will be a monthly word or phrase designed to get everyone speaking the same language to build a positive message as we Grange.

"GRANGE STRONG!"

Grange Strong! is a powerful expression that embodies the strength, unity, pride, and resilience of the Grange. 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.

This Team is empowered to conduct a thorough examination of every component of the current Junior Department and report back with their findings and recommendations, with the goal of ensuring that we are meeting the current needs and wants of our young members and their families as well as our community and State Granges. This Team will also review the Grange Youth Fair Program to see how it fits into our National Grange programming.

Sister Samantha Wilkins has graciously agreed to remain the National Grange Junior Director through the first quarter of 2024, to ensure a smooth and complete transition. Thank you, Sam, for your many years of outstanding service and dedication to our Junior Grangers.

Members Needed for Work Groups

I am looking to put together several Work Groups to review and make recommendations on various components of the National Grange. If you are interested in being considered, have a name or names to recommend, or thoughts to share, [please let me know](#) within the next couple of weeks.

- Communications
- E-Membership
- Merchandise and Sales
- Fundraising
- Bylaws Review

Imagine the impact the Grange can make when we prioritize and actively work toward enhancing the experience and value we provide to each member. How awesome this country could be if every community had a strong, vibrant Grange focused on resilience and relevance. Remember also that determined people working together can do anything. Let all who desire join in serving as Caretakers of a Legacy!

Advocacy Playbook: Lawmakers must consider rural mental health

By [Burton Eller](#), National Grange Legislative Director

What's the issue?

Let's talk about mental illness, depression, and suicide in our community. According to [a recent University of Nevada, Reno, study](#), farmers and ranchers experience depression at rates seven to eight times higher than the general population; the suicide rate is over twice as great in most rural areas compared to most urban areas; and while middle age has been identified as a time of greatest risk for suicide in the general population, in rural areas young men in their 20s and 30s experience higher suicide rates than middle-aged men. The suicide rate among rural youth ages 15-19 is 54% higher than that of their urban counterparts. Factors that contribute to these alarming statistics include isolation, natural disasters, drought, commodity prices, economic cost-price squeeze, lack of availability to mental health professionals, no insurance or insurance that won't cover mental illness, stigma of shame of judgment in small close-knit communities, drug and alcohol addiction, and more.

What is the Grange doing about it?

Over a year ago, the National Grange partnered with [Rural Minds](#), a newly organized group with a mission to serve as the informed voice for mental health awareness and suicide prevention in rural America. Over the past year, this partnership has produced rural and community-focused meetings, educational sessions, webinars, printed information, and a website. At the recent Grange convention in Niagara Falls, Rural Minds and National Grange rolled out the [Rural Mental Health Resilience Program](#), a comprehensive online resource center designed to address the unique challenges faced by rural Americans.

Congress can make a big difference

The National Grange, Rural Minds, and several farm, ranch, and commodity groups are working with several lawmakers to establish a National Agricultural Crisis Hotline in the upcoming farm bill.

The Hotline would be an expansion of the [Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network](#) (FRSAN) authorized in the 2018 farm bill. Under the existing Network, several states have conducted highly successful pilot programs that provide trained, experienced rural-specific counselors available 24-7 by phone. The proposed Hotline would expand the pilot programs nationwide. Support in Congress is [growing with legislation sponsored](#) by Representatives Caraveo (D-CO) and Gonzalez (R-TX) and Senators Gillibrand (D-NY), Baldwin (D-WI), Bennett (D-CO), Moran (R-KS), Tester (D-MT), Smith (D-MN), Collins (R-ME), and Ernst (R-IA). Expanding the National Agricultural Crisis Hotline to a nationwide network is urgent because less than a third of the people with severe psychological distress who have used the nationwide 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline are likely to use it again, according to [a recent study by the New York University](#).



“Don’t Drop the Ball” with the Grange Foundation

On December 31, from 7-9pm Eastern, join Amanda Brozana Rios, National Grange staff, Grange Foundation Board members, and members of the National Grange Youth & Junior Leadership Team for a live virtual party, celebrating the accomplishments of the National Grange and the Grange Foundation.

This fun, interactive event is the perfect way to end the year!

We encourage you to think of the Grange Foundation in your year-end giving. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation today.

National Grange January events

We encourage you to tune in for our Zoom events in January! These programs are open to **all** Grange members! Most events will be available to view on our YouTube channel about one week following the event.

See you there!

Distinguished Grange applications available

The 2023-2024 Distinguished Grange applications are now available on the National Grange website.

In 2023, 26 Granges and 3 State Granges from across the country completed the steps and application to be Distinguished Granges, but we know it can be done by many more! Take a look at the available application forms – and if you have any questions about the requirements, let us know!

JANUARY 2024 NATIONAL GRANGE EVENTS

TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP
JOIN US ON ZOOM FOR THESE EVENTS!

<p style="text-align: center;"><small>ALL TIMES EASTERN</small></p> <p>5: FELLOWSHIP FIRST FRIDAY 8:30 P.M. Connect: grange.biz/firstfriday</p> <p>A new program! Join us for this fun NEW monthly program - a time for fellowship, thought-provoking conversation, and the chance to connect with Grange members from coast to coast! Includes a short program, activity, and time to socialize around topics of your choice. January topic: Soup! Join us with a bowl in front of you; a recipe of your favorite with you to share; some quick cooking tips; and play our Grange Alphabet Soup game.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><small>ALL TIMES EASTERN</small></p> <p>17: MEMBERSHIP MATTERS 8:30 P.M. Connect: grange.biz/matters</p> <p>Now on a new night! Join Membership/Leadership Development Director Amanda Brozana Rios for this monthly time to learn about various membership challenges and growth opportunities.</p>
<p>14: JUNIOR JIBBER-JABBER 9:00 P.M. Connect: bit.ly/2jibberjabberZoom</p> <p>Join National Junior Grange and Youth Development Director Samantha Wilkins for updates about the National Junior Grange department. Contact junior@nationalgrange.org for more information.</p>	<p>23: COMMUNICATIONS ZOOM-TORIAL 8:30 P.M. Connect: bit.ly/GrangeZoomtorial</p> <p>Join Communications Director Philip Vonada and some Fellows as we explore various topics in the world of marketing and communications. This month will be on interview tips and tricks and connections with local media outlets. Questions? Email pvonada@nationalgrange.org</p>



JUNIOR GRANGE FOCUS AREA:
ADVOCACY

YOUTH FOCUS AREA:
RITUAL



View the Distinguished Grange applications here

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.

BACK IN STOCK!

**SUPPLY STORE**

www.grangestore.org

4TH DEGREE PIN



This is a **BRAND NEW** 1" pin with a clutch back. Perfect for welcoming new members into the Grange, celebrating milestones, and more - and great as presents for your Grange family. Featuring the Grange emblem, surrounded by the names of the Seven Founders.

Order online through the Grange Supply Store at grangestore.org or by calling Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109.

\$10.00
PLUS SHIPPING

Supply Store note: Orders received through January 2 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.

Staffing Note: The National Grange office will be closed on December 25th and 26th, as well as January 1st. Additionally, much of the National Grange staff will be taking time off for the holidays, so we ask for your patience between Christmas and the New Year if we are slow to respond!

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

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

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 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 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 or call/text (301) 943-1090

Legislative and Policy Issues Burton Eller, Legislative Director. *National HQ*, ext. 114 or email beller@nationalgrange.org

Membership Recognition, Grange Supply Sales, Grange Programs and Member Benefits

Loretta Washington, *National HQ*, ext. 109 or email 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

Junior and Youth Programming Samantha Wilkins, samantha@nationalgrange.org or (210) 838-7892

Lecturer Tom Gwin, lecturer@nationalgrange.org or (360) 581-0177

Grange Foundation Joan C. Smith, Chairperson. ngfb@grange.org or (571) 662-7220

