



# The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

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## National Grange adopts new Mission Statement

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

Hello! The 2024 edition of the National Grange Leaders' Conference is a wrap. Over 80 participants traveled to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, and a handful of others participated via Zoom. The agenda focused on strategic planning, team building, and the future, and included many workshops in what I'm calling the "Toolbox Series" – critical topics and skills that attendees are encouraged to take back to their states to teach and to share. Please contact your State Grange President to ask how you and your Grange can receive the information.

One outcome of the conference is the adoption of an updated Mission Statement for the National Grange – "Strengthening individuals, families and communities through service, education, nonpartisan grassroots advocacy and agricultural awareness."



Please join me this Sunday, February 25, 2024, at 8:00 pm Eastern on Zoom ([click here to join](#)), to talk about the first 100 days as President of the National Grange – what has happened, priorities, and what comes next. The focus moving forward, and in all ways, will be on inclusion, relevance, team building, and re-emphasizing our grassroots heritage. Grange Strong!

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!

## Thank you, Mujo!

Earlier this week, the staff of the National Grange took a short pause from ongoing moving tasks to recognize and thank Mujo Mrkonjic, our building engineer, for his 6+ years of service to 1616 H Street NW. Mujo has been a great asset to the National Grange and our historic headquarters, and will be staying on with the new owners to ensure our "old girl" has a smooth transition. Thanks, Mujo!



## If we could do anything...

By [Amanda Brozana Rios](#), National Grange Membership & Leadership Development Director



This past weekend at the Leaders' Conference in Myrtle Beach, the group of about 80 from around the country participated in several exercises aimed at "making the Grange stronger tomorrow than it is today," as National President Chris Hamp said over and over.

But that does not start and end at the top.

While the Grange has a hierarchy, the power is consolidated where the "blue sashes" live, not the gold. This is true with our advocacy efforts because all policy must start at this grassroots level, true about leadership development where members cut their teeth learning how to "lead and be led well" (sunsetting National Grange vision statement), and about strengthening the Grange as a whole.

At home in our community Granges, we have a lot to do – we pay our bills, we plan our events, we learn and laugh and grow, some of us fixing our halls or performing the Degrees regularly, but all of us keeping this organization alive in our hometowns.

Yet when it's hard to Grange – when our membership is limited and every effort requires more from each individual associated – we often begin to miss the forest for the trees.

During this Leaders Conference, we discussed what we collectively believe and wish for as we hope to grow past the next urgent demand and plan for a tomorrow that is inspired by our core values.

### What is it we were creating, what does it mean and why should local Granges embrace the process as well?

Communications Director Philip Vonada and I led a workshop for participants to write an updated vision statement for the National Grange. Vision statements focus on tomorrow. They are statements that articulate long-term goals and the impact we wish to have on the world, the "ideal state," if what we do and how we do it has the hoped-for impact.

Vision statements aren't written out of the blue. They come from identifying the organization's core values. The Grange's core values can be found in many places, including the Subordinate Manual, the Junior Manual, and the Declaration of Purposes. These should be the foundation of all we do because they answer our "why."

For an organization like the Grange, where locally we take on different types of service projects and focus on different issues in our community and beyond, understanding and measuring our actions against the core values of the Grange ensures that we respect those values and that we are living them out loud. The vision statement then should be built on imagined success and may be different from Grange to Grange but ultimately should each sound extraordinarily similar because our base – the documents that set out who the Grange is, how we differ from other organizations and what our fundamental beliefs are that all should resonate with our members - is the same.

The vision statement is the destination. The mission statement is the route we choose to go to get to that destination. The core values are the reason why we chose that destination and how we'll behave as we get there.

For our workshop, Phil and I asked participants to come ready with the Grange's values. Many found quotes that showed our interest in charity, in fellowship, in education and personal growth, in advocacy, and in unity. What if we asked the members of your Grange that same question: to bring to the next meeting one or more phrases or quotes from our foundational documents that they believe are central to the Grange as a whole and what your Grange and members seem to embrace in what you're already doing?

We then asked if each Grange and Grange member was living by these values, and charting a course forward that used those values as navigational beacons, what the world may look like. These answers were aspirational. They were inspiring. They were statements that would make someone's head nod in agreement that this is indeed the way they wish the world to be. Those nodding who read the vision and have not yet joined are ripe for Grange membership because they believe a world like the one we imagine with our mission is in line with their values as well.

Your members can and should craft their own vision statements focused more narrowly on the ideal state for your community. An example of the difference between what your local Grange may adopt as a part of its vision statement and how a mission statement may be crafted from that vision:

**VISION:** Sampletown residents will be nourished body and spirit.  
Together, we will strengthen the fabric of our community by empowering individuals and families and creating an interconnected network.  
Sampletown will be a hub of resilience, free from hunger.

**MISSION:** Strengthening Sampletown through agriculture education and programming that teaches resilience while fostering community and hope.

From the example vision that focuses on a future, we know how Sample Grange will be part of this imagined reality: through educational programming and by fostering community.

"Finding a lane" is an incredibly important step in making sure efforts are not wasted. To do this, Granges must each determine from our core values what they would like their portion of the world to be like and determine what they will offer for that to become reality. The values – vision – mission cycle can be a very fun, informative, and empowering process. It can also ensure that every member buys into the direction the Grange is headed.

If your Grange needs help with a discussion on core values, vision statements and mission statements, consider reaching out to the person or people who attended the Leaders' Conference to facilitate this for you. You can also [connect with me](#) and I can work with your State leadership and you directly to facilitate this process.

## Final Day to Order – Grange Strong Fundraiser



**GRANGE STRONG**  
RESILIENT • UNITED

Are you GRANGE STRONG?  
Support this fundraiser through [customink.com](https://customink.com) to purchase your own #GrangeStrong shirts!

must purchase by February 23!  
delivery by mid-March

- T-Shirt - \$22\* (Navy)
- Women's V-Neck - \$22\* (Steel)
- Long-Sleeve T-Shirt - \$28\* (Navy)
- 3/4 Sleeve Raglan T-Shirt - \$28\* (Gray/Blue)
- Hoodie - \$40\* (Royal)

\*plus applicable taxes and shipping

[grange.biz/grangestrongshirt](https://grange.biz/grangestrongshirt)

Are you **Grange Strong**?

If so, support the National Grange's #GrangeStrong fundraiser by purchasing a shirt!

**MUST ORDER** by **TODAY**, February 23, with guaranteed delivery by mid-March for Grange Month.

[Click here to order today!](#)



**FELLOWSHIP  
FIRST FRIDAY**

**8:30 P.M. EASTERN  
MARCH 1, 2024**

**TOPIC: TEMPERANCE BALDWIN KELLEY**

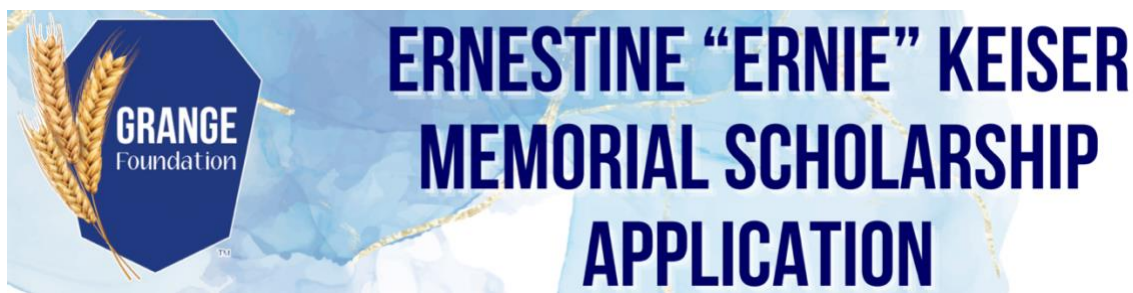


**Fellowship First Friday** returns on March 1<sup>st</sup> with a look at one of the most instrumental but less discussed figures in the initial start-up of the Grange. RSVP using this link: <http://grange.biz/FridayRSVP>. You need not RSVP to join, but those who do will receive a special gift. Anyone who attends will be entered into a door prize drawing but those who RSVP will double their prize.



## Grange Foundation's Ernestine Keiser Memorial Scholarship

By [Joan C. Smith](#), Grange Foundation Chairperson



In November, the [Grange Foundation](#) announced the creation of a new scholarship. In the upcoming issues of the Patrons Chain, we will be highlighting some of the application requirements for the scholarship – we hope you'll apply! [Applications are due March 1!](#)

This scholarship fund was established in 2023 by friends and family of Ernestine "Ernie" Keiser. Ernie was a long-time Grange member in Virginia and was a charter member of Beach Community Grange #958 (VA) in 1959. She was very supportive of the Youth program at the local, state and national levels. Ernie was a firm believer in the importance of education and her family and friends desired to continue her legacy by establishing this scholarship program. For 2024, the value of the scholarship is \$1,000.

## Register for the Virtual Legislative Fly-In



This year's National Grange Legislative Fly-In will be held virtually on **March 18**.

We hope you'll join National Grange staff, federal legislators, and issues partners for this educational afternoon. You'll learn what the National Grange is working on, how it affects all of rural America, and how you can get involved.

This is a **FREE** offering from the National Grange for all members and friends of the Grange. Feel free to

share this information and invitation with potential Grange members.

Register today at <http://grange.biz/flyin2024>.

## Grange Month materials available

Grange Month is coming up quickly in April, and it's time to start planning! New resources are available on the National Grange website, including new themes and ideas for Grange Spirit Week. This year, the theme **#GrangeStrong** will help focus the work of Granges nationwide.

Please take advantage of the materials in your Granges. Is there something you're missing that you'd like to see? Contact us and we'll see what we can do! [View the materials here.](#)



## Save the Date: Rural Minds and National Grange to present webinar

Be sure to save the date – Wednesday, March 27, at 7 PM ET – for our first “Connections” webinar in the 2024 series: “Rural Mental Health Resilience Program Launch Webinar.” [Learn more and register for free here.](#)

Have you successfully used the Rural Mental Health Resilience Program in your Grange, or have you used any of the materials to talk to an individual or with a small group or other organization? Please reach out to Philip Vonada, and we may feature your story on the webinar.





### SUPPLY STORE

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



**VINTAGE GRANGE HALL DEDICATION PLAQUE**  
*Limited quantity available!*  
must order by March 1 or sooner!

Grange Hall Dedication plaques from 1947 - made of wood with felt backing.

11.5" x 13" with space for your Grange to place a dedication engraving.

Handmade - may have some imperfections - ***sold as-is.***

**\$25.00**  
with free shipping!

Get yours by ordering online through the Grange Supply Store at [grangestore.org](http://grangestore.org) or by emailing Loretta at [Lwashington@nationalgrange.org](mailto:Lwashington@nationalgrange.org).

**Your last chance to get these amazing plaques and a piece of National Grange history!**

## Grange Member Benefit: American Income Life Insurance



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

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

The policy covers Accidental Death (Death certificate is marked "accident") and Dismemberment (Loss of a hand, arm, foot, leg, eye). Please [review this brochure](#) for the AIL Plus program for review.

Learn more at [MyBenefits.AILife.com](http://MyBenefits.AILife.com) and use the access code to sign up  
Enter access code: **SGLHD**

**Note:** To claim the AD&D benefits, you do NOT have to purchase any other AIL products or insurances. If you feel that AIL is being pushy about selling other products, please reach out to [Loretta Washington](#).



## 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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### 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

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### Free Grange Websites, Emails, *Good Day!* subscription questions, and Membership Database

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