



the CONNECTICUT GRANGER

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December 2020

COVID still with us this holiday season



George Russell
State President

Riverton Grange No. 169
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As December approaches and the holiday season begins, the COVID-19 pandemic numbers have been increasing in our state and around the country. I ask all of our Grangers to stay safe and healthy by continuing to follow all of the guidelines. As I am writing this report, the Governor has kept the number of 25 people for social gatherings inside and has lowered it to 50 people outside. These numbers might change by the time the holiday season approaches. The Granges who are meeting in person might want to change and go back to meeting virtually.

The 154th National Convention was an historic event for all of us. It was held virtually on November 17th and 18th. The first day of the session began at noon EST in the Seventh Degree by National President Betsy Huber. After being lowered to the Fourth Degree, the National Master gave her Internal and External President's addresses. In Sister Huber's address she mentioned the pandemic and how it affects education, unemployment, food shortages and how the livestock was backed up on the farms. Milk was dumped and vegetables were plowed under because manufacturing plants were either closed or couldn't keep

up with demand. Sister Huber's External Address was livestreamed on YouTube and Facebook.

The election of two members of the Executive Committee for a two-year term were Leroy Watson from New Hampshire and Susan Noah of Oregon. The rest of the afternoon we heard from Committee Chairpersons regarding their policy statements and resolutions the committees passed. After a two-hour break at 6 P.M., we opened again to hear more policy statements and resolutions the committees were advancing for adoption. We finished the evening with the Grange Advocacy Report by Leroy Watson

and Grange Foundation Report by Joan Smith. We completed the evening with a Memorial Service presented by National Chaplain Barbara Borderieux. I had the honor of reading the tribute to our Past Voting Delegate Margaret Sendewicz. Sister Sendewicz was a Delegate to the National Grange from 2006 to 2010.

The second day of the 154th National Grange Convention opened in the Fourth Degree at 12 Noon EST. That afternoon we heard from National Grange Vice President Philip Prelli (of Connecticut). Brother Prelli went over the improvements
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Searching for success stories



Faith Quinlan
Membership Dir.

Winchester Grange #74
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"It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change." Charles Darwin, 1809.

This month I met with my new Membership Committee. There is a representative from each Pomona and they are active, intelligent and diverse women who helped kick off the meeting with great suggestions. I am pleased to introduce my team, Barbara Prindle, Mountain Laurel Pomona; Karen McDonald, Nutmeg Pomona; and Shelley Cameron,

Eastern Connecticut Pomona.

Based on this meeting I will be reaching out to all of the Community Grange Membership Chairpersons. I will share resources for their use, instructions for how to use all the tools and resources that are available to increase membership and community participation, plus gain more exposure for their events. The committee would also like to learn more from the Granges that have succeeded in gaining new members this year. Sharing some of the stories about how members come to us, where they are from and what drew them to find out more about the Grange can be helpful in our efforts to speak to what people like and create membership
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Connecticut State Grange
A part of the National Grange
American Values. Hometown Roots.



NEXT ISSUE . . . Articles Due December 15

State Master

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that have been made to our National Grange building in Washington, D.C. Improvements include the new state-of-the-art conference room among other projects. He also gave an outline of what building improvements are needed in the next 5 to 10 years. They are also looking at other options for the use of the building. The rest of the afternoon and evening we worked on resolutions. The one resolution

referred to National Grange by the Connecticut State Grange was regarding the sale of real property. We suggested that a Grange would receive \$10,000 on the sale of real Grange property. The previous by-law clause states that a Grange would receive \$1,000. After a long discussion, an amendment was made to increase it to \$3,000. This amendment was passed and the resolution, as amended, was passed with the necessary 2/3 majority vote. Because it is a by-laws change, this resolution will need to be brought up again in 2021 and voted on for a second time. After submitting this resolution repeatedly for three years, we finally got an increase in the amount that would be returned to the Grange.

To finish up the evening we heard

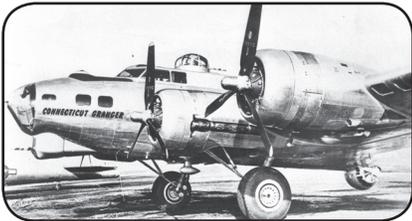
reports from Joseph Stefenoni, Membership Director, and Pete Pompper, Community Service Director.

The preceding was a quick rundown of what went on during the two days of the Session. If you are interested in seeing more in-depth details, most of this Convention is available for viewing on YouTube.

Next year the 155th National Grange Annual Convention will be held November 9-13, 2021 in Wichita, Kansas. Let's all hope that this pandemic is far behind us by then and we can go back to meeting in person.

Sharon and I would like to wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season and a Happy New Year! I hope everyone stays safe and healthy.

the Connecticut Granger Published Monthly



WW II Flying Fortress "Connecticut Granger"

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Family Activities Committee



Dawn Percoski
Family Activities Dir.
Vernon Grange No. 52
CWA@ctstategrange.org

We are off to a great start as we get underway for our needlework and craft contests for this year. We have held our regional meetings with the CWA Chairman and presented this year's theme of "You Are My Sunshine - Sunflowers" Everyone on the committee was very excited with the recipe of the Sunflower oatmeal cookies and we can't wait to see what you come up with for the Sunflower themed craft contest! Be sure to ask about our new special contest for this year, we think you will like it! Packets are going out to all the Chairman who were not able to attend along with the entry forms for the Northeast Needlework Contest 2020-2021.

We will be raffling off this beautiful gift basket. You can get your tickets from your CWA Chairman 2 for \$1.00. You have until February 14th to buy your tickets. We will hold our last special

CWA/Family Activities Zoom meeting on February 28th at 1:00 pm and at that meeting we will have the drawing for the gift basket and announce the winner.

Until then, put your thinking caps on and start working on your projects to keep our hands and minds busy. It's going to be a difficult time of year especially as we are still in the grip of such a changed world. So please be kind to one another and be sure to check in on each other, especially those who are not at our zoom meetings.



Success Stories

Continued from page one...

opportunities.

A special surprise I received in the mail this month is a letter from Joe Stephenoni, National Membership Director, congratulating 5 Connecticut Granges for a net growth in membership at their Community Granges. I am forwarding those congratulatory letters and they should arrive at those Granges soon. Unfortunately, though some of our Granges succeeded, our state saw a net loss of 95 members, a 5.56% loss. Not all of the country is doing poorly with their membership growth. Oregon State Grange led the states with a net gain of 54 new members. Nationally there was a net loss (no figure given), of course a trend all states are fighting to change.

Through my research about what experts have to say behind the continued decline in membership for fraternal organizations, the answers are always the same. I have mentioned them to you all many times before. What I am actually searching for is a success story. I want to share how an organization made changes and turned things around. Below are a few excerpts from an interesting and slightly optimistic view of fraternal organizations that are finding a way to maneuver through the challenging world of membership. This article is from www.ABCNews.go.com. Article written by Marc Lallanilla on October 25, 2007 titled, "Can Civic Groups Like Moose, Elks Survive?"

"The Chicopee Falls Moose Family Center in Western Massachusetts is one example of an organization that has successfully fought to earn its place in the community. "It was a dark, no-windows-in-the-building place," administrator Bruce Adams said of the all-male, beer-drinking, clannish nature of the lodge. Now, the Moose Family Center has full

wireless Internet access. Free computers are available for children and adults. The club also sponsors 15 soccer teams for boys and girls. These days, according to Adams, "there are many times when you can come into our center and there are more women than men here. We provide activities for the entire family."

"We're not your grandfather's Moose Lodge," said Adams.

The Chicopee Falls Moose Family Center also supports the community by providing athletic fields and other support to programs that have been slashed from local schools' budgets. The group also recently gave \$25,000 to the local public library, Adams said. And Adams' approach seems to be working. Total membership, which hovered around 1,100 in 2001, has since swollen to over 2,000 members.

"This is why younger people want to be a member here -- because we're helping our community," he said. "Soccer moms are joining, soccer dads are joining."

"The group is also considering

a membership-at-large status, which would allow people to join without requiring attendance at regular meetings. This new level of membership, however, has not yet been approved or implemented by the Optimists.

The Thinning Herd

For some smaller chapters of the Elks, the Moose and other groups, where fewer than a dozen elderly members struggle to keep a club operating, efforts to boost membership may come too late. This leaves some experts asking what, if anything, will replace these groups?"

My hope is that WE will be what replaces these groups. The groups that are unwilling to change and adapt. I am so proud of the people who have been stretching out of their comfort zones and trying the Zoom meetings and other new technologies. That willingness to grow keeps us all young and flexible and get us to our evolution to be relevant and growing during the 2020 decade.

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An uncertain session for General Assembly



Alma Graham
Legislative Director

Coventry Grange #75
Legislative@ctstategrange.org

Thanks to those who submitted resolutions to the Connecticut State Grange Annual Session. We ended up with 10 resolutions this year. Due to the challenges of the first ever viral session, the State Grange Board of Directors had to make adjustments as how resolutions were presented to the delegates. This is the first year that we did not have session committees to review resolutions and make recommendations for action.

The resolution concerning the sale of Grange property was sent on to National Grange. This resolution has been submitted to National Grange in previous years. Presently when a Grange sells its property, the local Grange only gets \$1000.00 from the sale with the rest going into an escrow in the local Granges name. The Grange then received a yearly interest payment on the principal. This resolution would have increased the amount that the local Grange would receive to \$10,000.

There were five resolutions which were adopted concerning legislative issues and these will be added to the State Grange Legislative Policy Guide. The Legislative committee met in early November to review the resolutions and go over the guide. We plan to have the updated guide finished and ready to deliver to the Connecticut General Assembly when their session convenes on January 6th.

With the current pandemic we do not know how the legislative session will operate this year. This was an election year so the first day of the session was traditionally the swearing in of the new General Assembly members and adoption

of the rules for the session. This was always a massive gathering with family members and friends attending the session to witness the swearing in and a lot of social gatherings after.

The caucus leaders will have to determine the rules on how the General Assembly will meet as well as the committees and how committee hearings will be held. The hearings are where the public is able to testify on the different proposed bills. The public has a

right to express their opinions on the bills so these public hearing must happen somehow.

Another question is on the actual voting on bills during the session. With uncertainty of the impact of the virus, will there be a way that will allow the members of the General Assembly to vote remotely. This has not been encountered before and there is no precedent or policies to guide them. A new normal?

Zoom convention a “suitable substitute”

By Amanda Brozana Rios, National Grange Communications Director

At one of the shortest National sessions on record, the officers and delegates of the Order met for a digital convention on Tuesday and Wednesday, Nov. 17-18, to discuss policy and procedures, honor past leaders of the organization and more.

Committees were assigned and met in advance of the convention through the Zoom platform, to work through the nearly 100 resolutions that were put before the body, making the business much more manageable for the condensed format.

National Grange Legislative Director Burton Eller said the process went smoothly and allowed committees time to research, discuss and address the concerns of the members that had been moved through the grassroots process to this highest legislative body of the Order. “The committees have been meeting to review present policy in the past but allowing them to assess present policy and resolutions worked out well. This is something that can improve our process for years to come, even when we get back to meeting in person,” Eller said.

Several new policies will allow Eller and other members to offer Grange perspective on the current state of agriculture in the United States. Additionally, delegates adopted resolutions related to topics of the day that are “off the farm,” such as vaccinations and pandemic preparedness, chronic pain and opioid issues, support for the USPS and local newspapers, the number of justices on the Supreme Court, and more.

Members and the public were able to see much of the convention on the National Grange YouTube channel live - and those livestreams remain available to view.

National Grange President Betsy Huber said she has heard much praise for the session.

“All the feedback I’ve heard has been positive,” Huber said. She said while everyone has noted their disappointment in not meeting in person in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, the virtual version was a suitable substitute.

The scaled-down session had little of the usual flair, but the Junior, Youth and Lecturer’s Departments made up for that with events Friday and Saturday evening, showing off talent of members and announcing new Youth Team members for the 2020-21 year.

Next year when we will all be able to meet it will be a convention to celebrate. We look forward to being with our Grange family in Kansas and hope to see you there.

Your Deputies and Committees for 2021

Pianist Mary Lou Keefe . . Winchester

Deputies

General Deputy . . . Peter Keefe . . . Winchester
Pomona Deputy . . . Jeffrey Barnes . . N. Stonington
Deputy Sandra Phillips . . . Winchester
Deputy Earl Phillips . . . Winchester
Deputy Donald Lanoue . . . Cheshire
Deputy Geno Piacentini . . . Redding
Deputy Theodore Beebe . . Colchester

Family Activities (CWA)

Dawn Percoski (Director) Vernon
Anne-Marie Knochenhauer . . . Groton Community
Claudia Sopstyle Vernon
Patricia Tarca Cawasa
Cindy Legg Beacon Valley

Membership Development & Retention

Faith Quinlan (Director) Winchester
(Mountain Laurel Pomona)
Barbara Prindle Taghannuck
(Mountain Laurel Pomona)
Karen Macdonald Redding
(Nutmeg Pomona)
Shelley Cameron Ekonk Community
(Eastern Connecticut Pomona)

Youth

Dawn Anstett (Director) Riverton
Melissa Coleman Riverton
Jaimie Cameron Ekonk Community
Betty Jane Harrington Hemlock

Junior

Michelle DeDominicis (Co-Director) . . . Hillstown
Kathy Tefft (Co-Director) Lyme
David Sanford Lyme
Angelina DeDominicis Hillstown

Legislative

Alma Graham (Director) Coventry
Charles Dimmick Cheshire
Gordon Gibson Vernon
Noel Miller Coventry
Susan Masino Simsbury

Agriculture

J Allen Cameron (Director) Ekonk Community
Dennis Jasmine Riverton
Nancy Mascio Bridgewater
Irene Percoski Vernon

Public Relations

Terri Fassio (Co Director) Winchester
Robert Charbonneau (Co Director) Meriden
Frank Forest Hillstown

Ritual (Code Reading)

Donald Lanoue (Director) Cheshire
Peter Keefe Winchester

Community Service

Robert & Margaret Buck Bethlehem & Oxford

Education

Nancy Weissmuller (Director) N. Stonington
Dawn Percoski Vernon
Nancy Strong Vernon

CONNECTICUT STATE GRANGE

Join us for a fun and casual holiday social gathering. Stop by and say Hello!

Virtual Christmas Spectacular

Thursday, December 17th
7:00 pm

Send an e-mail to information@ctstategrange.org or membership@ctstategrange.org for the Zoom Meeting Access Information

zoom



Eye on Communications

GLEANINGS FROM YOUR STATE PUBLIC RELATIONS TEAM

Planning for your Grange in 2021: The Future Is What We Make It

As the COVID pandemic rolls into 2021, Granges need to rethink planning for the next year. What happens if events and activities can't be held? How will our Grange make money to pay our bills? Will we ever meet in person again - or in full capacity? Are our members even still interested in participating in our organization?

These are all valid questions, and Granges should be working now to develop a plan for the next year.

Here's a few ideas to keep your Grange moving in a positive direction:

- Make a plan designed to be flexible and adaptable. Always be prepared for the unexpected and plan for both the best and worst case scenarios.

- Be prepared to utilize the internet for online programming, and up your social media presence. Utilize platforms such as Zoom, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter and your website. As more people are home and have more time, they are engaging in social media at record rates.

- Learn something new - the set a goal - and be creative in ways to to achieve it. Set aside time to lay the groundwork for learning, such as getting to know Zoom or Facebook, and then drive towards continuous improvements.

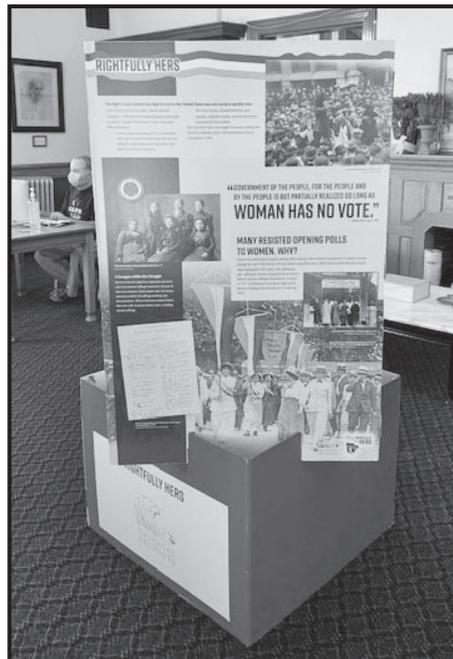
- Create a donation drive. This could be a fundraising event, such as as take-out dinners, a bakeless bake sale, selling branded items such as T-Shirts or Mugs, or even a basic philanthropic letter to all of your members.

- Watch other organizations. See what other Granges as well as

other non-profit groups are doing during this time, and then incorporate some of their resources into your planning.

- Focus on information collection. To know if your Grange is headed in the right direction, keep track of online stats, email inqui-

Rightfully Hers Display Donated



The Connecticut State Grange and Riverton Grange #169 recently donated a National Archives' "Rightfully Hers: American Women and the Vote" Pop Up display to Beardsley and Memorial Library in Winsted for viewing by the public. In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment which granted women the right to vote, the National Archives launched a nationwide initiative that explores the generations-long fight for universal woman suffrage. Despite decades of

ries, phone calls, and other forms of engagement. Use surveys to gage member opinions and satisfaction. Measure what's working well and locate where further adjustments may be needed.

This past year has been one of the most challenging we've faced as Granges, but that doesn't mean we can't learn from it. In many ways, we came together and learned how to adapt in the face of adversity, and that's a positive.

If you have any questions, or need a hand, please send an email to information@ctstategrange.org or publicrelations@ctstategrange.org.

marches, petitions, and public debate to enshrine a woman's right to vote in the Constitution, the 19th Amendment – while an enormous milestone – did not grant voting rights for all. The challenges of its passage reverberate to the ongoing fight for gender equity today. Connecticut State Grange was one of the recipients of this pop-up display and allowed Riverton Grange, Northwestern Connecticut Cyber Lions Club and Barkhamsted Lions Club to safely showcase it at outdoor venues throughout September and October to interested groups. "Now that the 100th Anniversary telling the story of the 19th Amendment has passed, our Grange wanted to make sure that this wonderful exhibit could continue to educate others," said Riverton Grange Community Services Chair Dave Roberts. "So we thought what better place to display this exhibit than at the Beardsley and Memorial Library in Winsted. Riverton Grange was founded 112 years ago and the National Patrons of Husbandry (Grange) has always promoted gender equity throughout its long history. You can view the Rightfully Hers exhibit during normal Beardsley Library hours.



SENEXT GRANGE #40

Corr: Diane Miller

Dec. 16: Christmas Party

Dec. 24: Pie Sale

We continue to hold our meetings monthly with social distance and wearing masks. It is good to see our fellow members. We installed our new Master Amy Monahan. Our program on Bullying was very informative as there is bullying in all areas including work place and with adults. Several of our youth also added to the conversation. Various groups continue to safely meet in our hall. Plenty of open space and seating. We have several Christmas projects planned for the community. We were excited to be part of the State Grange annual meeting by virtual meeting in our hall. The internet in the hall has allowed this to happen. Thanks to all who helped us receive the new member award. Adding 9 members to our roles was achieved by active outreach. Having programs for all ages in the hall has been the answer to getting the organization going again.

Making pies in our certified kitchen will certainly help with fundraising. Now that the weather has turned colder we will need the funds to keep the hall warm for the groups that want to meet. We are actively seeking persons or groups that would like

to rent the hall. We have a really nice upstairs for exercise groups and the lower level for sit down groups.

We have books, puzzles and craft items available for all to use. Hope all stay well this winter.

VERNON GRANGE #52

Corr: Nancy Strong

Dec. 4: Zoom Meeting

Vernon Grange has been holding all its regular meetings via Zoom since March. If you want to join us, email Nancy Strong a nrstrong@aol.com to get the link. We have had some technical problems, but we work them out. Many cards were written by members to the Veterans at Rocky Hill for Veteran's Day. The Strong Family Farm has a fake "mailbox" for drop offs. It makes a central place to share now that we have been joined by Enfield Grange. We have made dog pull toys for a local dog adoption facility out of old t-shirts for National Dog Adoption Month. It was a fun craft night on Zoom and we will be doing it again soon to make holiday items for the local nursing facilities. We wish all a safe and healthy holiday and let's all have "faith and hope" for a better 2021!

KILLINGLY GRANGE #112

Corr: Glenna Bruno

As of this week and several weeks in early October we have been beautifying our Grange. It's being painted nice and white with light blue trim. New signs, with light blue background and bright yellow letters. Also the front steps are bright yellow. Hopefully our handicapped step or small ramp will be bright yellow to be seen better at night in the parking lot.

We have been busy with a tea cup fundraiser which increased our treasury by \$500 and a yard sale which netted about \$900. So, we are getting back to "normal" again. Wish us luck.

NORTH STONINGTON COMM. GRANGE #138

Corr: Nancy R. Weissmuller

Dec. 11: Here Comes Santa Claus

Dec. 18: Caroling Around Town

On Oct. 9 Legislative Chairperson Nick Mullane caught us up on the political scene and passed out sample ballots for us to peruse. On the 30th we held our annual Halloween party with costumes ranging from a huge blue shark with wicked-looking teeth and a sparkly unicorn to a tiny Elsa and a miniature Dracula. Costume parades awarded prizes to all. Sue's COVID friendly games kept the children happy and safe. They enjoyed Kick the Creature, Flying Ghosts, Feed Frankie, What Am I, Halloween Bingo and I Spy among others. As refreshments were not allowed, Sue made sure a special (absolutely delicious) Halloween cookie, made by Jenn Watrous, was included in everyone's prize bag. "And a good time was had by all"!

If you would like to join us for our annual Christmas party be sure to wear your mask. We will be delivering fruit baskets when we carol around town on the 18th and would love to have a few more voice join us. Just give the Lecturer or the Secretary a call. And if that strange October snow storm will just not repeat itself for a few months, next time we will tell you all about neat November. Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Holidays to all!



MOUNTAIN LAUREL POMONA #15

Corr: Todd Gelineau

Dec. 6: Virtual Meeting of Mountain Laurel on Zoom, 4:00 P.M. Please email Secretary@CTStateGrange.org to receive a copy of the Zoom invitation to attend. All are welcome!

Mountain Laurel Pomona will continue to meet on Zoom in December when we hold our second such meeting on December 6. Because it is a Zoom meeting, there is information needed to attend. However, you do not have to use a computer to participate. There is a phone number that can be called and through the entering of numbers provided you will gain access to the meeting and will be able to participate. Please contact me at the email address above or call me at 860-307-1522 and I will get you all the information you need to attend. We look forward to seeing everyone on Zoom for the holidays!

WINCHESTER GRANGE #74

Corr: Todd Gelineau

Dec. 8: Meeting on Zoom, 7:00 P.M. Please contact Sue Addison or contact Todd (at the phone and email address listed in the Mountain Laurel article) to receive the information needed to log on to Zoom.

At our last Zoom meeting, the results of the mail-in election were read by the Secretary and Craig Leifert was elected to serve as Master of Winchester Grange for the 2020-2021 Grange year. Congratulations to Craig and all of the newly elected

officers of the Grange.

Back in July, Winchester Grange voted to pass on the opportunity to take on the sale of the Eureka Grange Hall in New Hartford. At the end of the day, it was determined there was great risk to assuming responsibility for this hall should it not sell immediately. As it turns out it has not sold... yet. The Connecticut State Grange is now in the process of taking over the property and listing it for sale. With this in progress, the members of Eureka Grange will be released on demits that they can take to any Grange of their choice to continue their Grange journeys. Because Winchester and Eureka did not complete a merger, this is the only way of handling the members of Eureka. It is hoped most, if not all, will take their memberships to Winchester Grange where they will be welcomed with open arms (well... not actually until social distancing requirements are relaxed!!). The members of Winchester Grange did vote to welcome any and all members of Eureka who wish to come over to our Grange.

Happy Holidays to all and see you on Zoom!

TAGHHANNUCK GRANGE #100

Corr: Barbara Prindle

At our regular November meeting, on Zoom, we were happily surprised to have State Master George Russell visit. Our members were excited to learn that the National Grange magazine, Good Day!, will include the article on Taghhannuck Grange's broadband efforts that was in the October issue of the Connecticut Granger. We again donated to the Lakeville Journal which is our local newspaper. Our members feel it is important for all of the towns in the Northwest Corner to have access to local news in a weekly newspaper. Speaking of newspapers there was a great picture of our newest member, Miriam Jones, in our daily newspaper participating in the Veterans Day ceremony at the Sharon memorial.

Our regular monthly meeting is December 10, 2020 at 7:30 and is our Cookie Exchange meeting to be held on Zoom. Our members will drop off 4 dozen cookies in the drop box at the Master's house the day before the meeting and a few members will make up approximately 25 gift packages to be given out to local Grangers who can't get out and others who are in need.

Taghhannuck Grangers are looking forward to getting back into our Grange Hall but in the meantime we invite you to join us on Zoom as it adds energy to the meeting.

BETHLEHEM GRANGE #121

Corr: Al Maddox

Due to the spike in COVID-19 in Bethlehem, we have decided to cancel our in-person meetings for a while.

Congratulations to Rob Buck for becoming Overseer of the Connecticut State Grange and to Eloise and Cindy for continuing in their State Offices. We are giving the First Church a complete Thanksgiving Dinner to be given to a needy Bethlehem family.

We have given third graders of Bethlehem and Washington schools dictionaries.

See you all soon!



Taghhannuck Grange's Miriam Jones participating in the Town of Sharon Veterans Day Ceremony at the Sharon War Memorial.



NUTMEG POMONA #16

Corr: Joanne Cipriano

Here we go again. This is the 5th meeting we had to cancel. Our meeting scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 6th has been changed to a virtual meeting. Time will be 2 P.M. We had many Nutmeg members on Zoom for the State Session so we will try it again for this meeting. If you see this in time, call Master Don Lanoue and tell him you want to be involved. All officers and Granges have been notified. This pandemic WILL pass and we WILL meet together again.

On the agenda will be the election of Steward, Flora and one member of the Executive Committee.

Speaking of election, we congratulate the new and recycled officers of the Connecticut State Grange.

We have many members on the sick list and we hope by now they are on the road to recovery.

From the officers and members of Nutmeg Pomona #16 we wish you a Happy Thanksgiving.

CHESHIRE GRANGE #23

Corr: A. Ruel Miller

Dec. 16: Open Meeting Christmas Program and Grab Bags

Several of our members attended the annual State Grange Session on Saturday October 17th. The session was a virtual one for one day on the Zoom format. Marge Bernhardt and Charles Dimmick were re-elected to the office of Lecturer and Chaplain respectively. All in all the

session went very well considering our having to do business in a totally different venue. Our Grange received a couple of awards as did our Lecturer, Emily Alexander, receiving three for her excellent work.

Our last meeting was November 4th. We had enough members for a quorum plus to fill the necessary stations and a good Lecturer's program. Several members/officers are still not comfortable in attending. In order to keep our Grange visible in the community, we entered a town wide scarecrow contest for Halloween. We were one of 68 entries. We placed first as the "Best Home Town Representation".

It was decided not to meet on December 2nd, but to go with December 16th for our Christmas program. We will dispense with the card exchange and just have a \$5.00 grab bag. Quite the change from the past. It appears that we will be meeting once a month for the foreseeable future.

Despite these times that we are experiencing, all of us at Cheshire Grange wish you a very Merry Christmas and certainly the hope for a happy and a much better New Year.

BEACON VALLEY GRANGE #103

Corr: Joanne Cipriano

Beacon Valley members were happy to be able to meet in October and had planned for our November meeting. Unfortunately, this meeting had to be canceled because Naugatuck is a red zone.

We received a letter from Prospect Grange asking us if they could merge with us. In calling our members to postpone the November meeting, we asked for their opinion- it was unanimous we welcome them. We would like to have a welcoming ceremony. Only God knows when we can schedule it. Our crystal ball is blank.

Joanne Cipriano, Master, was our State Session delegate on Zoom and placed first for her entry in the Essay

Contest, "My Grange". (Editor: The essay is printed in the State Lecturer's column in this issue).

To all bargain hunters, I have a couple (1) the raffle barrel used at the Connecticut Agricultural Fair (2) an electric stapler with 15,000 staples and a small Hammond organ. All just for the taking.

With sadness we report the passing of Robert Burns, a 77 year member of Beacon Valley Grange. Bob proudly served in the Navy during World War II and was a Burgess in Naugatuck for 46 years.

Bob was the person who made sure we had an article in the Granger each month. If not, he reminded me of it. I have lost my Connecticut Granger guardian angel and a great friend.

As he enters the Great Grange Above, we say "Well done, good and faithful servant."

GREENFIELD HILL GRANGE #133

Corr: Maureen Sanborn

In August we held our lobster bake. We had 35 people. Our tables were set up socially distant and masked were required. Choice of lobster or half chicken, shrimp cocktail, coleslaw, rolls, bake potato were all on the menu. All who attended were excited to be back at the Grange. Thank you to all the volunteers, cooks, and the servers.

Because we had to cancel our agricultural fair, on September 26 we held a fall fundraiser. Available were bulbs, mums, pumpkins and a bake sale. Thanks to all who baked and donated. Many thanks all who helped; Laura Devlin, Nancy Olson, Jen Damon, Jack Damon, Stephen Golias, Lori Golias, Stephanie Thompson. It was a huge success and we are hoping to make it an annual event.

Many of our neighbors and friends have enjoyed our drive-in movie nights. Five nights featured family movies and concessions. Thanks to Jen, Jon, Jack, Jules, Jake, Amber, Beau, Lori and Danielle

Continued next page...

Continued from page 9...

for all your help with setting up selling concessions and popping the popcorn! Cooler nights call for warm, buttery popcorn.

A Souper supper Is planned for November 14. A variety of soups, grilled cheese, bread and more will be served. And BINGO with prizes. Limited seating and socially distant table set - ups.

During these times many more people have relied on food pantries. We have taken up a collection for Operation Hope in Fairfield and have collected many non perishables to be donated

Thanks to all at the Grange that help make these events a success.

We would like to wish everyone a blessed Thanksgiving. Even though this year we will celebrate differently, let us still take the time to reflect on all the gifts God has bestowed on us.

Merry Christmas to all and happy new year. Stay healthy and God bless us, everyone!

HEMLOCK GRANGE #182

Corr: Maureen Sanborn

Dec. 11: Holidays

Dec. 25: Omitted for Christmas

Jan. 8: Winter Bliss

Jan. 22: Omitted, unless regular meeting is cancelled

OXFORD GRANGE #194

Corr: Rob Buck

Dec. 2: Business Meeting, 7:30 PM

Dec. 16: Social Meeting, 7:30 PM

We held our first meeting for November on the 4th, but attendance was poor as COVID ramps up and people are staying away from indoor gatherings. The second meeting which is the traditional Thanksgiving potluck was put on hold due to the ban on food serving at meetings. I fear the December meetings will be postponed, even though dates are listed, due to Governor Lamont's ban on gatherings of more than 10. Hopefully, we can go virtual and use Zoom technology to remain safe from the virus. Although we held

the chili cook-off in October and were successful with social distancing and other measures, the December craft fair had to be canceled in November due to uncertainty about the near future. While this puts a hamper on fund raising, it appears we will make it through the winter. The GOMAD music gatherings were

orchestrated by Margie Rosenberg and held outdoors in the gazebo until November 7. By the 14th, daytime temperatures in the forties made it uncomfortable to sit outside, and so it appears that tradition is over for the season. Thank you to Margie for the work on that event.



Cannon Grange #152
Holiday Market
 Cannon Grange Holiday Market - Dec 5- 10 am to 4 pm. 8 local vendors including 4 Cannon Grange members. Shop Local for the holidays. Weather permitting, we will have our vendors inside and outside for optimal social distancing! See you on Dec 5th!



CONNECTICUT STATE GRANGE
Home for the Holidays
Virtual Cookie Recipe Exchange
Sunday, Dec. 6th • 7 PM
Let's talk Cookies!
 Baking and Packaging Tips, Tricks and Ideas!
 Bring your favorite Cookie Recipes to share.
 Join us for a fun and casual social gathering.
 Send an e-mail to information@ctstategrange.org
 or membership@ctstategrange.org
 for the Zoom Meeting Access Information

Christmas Peppermint Patties



Mint is always popular during the holidays. These easy to make no-bake CHRISTMAS PEPPERMINT PATTIES are perfect for gifts as well as satisfying those who look for the flavor in their Christmas treats.

INGREDIENTS:

1 (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
4 tbsp salted butter softened
2 pounds confectioners' sugar plus additional for rolling
2 teaspoons peppermint extract
red and green gel food coloring
1/2 cup sugar



INSTRUCTIONS:

With an electric mixer, cream together the cream cheese, butter and peppermint extract. Gradually add the powdered sugar. Mix on low speed just until combined. Dust a non-stick surface with additional powdered sugar.

Divide evenly in 4 even pieces. Add a few drops of desired food coloring into each of the peppermint mixtures.

Roll each color into a 20-inch rope. Cut into even 20 even pieces. Dust with additional powdered sugar between batches to prevent sticking. Roll each cut piece into a ball then roll into the granulated (if desired). Press the center with a fork dipped in powdered sugar (like you would a peanut butter cookie).

Leave on a wax paper lined baking sheet for 2 hours or until dry. Store chilled with wax paper between layers.

DO CREAM CHEESE MINTS NEED TO BE REFRIGERATED?

Yes. We store these Mints in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Look at the expiration date on the cream cheese to see how long they will last. These mints freeze beautifully in an airtight container.

TIPS:

- You can dip the patties in melted milk, dark or white chocolate if you prefer. However, we like these just the way they are.
- We like to use gel food coloring for this recipe. This keeps the dough from getting too sticky.
- Add sprinkles to the mix for a festive look!

SOURCE: <https://kitchenfunwithmy3sons.com/christmas-peppermint-patties/>

WINDOW TO THE PAST

Photographs are a treasured part of Grange history. Many of them, unfortunately, do not come neatly labeled on the back with names, dates, people or places. These photographs have a history to tell... but about whom or what? Please help us solve the mystery of faces and places as we look through the Window to the Past. You can contact us by calling (860) 626-5074 or on the web by emailing: submissions@ctstategrange.org.



There were no answers on the November photo.

On the October photo we heard from Glenna Bruno of Killingly Grange. "The gentleman on far right is John Dempsey and I presume the lady is his wife. the left hand couple does look familiar but it was such a long time ago. John Dempsey was Mayor of Putnam and also was Governor of Connecticut... and born in Ireland.

We heard from Nancy Strong from Vernon Grange confirming that the person on the right in the August photo was Mervin Whipple.

There was an error in the last issue. Joyce Main who replied about the photo is from North Stonington Grange, not Pachaug Grange, as listed. We apologize for the error.



2020 Essay Contest Winner



Marge Bernhardt
State Lecturer
Cheshire Grange #23
Lecturer@ctstategrange.org

MY GRANGE

By Joanne Cipriano

Beacon Valley Grange #103

My Grange hall has always been a busy place with monthly meetings, activity nights, Open Mics, Boy Scout meetings, tag sales etc. The coronavirus has caused it to remain silent for the past six months.

But the Grange is not the

building, it's the members. Ours has been thoughtfully checking on each other daily and lending assistance when needed. Sadly, during this pandemic, we lost two of our officers. We were unable to offer our condolences in person but cards and refreshments were sent.

The animals needed our assistance too. So, we collected and delivered dog food, toys, cages and blankets to Rose Hope Animal Refuge in Waterbury.

Thinking positive and ahead we are collecting items for a tag and rummage sale to be held as soon as

restrictions are lifted.

Our Grange is 131 years old. I look forward to helping it celebrate many more birthdays.

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It is never too early to enter the 2021 Essay Contest. The title is "A Grange Memory". It could be the night you joined, an Anniversary or other celebration, or did you actually go to a meeting where there was a goat tied at the front door before degrees. These are only a few suggestions. You may choose any topic that appeals to you. The essay should be 150 words or less and can be mailed or e-mailed to me when you finish.

Take care and stay well!

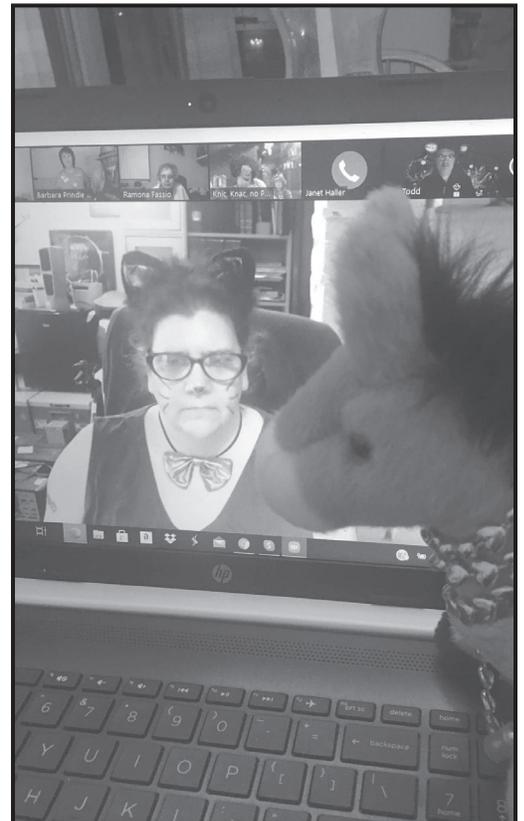


*By Hank the Burro*

Hello Grange friends!

We've been spending a lot of time on Zoom - first attending the CT State Grange Halloween Social, then the National Grange Annual Convention. What would we do without Zoom? It sure gives us a great way to connect.

Please visit my Facebook page, and click the "Like" button while you are there too - to follow all of my adventures. <http://www.Facebook.com/CTGrangeHanktheBurro>



# Bridgewater members step up to save hall

*Reprinted from New Milford Patch*

BRIDGEWATER, CT, November 24, 2020 – When the Town took a step toward demolition of the Bridgewater Grange Hall by condemning the building in 2017, it was saved by a grass roots effort that is now culminating in the formation of the Bridgewater Grange Preservation Association, a 501(c)3 non-profit dedicated to the restoration and preservation of the building for community use.

Anyone who has driven into Bridgewater, CT through the intersection of Main Street and Hat Shop Hill Road can appreciate why this big white clapboard building was singled out for recognition. The structure evokes the authentic utilitarian aesthetics of the mid-19th century farming community who built it.

Built in 1854 as a meeting house before the incorporation of the town, the building is located on the Green between Main and Center Streets, in the heart of Bridgewater. Over time, in keeping with the New England way, the building was re-purposed as a meeting place, town hall, school and grange hall.

In 1901 the local Grange organization purchased the building, and it became the home of Bridgewater Grange #153. In 1999, Bridgewater Grange Hall was sold to the town for \$1 with the understanding that the town would maintain the building and the Grange organization would always be able to call it home. This did happen – for a while. The town performed some maintenance on the building initially but since, has allowed it to fall into such disrepair that the building is condemned and the town is now proposing demolition.

Since having to vacate the building in 2017 after the structure was condemned, the Grange organization has had to rent space next door at St. Mark's Church for meetings and to

hold events. The Grange hosts many events throughout the year for the Town including Roast Beef Dinners, the annual Citizen of the Year Award, the Scholarship Award, the Easter Egg Hunt for children, the popular Chili Cook-off, Cocoa with Santa during the Christmas tree lighting, and a reading of “The Night Before Christmas” at the library. The Grange also delivers holiday baskets to homebound residents in Bridgewater and New Milford.

Subscribe

Several members of the Bridgewater Grange have been working steadily to create a 501(c)3 organization, called The Bridgewater Grange Preservation Association, that will spearhead the efforts to renovate the building and maintain it, going forward, as a community center and home for the Grange. Together with grants, local fund drives, and events, the Grange has expressed optimism they can bring this beautiful, historic building back to life in the heart of town.

“Saving the Bridgewater Grange Hall is important because it is a reminder that we are still an agrarian community and that status



**Early view of Bridgewater Grange**

is important to the community today just as it was when this building was built, 166 years ago” said Neil Olshansky, spokesman for the Bridgewater Grange Preservation Association. Bridgewater features numerous agricultural and livestock farms.

The Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office and Preservation Connecticut, another non-profit, are supporting Bridgewater’s efforts to save the Grange Hall. With a team of historic architects, engineers, and construction experts providing structural analysis, design input and pricing, they have created a 3-phase plan for a complete restoration.

## Efforts move forward to save hall

*From the Nov. 21, 2020 issue of the Waterbury Republican-American*

*By Lance Reynolds*

BRIDGEWATER – First Selectman Curtis S. Read completed the first task on his to-do list for the revitalization of the former Bridgewater Grange No. 153 property on Route 133, but it’s not exactly how he hoped it would turn out.

Read saw his \$100,000 Small Town Economic Assistance Program grant application get approved last week. That money, he thought, would have helped demolish the 170-year-old building between St. Mark’s Episcopal Church and Bridgewater Village Store & Bistro.

The State Historic Preservation Office, however, has control of the building because it’s located in a historic district, and it opposes demolition. Instead, the SHPO would rather have the rundown building stabilized, Read said.

Before the SHPO project gets underway, a town meeting would need to be held to determine whether the town would be approved to sell the building to the town Grange.

“Is that good enough for us to see a stabilized building that doesn’t belong to us right in the center of town?,” he asked the Board of Selectmen last week. “Would the townspeople be willing to turn it over

*Continued next page...*

# Save hall

*Continued from previous page... to them per dollar?"*

SHPO's project plan has three phases, each costing an estimated \$100,000 in state funds.

Phase one would entail SHPO hiring a circuit rider from the State's trust for historic preservation, and architect and other entities to revise drawings and plans for the building, Read said.

For phases two and three, the town Grange would apply for

501(c)3 nonprofit designation, Read said. Stabilizing the structure is estimated to cost \$325,000 with SHPO covering \$200,000. The Grange hopes nonprofit status would help it secure the remaining \$125,000, he said.

SHPO's project plan would only stabilize the building, with it not being usable afterward, Read said. The estimated cost for renovating the building is \$1.8 million.

If the Grange fails to raise enough money, Read said the town would get \$100,000 back from SHPO. That's

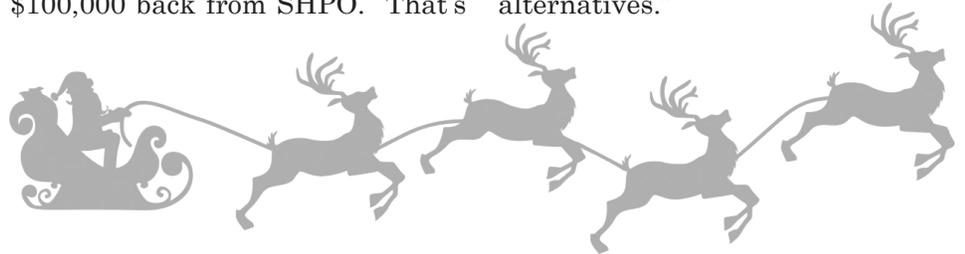
when Read would be allowed to pursue demolition and construction of a new, one-story building- if residents approve- at an estimated cost of \$900,000.

"One way or the other, nobody wants the eyesore of the Grange in the middle of the town," Read said. "If we get \$100,000, demolish it and decide we are not going to build anything because that's what the people want, or decide to build it over here because that's what the people want, we would present the alternatives."

## First Place!



**Ruel Miller, of Cheshire Grange, shows off his certificate for placing first in the Cheshire Best Hometown Representation Category sponsored by the Cheshire Chamber, Artsplace, Cheshire Public Library, and the Cheshire Parks and Rec. Dept.**



## National Grange Ambassadors

*By Kennedy Gwin*

With convention done virtually and many of the ambassador's duties cut short due to COVID the 2021 teams are looking familiar. For the National Junior Grange Ambassadors Bryce Danko from Pennsylvania and Brianna Gervais from Connecticut will continue another year as ambassadors.

Their focus this upcoming year will be on continuing the Agriculture awareness project, continuing leadership workshops, designing and creating junior passports as well as hosting Cultivated Connections episodes. They also will be getting active in the Grange social media, so make sure to follow to check out what they have to say! We are excited they both get to carry on their work, and we look forward to the upcoming year.

Up next is the National Grange Youth team. Our new 2021 National Grange Youth Ambassador is Britney Mercado from New York. Britney was a National Grange representative in 2019 at the CADCA midyear training institute in Grapevine, TX. Next on the National Grange Youth Team are National Grange Young Patrons Molly and Vince Newman. Molly and Vince are high school sweethearts and have a daughter named Kimber, who they are raising to have a deep love of Grange. They also serve as Kansas Asst. and Lady Asst. Steward. When asked about goals for the team this upcoming year National Grange Youth Director Mandy Bostwick said "my goals for this next year is to continue to provide meaningful leadership opportunities for the Grange Youth to prepare them to be the future leaders of the Grange".

This next year, Director Mandy Bostwick, went on to explain that her goal with this group is to "find a good balance between Youth and Young Adults in the program. We tend to focus on the youth side of things and praise our 14-23 year old's (high school and college aged youth) but continue to tell our young adults, 24-35, that they're too young to be in a major leadership positions. In the past few years there have been an increase in the young adults becoming state officers, but I want to use this team to come up with programming that benefits both the youth and young adults simultaneously."

# Waiting



**Charles W. Dimmick**  
State Chaplain

Cheshire Grange No. 23  
chaplain@ctstategrange.org

*I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,  
and in his word I hope; my soul waits  
for the Lord more than watchmen for  
the morning, more than watchmen  
for the morning. Psalm 130*

*Be patient, therefore, brothers,  
until the coming of the Lord. See how  
the farmer waits for the precious fruit  
of the earth, being patient about it,  
until it receives the early and the late  
rains. You also, be patient. Establish  
your hearts, for the coming of the  
Lord is at hand. The Letter of James,  
Chap. 5.*

The season of Advent, which starts  
four Sundays before Christmas  
[often the first Sunday of December,  
but this year the last Sunday of



November], is characterized by  
being a period of waiting. It is a  
remembrance of the many years  
of waiting of the Hebrew people  
for the arrival of the Messiah, the  
promised one of Israel. The prophets  
proclaimed two things about the  
Messiah: that he would call us all  
to repentance and atone for our sins  
through suffering, and that he would  
bring about a new order in which  
peace would reign throughout the  
world.

For Christians, the birth of Jesus  
Christ fulfils that promise partly,  
but not completely. The first half has  
been accomplished, but we still wait  
for the second. Thus Christians are  
still waiting: for the second coming  
when Christ will appear in Power  
and Glory to establish the Kingdom  
of Heaven on Earth. Jesus himself

proclaimed that his coming was not  
the end of the story. He said:

*“Do not think that I came to  
destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did  
not come to destroy but to fulfill. For  
assuredly, I say to you, till heaven  
and earth pass away, one jot or one  
tittle will by no means pass from  
the law till all is fulfilled” (Matthew  
5:17-18).*

So, we continue to wait, patiently,  
for that second coming. How long?  
Nobody knows. We are assured  
by faith that it will come, perhaps  
tomorrow, perhaps many hundreds  
of years in the future. We are  
told *“But about that day or hour  
no one knows, neither the angels in  
heaven, nor the Son, but only the  
Father (...) Beware, keep alert; for  
you do not know when the time will  
come.” Matthew 24*

## In Memoriam

**Robert Burns, G.S.**  
Beacon Valley #103

*“Well done, good and faithful servants.”*