



Illinois Granger

Spotlight on Grangers

In Essentials... Unity

In Non-Essentials... Liberty

In All Things... Charity

July 2023

Vol 3 No 7

Angela

Dickerson

Member of Bluff
Grange # 1826 –
25+ year member

Past Secretary and
current FAC

I will be the 2023-
2024 FAC Chair-
person

Education:

Graduated from
Belleville Town-
ship West – Ac-
counting, Belleville, Illinois

Graduated from Southwestern Illinois College - Account-
ing, Belleville, Illinois

Graduated from Midwest Institute – Veterinary Technician
– Fenton, Missouri

Family:

I have a two sons 35 year old son Justin Dickerson
(Fiancee Ashley), 30 year old son James Gardner (Wife
Courtney), 5 Year old Granddaughter Sophia Lynn Gard-
ner and 5 year old Grandson Ryder Leister.

Hobbies:

I enjoy sewing, plastic canvas projects, making jewelry,
scrapbooking, cooking, working out in the yard and bak-
ing.

I have been working for Baker Pool & Spa a little over
three years now.

I have three “fur” babies (cats) Chance, Bella & Sage. My
sister and son talked me into adopting a dog. He is a full
bloodied Pekingese. He would ignore if you called him by
his name Ace. He will respond to “Bugs”. He has big
brown bugged out eyes. They didn’t tell me he is soooo
needy. If he doesn’t get his way, he will go and chew up
something. Yup, he chewed up my glasses. It is like having
a toddler again.

Each year I look forward to visiting my Grange family dur-
ing State Session.



Lynette’s Visions and Wisdoms

So sorry to have missed the **MidWest Grange Leadership Conference** in Wisconsin with Minnesota helping to host. It was the first time I had missed in many years. The Facebook photos looked like everyone was having a good time. Look for a report from Karie Blasingame for details about the event. Mary Hagarty, Don and I were at a family wedding in IN.

The weather is very dry, drought conditions, and very warm, some days very hot. The wheat is harvested, and we have completed the second cutting of hay, The corn is tall and very stressed with the drought and soybeans growing. The cucumbers, radish and zucchini are ready for harvest. Tomatoes look good. Wild black raspberries were great, but the wild blackberries need some rain. We spent a day recently putting up the new hoop building. It is the replacement for the hoop building destroyed during a storm, we have the framework up and will wait for a calm day to put the tarp on.

Currently, several Grangers from IL are planning to go to Curtis, MI for the **Grange Revival 3.0**. We will share pictures on Facebook and in the next Illinois Granger. I know that Karie and the revival group have done lots of work to make this a great event. There will be 135 campers, wow that will be a large group. Can’t wait.

Plans are being made for the **152nd State Session**, September 8-10, 2023, Northfield Inn, Springfield, IL. More information has been sent to all the Granges and Officers and Committee people. Return meals, delegate information and resolutions to Robin Kindberg as soon as possible. Hope you are all working on contest entries for session. Hope you are selling FAC raffle tickets. Emily Ellwanger is now the FAC

chair as JoEllen Coleman has stepped down. Watch for information in the Illinois Granger. Thanks to those who will be helping Emily with FAC activities. I hope that you are sending your resolutions. National Grange Flora Lena Shufeldt and OK State Grange President Bill Shufeldt will be our National Grange representatives. I am looking forward to having you all meet them. This is an election year please give careful consideration to who would be the best fit for the office. If you want to nominate someone for an office please talk to them first to see if they are interested in the position. Two officers have already mentioned that they do not want to run again, so Treasurer and Secretary offices are available for nomination to any interested IL Grangers. IL State Representative Charles Meier will be our speaker for the Ag program. Come to Saturday morning session to hear him speak. Watch this paper for the schedule and more information for the convention. All are welcome to come to the State meeting.

National Agriculture in the Classroom has announced they will offer a free, one-day summer virtual conference sponsored by the CHS Foundation on July 20, from 10:00 AM - 5:45 PM Eastern Time. Hear from children's book author Lisl H. Detlefsen and attend valuable sessions featuring a variety of agricultural subjects and interests for all grade levels.

This professional development event is sure to leave you with valuable agricultural literacy resources and excitement for the new school year.

The conference will be recorded and accessible shortly after it takes place.

I have another article on the Affordable Connectivity Program, it is a reprint of a Patrons Chain article. National Grange applied for a Federal Communication Commission grant to advocate for the Affordable Connectivity Program. The ACP will give internet service at reduced cost or possibly free to those having income at or below 200% of the poverty level. The National Grange has partnered with the Oregon Institute for a Better Way and Community System Navigators (Misty Burris) to put this ACP program out to the public. Please have your Grange consider the options for this program. The ACP is a two-year program. Navigators would be coming to assist with distribution of handouts and enrollment of ACP. This is one way the National Grange assists your Grange to assist your community. Please read the article and sign up.

The National Grange Executive Committee has been meeting regularly to discuss the current happenings of the NG. Also discussion of varied events and possible sale of the NG Building.

Be aware that some of the dates for contest entries are the first of June!! These National Contests do not have to go to the State Grange first – you can send them to both National and State. Some of the National Grange Contest dates have changed check out Facebook or nationalgrange.org.

Start to plan now for November 14- 18, 2023
157th Annual **National Grange Session**, Niagara Falls, NY

Calendar of Grange Events

7/1 Officer/Deputy/Committee Chair Reports Due

7/1 Deadline for Delegate names

7/1 Deadline for Resolutions

7/18-23 Grange Revival Curtis MI (UP)

8/1 State Session Meal Reservations Due

8/1 Distinguished Grange Application Due

8/1 Community Service Deadline

8/8-13 Boone County Fair

8/13 Turkey Hill Ham and Peach Dinner

9/1 Grange in Action Report Due

9/8-10 Illinois State Grange Session

11/14-18 National Grange Session-Niagra Falls NY

2024 National Session Quad Cities 11/10-17

Donations: Memorial Scholarship

Donations: Illinois Granger

\$25 Lester & Betty Hardt – Broad Hollow

NOTE: Please send me any important dates, members in nursing homes, rehabs, or senior living, obituaries, donations, births, weddings, any good news from your Grange so I can add them to the newsletter.

Ruth Blasingame 815-299-7884

illinoisgranger2017@gmail.com

8711 Deer Run Drive Belvidere, IL 61008

June Gobbles from Turkey Hill

Lots of activity has been going on at Turkey Hill Grange building. After our Chicken Dinner, we resumed work on our kitchen. The lower cabinets were replaced, and a hand washing sink was installed and new counter-tops. The new upper cabinets had been installed earlier. Our worktables were rebuilt and received new epoxy coating on the top. The counter between the dining hall and the kitchen was also refinished.

What's next? New flooring in the dining hall! The buffet line will have vinyl plank and dining hall will get new carpet. That gave us the perfect time to paint the dining hall, so we did. 12 Grangers came out and got to work, we even got the kitchen done except for the ceiling. That will be done after some repair work on the ceiling is completed.

Our sincere thanks go to families and individuals who contributed to our Kitchen project. Contributions were made directly to Turkey Hill and in the form of memorials honoring our members.

On June 10th, we held a breakfast with the total profit going to Storm Relief through a group sponsored by the United Methodist Church. This group takes no money from contributions for administration costs. The total contribution goes to help people affected by tornadoes and severe storms.

A group of our Grangers went to eat at Mungo's in Collinsville. I heard the food was wonderful and they had a great time.

We made 137 jars of jam and jelly to sell at the markets we attend. They continue to be sought after and cherished by our customers.

We will have a food trailer at the Grange on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays starting on June 29th and continuing until we raise the money needed for our new sound system, which is much needed. Please come support us by purchasing our goodies. We will have funnel cakes, corn dogs, pork tenderloins, brats, hot dogs, pulled pork, French fries, chips, soda, and lemonade.

In addition to all this activity, we held our June Flea Market and Vendor Fair that featured a Children's Day. For Dairy Month, our 4H group supplied ice cream for the kids. We had a seed planting station, a display on bee keeping and information involving kids in aviation.

Plans are underway for Ham and Peach Dinner on August 13th. Mark your calendars, we hope to see you!

Our quilters have made several Quilts of Valor for our ceremony this year and will be making more.

A big thank you and a pat on the back goes to all our Grange members for a busy and productive month!

Submitted by Chris Bersett

Secretary of Turkey Hill Grange

Happy Announcements

Mina Elizabeth Kindberg

Born June 19, 2023 at 4.32pm

7 lbs 10 oz 21 inches

Parents Tim & Stephanie Kindberg

Grandparents Karl & Robin Kindberg

Proud Aunts Karrie & Kelly Kindberg



Caroline Joy Ellwanger

Born May 5, 2023

8 lbs 11 oz 20 1/2 inches

Adam, Sara and Scarlette are so excited to welcome baby home.



ISG Secretary Report July 2023

Well it's time for reminders of date deadlines:

ROOM RESERVATIONS – If you are attending State Session and are planning on staying overnight, please let me know so I can reserve your room for you. State Officers, Deputies,

Committee Chairs and Committee members and Directors yours are already set.

DELEGATE NAMES – Are due to the ISG Secretary by July 1st. I hope I get more than what I have already.

MEAL RESERVATIONS – Are due to the ISG Secretary by August 1st. Be sure to send payment along with reservations.

DELEGATE BOOKS – If you want a Delegate Book please let me know before August 1st. Cost is \$5.00 All Delegates, State Officers, Deputies and Committee Chairs and Directors are required to purchase a book. Make check payable to: Illinois State Grange.

RESOLUTIONS – Are due to ISG Secretary before July 15th at the latest.

REPORTS: State Officer, Deputy, Committee Chairman and Directors your reports are to be to me by July 1st. I only have three so far.

QUARTERLY REPORTS – Are due by July 15, 2023. If you take in new members please be sure to include a copy of their application form and send it to ISG Secretary.

GRANGE MEMBERSHIP YEAR – Ends June 30, 2023. If you want to recognize your members please let me know as soon as possible. Each Secretary received in your GRIT packets a list of those who are due for recognition this year.

There are a lot of deadlines approaching fast please try to follow those deadline dates. It will greatly be appreciated.

Fraternally Submitted,

Robin Kindberg

Illinois State Grange Secretary

Beaver Valley Grange #1791

Missed giving the May report so this is a combo, May and June.

In May Steve Paulson reported on Agriculture plantings, bag seed or bulk seed and reports of buzzards being a problem this year. In June, Steve gave a report on the "Leaders Since Lincoln's Day". This article was about President Lincoln's friend Ralph Emerson and how President Lincoln encouraged him to get into the implement business. How the Emerson-Brantingham Company influenced the Rockford area industry.

Community Service hours were presented for May and June. Fairboard report was given for May and June also with the main topic of building the new bathroom.

Health Education and Welfare reported by Marisa in May on the fact that COVID has officially ended which affects any more of the free tests and vaccines. The FDA just approved a "hot flashes" non-hormonal medication. And New York has the first case of Super Ringworm fungus. In June Marisa reported that "orange" sun haze you've seen is from fires in Canada and those with allergies or asthma should be careful. She also reported about the recall of frozen fruits. Need to see if your purchase is affected? You can check the CDC site.

Legislative report in May was about the assault weapon bans, National Intel breaches and the documents that are to be screened leaving Washington, DC.

Safety reports about the dangers of a farmers job and in June to be safe out there and careful for the farmers.

Beaver Valley Grange has a fundraiser on June 23rd called the Sip 'n Paint, all are welcome.

Contact Marisa at whattheshuckmarisa@gmail.com to register or you can call her at 815-974-7411. It starts at 6:00 pm, Friday, June 23rd at the Boone County Community Grange Hall. Only \$35.00 and includes all supplies. There will be snacks and non-alcoholic drinks. Raffle baskets will be there too! Come and join us for a fun night.

Beaver Valley has been working on a couple of resolutions for State Session.

Fraternally submitted, Dayle Paulson, Publicity

Lecturer's Column

As we find ourselves in the midst of summer, I want to highlight the possibilities of planning interesting outings for your Grange family. Nearly every week all around the state one can find all sorts of great (and usually free) public events and entertainments.

For example, right around St Clair County and neighboring counties one can find

- Outdoor summer band concerts
- Summer family theater
- Auto races or vintage car shows
- Community festivals
- Parades
- Minor league baseball
- Tours of historic homes or sites
- Fireworks Displays
- Art Festivals
- Food-focused events
- Water Parks and Amusement Parks
- Zoos

Look around and plan an outing, maybe with a collaborative picnic for your Grangers and friends. These glorious days of summer will be gone all too soon.

Also, this is also good time to make specific plans for creating items to enter in the Lecturer's Contests for the State Session in early September. The categories have all been spelled out in detail but a few highlights:

- Photography contests can be entered either digitally or with physical prints. Mail any online entries to ethanedwards2023@outlook.com by September 6. Categories are
Farm Machinery,
Potluck Activity,
Gardens,
Grange Family,
Architecture, and
Extreme Close-up
- Creative Writing Prose topic is "Surprising Illinois" and Poetry topic is "Christmas Eve."
- Art categories include both paintings and drawings as well as three-dimensional media like ceramics and textiles
- Personal Collections can be any assortment of 12 related items. This has proved to be one of the most interesting categories in recent years. What will you surprise and impress us with this year?

- We are repeating the birdhouse contest again after debuting it last year. Be creative in using any sort of material to create a functional or whimsical place for a bird to hang out.
- And one more reminder of the new "folded objects" contest. This was an activity suggested by a member and it holds so much possibility: origami, constructions, napkins, anything you can think of. The only stipulation is that it should be created primarily by a series of folds.

And finally, we always like to have an entertaining talent show at the Saturday night banquet. This year's winner will have the opportunity to represent Illinois in the National Grange Evening of Excellence—this year in Niagara Falls, NY. We accept entries right up to the last minute but it really helps in the planning if you can let me know by September 6 if you plan on competing. In particular, you need to tell me if I need to make sure we have special audio equipment or musical instruments available.

AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

JOAN FIDDER, CHAIR

RAIN, RAIN where are you? In Northern Illinois we need rain badly; I hope things are better in the south. The only things growing well are the weeds!

Looking forward to seeing all the entries in September at State Session.

Don't forget to try the Diamond Art division in the Agriculture Dept. Entries MUST be farm related; with categories for both adults and Junior Grangers.

We have 2 beautiful farm quilts donated for the auction this year. One is a John Deere quilt and one is a Farmall quilt. Which one will bring the most? Green?? Or Red?? Bring lots of extra "moola" for the fun filled auction!



Flora Grange Report

Flora Grange held their annual Grange picnic and awards ceremony on Tuesday, June 13, 2023, with 45 members and guests in attendance. After a delicious picnic potluck, everyone went upstairs, and president Fidler opened the meeting.

Community Service chairman, Lindakay Ebel introduced and gave out the awards to the distinguished individuals as follows:

Granger of the Year – John (Jack) M. Ratcliffe – Recognized for his service and dedication to Flora Grange for 75 years, Pomona Grange for 66 years and the Boone County Fair for 50 years.

Junior Granger of the Year – JT Ryan – Recognized for his work with Flora Grange, the Youth Fair Board, Flaming Monkey's 4-H Club, and Boone County Federation

Fire Fighter of the Year – Craig Wilcox – For his service with the Belvidere Fire Department from 1989 to 2019 and for all his special teaching and inspection classes and training he held.

Police Office of the Year – Scott Yunk – Joining the Boone County Sheriff's Department in 1988 working his way up the ladder from detective to being elected Boone County Sheriff in 2022.

Teacher of the Year – Rebecca Perry – Rebecca worked at Belvidere Middle School from 2011 to 2018, transferred to Belvidere South in 2018 to present and is a team leader and is also a cheer coach and an avid runner in various events.

Non-Member of the Year – Terry Rossi – Terry is very active in the county's fight against steer taling and has spoken to many groups about this.

Reports were givens Agriculture: Bob Scherer reported crops are planted, need rain. Fair Board: Jack Ratcliffe stated a lot is going on at the fairground, circus, tractor pulls, dog shows, etc. Need help, come out and help get ready for the fair. Farmland Protection: Jack reported the county breakfast was held; it was well attended. Membership: Lindakay Ebel stated that National Grange now has a new 4th degree pin for new members, price \$10.00 each at their supply store, very pretty. Also, Lands Ends has become a distributor of the National Grange logo. Youth: JT Ryan reported there was a tour of the fairgrounds on June 8, and it was well attended. Youth are getting ready for the fair.

Fabienne Calabrese, Health, Education & Welfare, she has found that when a Grandparent has raised a child, the child seems to be more friendly, and shows kindness towards others. Quilting Emalee Colver reported there will be quilting at Flora Grange on Friday from 9 am to 3 pm and again on Saturday and Sunday, all are invited to bring whatever you are working on and join in.

Building & Grounds: Casey gave an update on the building and has a contractor he is working with on hail damage to our building. Elevator: Jack gave the members information on the cost of an elevator and had a diagram of

where it would be located. It was decided to have someone from the company come and talk to the group about the elevator.

Lindakay gave the monthly treasurer's report and was approved by the members. The Flora Granges representatives for the State Grange session will be Ken Fidler and Jack Ratcliffe. Flora Grange has two Resolutions which are due by July 1st, one on Animal Cruelty at Mexican and or Charrerria Rodeos and Saving Farmland. We have new membership applications, thanks to Emalee Colver. Thinking of you cards were sent around for members to sign for Gene West, Karl Kindberg, Mike Ratcliffe and Lonn Buzzell. Emalee collected \$60.00 in "G" bills.

There will be NO meeting in the month of July, we will meet on JULY 11TH at the fairgrounds and do some work. Our AUGUST meeting will be AUGUST 15TH, one week later, due to the fair. Meeting closed in full form.

Lindakay Ebel, Publicity

Boone County Pomona Grange

These photos are from the first Belvidere 4th of July parade in 1957. Pomona Grange had a float. We do not know who the people in the pictures are.



UNION GRANGE – THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

As we are celebrating our 150th year this coming December, members were asked to reflect on what the Grange has meant to them and what memories they have. Here are some of the great times we now hold very dear to us.

Growing up in the Grange as a Junior the Christmas programs hold special memories as we got to show off our varied talents. These consisted of reading verse, singing, playing musical instruments and doing skits. One memorable moment was when Brandon played “The Twelve Days of Christmas” on the piano. Every time he made a mistake he’d start the song over again. After 20 minutes of this it was not funny any more. The program would end with everyone singing Christmas carols and Santa coming to distribute presents. There was home-made popcorn balls and a big red apple for all. Everyone exchanged Christmas cards and it was like a big family gathering.

Throughout the year juniors were busy making presents for Mother’s Day and Father’s day and doing crafts for state contests. What we learned at the Grange was getting along with people, participating, meeting new and interesting people, getting to try different crafts, speaking in front of people. Once a year the juniors filled the subordinate chairs and every May we had a graduation ceremony inducting juniors into membership at age 14. These lessons served us well as we grew into adults.

The annual Fourth of July picnics were really big while I was a youngster with lots of food and games for everyone. Many times the picnic was held at either Kishwaukee or Kilbuck Forest Preserves. The day ended with a big bowl of ice cream. A tradition we still do today.

The Halloween parties were great with everyone dressing up. We went on hayrides, went caroling, had ice cream socials, played horse shoes, had degree work and practiced many hours to be in the Rose Drill. One year I remember Phyllis Pagles was in charge of the Rose Drill and we had to wear a spring color formal dress and we had matching umbrella and practice was fun. Several years we did the May Pole Rose drill with ribbon in hand we’d circle the May pole going up and down as we formed a braid on the pole.

The Spring Fashion Show encompassed all of Winnebago County seamstresses. Those winners would

then advance on to the State contest. You modeled your creation or modeling was done by the one you made an outfit for. It was a great time to be with women from other Granges.

As we got older it seems I liked the swiss steak and roast beef dinners more. It was always a lot of work, but both the workers and the guests enjoyed a great meal, especially the pie for dessert and real potatoes that were mashed. Another benefit was left over meat, potatoes and pie.

Grange provided opportunities to travel by attending State Sessions, National Sessions, Lecturer’s Conferences, Youth Weekends and Junior Campouts. We were proud to have Gary and Sally Campbell represent Illinois as the State Young Couple. I’ll never forget Mary Quist, Tom Ratcliffe and Mike Keller at Youth Weekends. We camped at Holiday Acres in Garden Prairie and met the owners, Al & Darlene Henninger and their sons who were Grangers in Boone County. Always had a great time there. We had progressive dinners, mystery dinners, games of Bunco and Buzz and square dancing was another fun activity. And, who can forget the year of the streaker as shown on TV? Not to be outdone, Russell and Terry Meyer surprised us all as they came streaking through one of our meetings and shocked us all into fits of belly laughter.

Leigh Baxter had a hearty laugh that was loud and infectious and he always enjoyed the juniors performing.

Another fun time was playing with the Kitchen Band. Our leader, Pauline Eggert, would blacken out her two front teeth, then turn around and smile at the audience. The room always erupted into laughs. Dorothy Rydholm played a full size wash tub and it wouldn’t be the same without our piano player, Muriel Youngberg.

At many of our meetings our closing song would be “Happy Trails” with the words “until we meet again”, and we really did look forward to seeing our friends again. **Thanks for the Memories** and the wonderful friends we made along the way.



THE PRAIRIE Grange Report

The Prairie Grange meeting was called to order at 7:10PM on June 19, 2023, by President Don Ellwanger. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved as written. We took in one new member tonight.

Committee Reports were given:

Ann Johnson reminded everyone to be sure to send in your National Grange Quilt square and Ann is willing to send them all in if you get it to her soon.

Karie Blasingame reported the Midwestern Grange Leadership Conference was held over the past weekend in Elkhorn Wisconsin. Two Grangers from Illinois attended the conference. They had several workshops that were interesting and educational, played Grange Baseball and made homemade ice cream and butter. They also toured the Hoard's Dairymen Museum and even got to see a cow parade. Had a lot of fun just wish more Grangers would have attended.

Sheri Bochmann reminded everyone to get her your community service hours as soon as possible since time is running out.

Mary Brubach reported Please pray for Rain. Crops are in desperate need of moisture.

Sarah Meyers reminded everyone to be sure to use sunscreen and drink lots of fluids to keep hydrated when out in the sunny hot weather.

Communications – we received many thank you cards from those who received Grange Scholarships.

We received many cards congratulating The Prairie Grange on their 100th Anniversary from many Granges and Grangers.

We also received thank you card from Brother Al Henninger for the Buddy meal he received.

President Don Ellwanger thanked everyone that helped put on the 100th Anniversary celebration. It went well with about 65 people in attendance. The meal was delicious, and we want to thank County Line Grange for preparing and serving the meal.

Riley Konieczki was in attendance, and he received his Scholarship from Prairie Grange. He will be going to mechanic's school.

It was voted upon to send a monetary donation to B1 Food Pantry.

We also voted to donate money to Sammantha Meyers and her William Penn University Bowling team.

Karie Blasingame reminded everyone if you are going to State Session that she needs your meal reservation before July 1st and remember Prairie Grange will pay for one of your meals at State Session.

We worked on several resolutions we will be sending to State Session.

Our next meeting will be July 17th our annual Picnic and everyone is asked to bring one hot and one cold dish to pass. Meal is at 6:30PM.
Robin Kindberg - Publicity Chairman



Illinois State Grange Youth

2023 Youth Contests

Photography: will follow all National Grange rules.

National Grange Categories due Sept. 1

Farm Machinery – Gardens – Grange Family

State Grange Categories – Follow Lecturer's rules.

Architecture - Extreme Close Up

State Youth Categories - Submit 1 week before State Session

Patriotic – Reflection – Fabric – Toy

Creative Art & Handcrafts: Due at State Session Friday morning

All Lecturer's Contests

Lego item or scene – not to exceed 12x12x12 inches in size

Diamond Art: not to exceed 16x20

Ceramics: not to exceed 12x12x12

Acrylic Painting: not to exceed 16x20

Watercolor Painting: not to exceed 16x20

Card Making:

3 Birthday cards, 3 Sympathy cards, 3 All Occasion cards

Fabric and Food: Due at State Session except for National Grange Quilt Square

National Grange Quilt Square: Due Sept 1

All Categories of Family Activities

Cookies: Six Decorated Cookies – Patriotic Theme

Table Centerpiece: Patriotic Theme. Will be judged then used for decoration on Saturday night

Agriculture: Due at State Session Friday morning.

All AG Categories

Garden Design Contest: Due Sept 1

Pollinator Poster

Pollinator TikTok or YouTube Video

Food Waste Poster

Food Waste TikTok or YouTube Video

Mental Illness Poster

Mental Illness TikTok or YouTube Video

Weather Watcher Challenge: Due Sept 1 details to follow

Any Junior Grange Projects that you want to share.

Karie and Marisa Co Youth Directors

Midwest Leadership Conference Report

Karie Blasingame

Father's Day weekend I spent traveling in Wisconsin enjoying the Dairy State during Dairy Month with Grangers from across our region at the Midwest Grange Leadership Conference. Friday night we enjoyed snacks, visiting, S'mores around the campfire and a great match of Grange Baseball. Saturday, we spent time doing many different Dairy Month activities, we made butter and ice

cream, visited a cheese factory, went to a cow parade at Hoard's Dairy Museum. Hoard's Dairyman Magazine is one of the oldest Dairy magazines in the country still in print and it was started in Wisconsin. We were able to visit the dairy museum as well as the grounds which has pollinator exhibits all around the outside of the building. If you have time to get up to Fort Atkinson, WI, it is a nice place to visit. We participated in a workshop about personality types and Parliamentary Procedure. Next year's conference will be held in Ohio, the weekend of June 21 -23, 2024. More details to come as they get their plans made.

Chaplain's Corner

Charlotte Mehrtens

Happy 4th of July "Let Freedom Ring"

As we celebrate the freedom of our country, I stop to think of a quote I recently read and I thought it kind of fit me to a T these past nine months. Some days are diamonds and some days are stones. Sometimes you are the bug, other times you're the windshield. Many of us just feel we can't get ahead some days, it just doesn't fall into place the way we plan it. Other days we do feel like we are the bug able to avoid the windshield. Just remember that God has us in His hands and carries us when we need to be carried.

I feel that many may be that way with their religion that they get mad because God doesn't always provide for what they have planned for themselves. It is very easy to get mad at God when you are the bug trying to get to the next high spot in their life

We forget to thank God for everything we have because it comes through His hands. It is the same way with our freedom, we have to work at keeping us free. This is not for just one person to do but it takes a nation of people to keep us free. I hope that each of us can say we are doing our part.

As we celebrate the 4th of July, I hope that you can spend the time with family and friends. I remember when I was small that was my favorite holiday, my uncle would have big watermelons in barrels with lots of ice, ice cream freezers being cranked, and as it started to get dark we would get our own pile of sparklers to use and light up the night sky. And lay down in the grass and watch the fireworks as they were shot off into the sky. Have a very safe holiday and "Let Freedom Ring"

Saying prayers for everyone who is ill for a speedy recovery, congratulations to those who have gotten married, had new babies, new jobs and moving on to something else. Take care and God Bless each of you. 9

This is the article referred to in Lynette's article.

Affordable Connectivity Program reprint from Patrons Chain article.

For 20 years, the Grange has been the leading voice advocating for the expansion of broadband into rural communities. Most frequently, we focus on the infrastructure of build-out, which is still a major factor keeping millions of Americans from high-speed, reliable internet to their homes. However, for others, broadband is available but unaffordable.

For this reason, the National Grange is actively working to promote the **FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program**, which provides a discount benefit for broadband to low-income and other eligible individuals. After receiving a grant to assist with the program's promotion, we have begun registering Granges to take part in the work to inform people in the communities in which Granges are located, and beyond, about ACP.

Please remember that taking part in this outreach program is **community service**.

Certainly, we want all Grange members to know about the benefit and sign up if they are eligible, but this cannot stop within our doors. Just like giving nonperishable items to the food bank is important, so is taking the information about ACP to the director of the food bank and asking for it to be placed in the boxes and bags of recipients.

Please take the time to register your Grange to take part in this outreach service, which will allow you to receive free materials to give to your local food bank, to senior centers, to veterans' organizations in your hometown, to place on bulletin boards in your halls and in other community spaces, to put on tables at events your Grange takes part in and more. From placemats that can be used at your community breakfasts and dinners to yard signs that can be placed on the lawns of members whose properties are on well-traveled roadways, there are many ways your Grange can increase awareness about the ACP program.

When you register through **grange.biz/signupgrange** or by texting or calling National Grange Membership and Leadership Development Director Amanda Brozana Rios at 301-943-1090 and leaving a message, you will be assigned a Community Navigator - an individual that works with our partner, Oregon Institute for a Better Way, to help Granges plan for the outreach, order and packaging the materials, perform data collection and more.

Navigators - all of whom are also Grange members - will also work to collect more information about your Grange, its outreach, goals, and needs. This data will help us create future grant proposals and allow us to search for grants and other funds that may directly benefit individual Granges.

Granges that take part in this program may even be eligible for a small financial incentive, but it all starts with the first step of registering your Grange to become an outreach partner.

Registering through this link does not commit your Grange, but will instead allow you to receive further information and connect with a navigator to brainstorm and talk about your Grange.