



ILLINOIS GRANGER

*In Essentials... Unity
In Non-Essentials... Liberty
In All Things... Charity*



November 2025 Vol 5 No. 11



Lynette's Visions and Wisdoms

Don and I are getting ready for the 159th National Grange Convention, but the first at sea! The cruise leaves port on November 8. There will be a meeting

of the delegates and officers on October 28th to start some of the process of the meeting early. We will see the budget, get reports on Grange Advocacy, Grange Foundation and vote on members for the Foundation Board, and to highlight other Grange Projects. We have been meeting with our session committees for months now and are working on the resolutions that have been submitted by the states. After the cruise there will be a meeting on November 21 for all Grangers to share awards and recognition.

I hope that you are signing up for the Grange Engage program.

The GRIT (Grange Resources Information and Training) session was held on October 11, 2025 in Washington, IL. Thanks to the 47 Grangers who came from 15 Granges to hear the presentations from Agriculture Chairs – Lana Korte and Marilyn Hoffmann, Community Service – Heather Ellwanger with assistance from Marisa O'Dell, Communications/ILLINOIS GRANGER – Karie Blasingame for Ruth Blasingame, Family Activities Chair – Trisha Renken, Historian –

Beverly Smith, Junior Grange – Mindy Schiefer, Lecturer – Lynette Schaeffer for Ethan Edwards, Legislative Director – Marc Henrich, Membership & Recognition – Robin Kindberg, Secretary – Brian Keller, Youth – Karie Blasingame and Marisa O'Dell for Beth Olson, and President – Lynette Schaeffer. It was a great lunch and facility, St Mark Lutheran Church, Washington, IL. Thanks to Kevin and Deb Wade for sharing their church with us. Much information was shared and I hope enthusiasm will be shared back to the Granges. The Information will soon be on the ilstategrange.org website. I am sure that the presentations will be shared in the Illinois Granger soon.

The 155th IL State Grange Session will be Sept. 11 – 13, 2026 at Northfield Inn in Springfield, IL. The 156th State Session will be in the southern area of the state. St Clair County members have been checking out different facilities for 2027. We are checking out a facility where the rooms are very minimalist (no TV) is this something that would be a problem for those attending the session? The facility is great size, very peaceful surroundings and very economical. We could set up hotel rooms within 15- minute drive, if that is what is decided on. We have a little time to decide, but not much. If you are ok with minimal sleeping rooms, please let me know your desires.



ISG Secretary Report

It was great to see many of you at GRIT several weeks ago. The location was wonderful, the food was excellent, and the information we were showered with was valuable as always. Be sure to look over everything you received in your folders and on your flash drives, sharing them with the members of your local Granges as appropriate. Thank you to everyone who worked long and hard to make everything come together.

Saturday, November 15, is the deadline for turning in the paperwork for the bonding of Grange officers by the various Granges. Whether your Grange chooses to self-bond or buy bonding insurance through the National Grange, it is very important that I receive the certification and, if applicable, the check by the deadline. Each Grange should already have received the bonding information and the forms to fill out. However, if you haven't, let Lynette or me know as soon as possible, and we will get them to you.

As always, don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. It might be as simple as wanting to check if I received something you sent, or as a deadline looms, you want to make sure I get what's needed in time. I'm here to help however I can.

Fraternally,
Brian Keller, Illinois State Grange Secretary
brianjkeller@gmail.com
618-410-9020

Prairie Grange Report

The Prairie Grangers met on Monday, October 20, 2026, for our monthly meeting. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as presented.

Harvest season is in full swing. Watch for farm equipment on the roadways. Slow down and be patient. There have been too many combine/tractor vs vehicle accidents in our area lately. Be alert and SLOW DOWN.

Flu season is around the corner and so are family gatherings so get your flu shots now and prevent sickness.

There was a great display area at State Session this year in all departments. Keep up the good work and why not start your projects now and not wait till the last minute.

Congratulations to Beth Olson of Beaver Valley Grange as the new ISG Youth Director. The theme will be "Out of this World."

Congratulations to Prairie Grangers for receiving the Distinguished Grange Award again this year. We discussed the requirements for this year's Distinguished Grange application and how we can incorporate them into our meetings.

Next 4momz2moms Sale is May 1 & 2, 2026. Lots of help is needed especially for setup/teardown.

Lots of changes coming to the Boone County Fair 2026. Watch for details. November 5th is Pomona Grange meeting, and we will be electing Fair Board President and Secretary. Big Thunder, Capron and LeRoy Community Grange are on the serving committee and it was decided that Prairie Grange will also help serve. A sign-up sheet will be on the Boone County Facebook page.

We voted to send a monetary donation to the National Grange Foundation.

We concluded our meeting by passing out awards and contest prize money from State Session.

Busy Bee Grangers award went to the Kindberg Family for donating most items to Haven Network. Busy Bee Grange went to Prairie Grange for donating the most items to The Haven Network.

Prairie Grange got 4th place for their Community Service book. Michelle Schwartz received Law Enforcement Officer of the year, she was nominated by Prairie Grange.

Kayla Konieczki and Sheri Bochmann received membership plaques for signing up 5 new members along with Adam and Sara Ellwanger who received a plaque for signing up new members. Ruth and Karie Blasingame each received a bar for their membership plaques for signing up new members.



Several members of Prairie Grange as well as several Junior Grangers received prize money for all the contests, they placed in at state session. The meeting was closed in full form at 7:55PM.

Robin Kindberg
Prairie Grange Publicity Chairman



Guildford Hope

Rockford IL- On Thursday, October 9, Guilford Hope Grange #6 presented 11 Merriam-Webster Elementary dictionaries to third grade students at the Rockford Diocese’s All Saints Catholic Academy as a part of the Grange’s “Words for Thirds” program.

Wayne Lyford, President of the Guilford Hope Grange, says that they have been participating more than 20 years with various Rockford schools. “We love to see the awe on students’ faces when we give them their dictionaries and tell them they can take them home. We provide a quick example on how to use the tool, too. For some students, this is their first time using a dictionary that isn’t electronic.”

Student Alysandra Lenz asked how to find a word she wasn’t sure how to spell, “Like platypus,” she said. Her teacher Greg Zarembski explained, “It’s like a science experiment, Aly, you start the way you believe it should be spelled,” he said, “and you may need to try a few different ways to spell it before you find it in the book.”

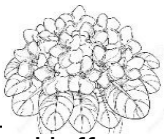
Another student, Benjamin Htoo, excitedly showed his classmates and teacher that he had found an entry about a document they had studied last month, the U.S. Constitution. “Look, Mr. Z,” he exclaimed, “It’s a picture of ‘We the People!’” The students were pleased that the dictionaries would help not just with reading, but with other subjects as well

Mr. Zarembski thanked Grange representatives Martha Byrnes and Mr. Lyford for the organization’s generosity. “It was great to learn about the Grange’s offer in an unexpected email last month,” he said. “We don’t get many classroom guests, especially ones bearing such meaningful gifts!”

The National Grange, the nation’s oldest agricultural and rural service organization, has participated in the “Words for Thirds” program through the Dictionary Project since 2002. The Dictionary Project is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in South Carolina. Their mission is to assist all students in becoming good writers, active readers, creative thinkers, and resourceful learners by providing them with their own personal dictionary. This is a tool that will take them well into middle school. Guilford Hope Grange was organized in Winnebago County more than 150 years ago. It is the oldest continuously active Grange in Illinois and third oldest in the nation. About 15 members meet monthly at local homes for fellowship and service. Anyone with an interest in serving the community is welcome! Call 815-978-3319.

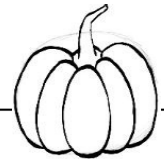


Greg Zarembeski (l), teacher at All Saints Catholic Academy in Rockford, on October 9, standing with most of his third grade class and representatives Wayne Lyford and Martha Byrnes from Guilford Hope Grange #6. The Grange members presented the students with new elementary dictionaries as part of the National Grange “Words for Thirds” program. The Rockford Grange organization has provided dictionaries for a class of third graders for 20 years, this being the first time at All Saints Catholic Academy.



Illinois State Grange Agricultural Contests

Grange Year 2025-2026



Marilyn Hoffmann/Lana Korte Floraville 618-830-3894 2025-2026	Lana Korte/Marilyn Hoffmann Floraville 618-409-3900 2026-2027	Lyle Lee Prairie 815-988-0249 2027-2028
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VEGETABLES

Broccoli (1)

Green Beans (5)

Cabbage (1 head)

Carrots (3)

Cauliflower (1)

Cucumbers (3)

Eggplant (1)

Gourds (3)

White Onions (3)

Yellow Onions (3)

Bell Peppers (3)

Hot Peppers (3)

Red Potatoes (3)

White Potatoes (3)

Sweet Potatoes (3)

Cherry Tomatoes (5)

Red Tomatoes (3)

Yellow Tomatoes (3)

Turnips (3)

Winter Squash (1)

Most Unusual Vegetable

Longest Cucumber

Longest Bean

Largest Tomato

FRUITS

Apples - any color (3)

Grapes (3 bunches)

Pears (3)

Pumpkin (1)

Watermelon

HERBS

Potted specimen of a single herb
must be labeled

Collection of Herbs (3 or more)
must be labeled



FIELD CROPS

3 ears of corn

Longest ear of corn

3 ears of indian corn (husked)

corn (1 quart bag)

oats (1 quart bag)

Soybeans (1 quart bag)

Wheat (1 quart bag)

Sunflower Head (1)

CUT FLOWERS

(must be in clear glass container)

Fall Garden Bouquet

not to exceed 24" tall

Zinnias (6 stems)

1 variety

Zinnias (6 stems)

Mixed Variety

Marigolds (6 stems)

1 variety

Marigolds (6 stems)

Mixed Variety

Black-eyed Susans (6 stems)

any variety

POTTED PLANTS

not to exceed 8" at base of pot

African Violets

Coleus (1 variety)

Coleus (mixed variety)

Geranium

other annual

other perennial

succulents

TERRARIUM

any variety - no larger than cubic foot



MARKET BASKETS

no larger than 30 inches

(8 or more items)

Group Basket

VALUE ADDED PRODUCT

8oz jar of any jam, jelly or fruit butter

jar of pickles (must be labeled)

honey

salsa

most unusual flavor or jam or jelly

JUICE

homemade 1 quart mason jar with date

any variety

OUTDOORS

Decorated Pumpkin

no carvings

best looking scarecrow

no taller than 4ft with stick

LIVESTOCK

Jerky - in airtight ziplock bag

Beef (3)

Turkey (3)

Fish (3)

Deer (3)

Misc(3)



* one entry per person/per category
* all entries must be grown or made
during the current Grange year

Flora Grange Report

Flora Grange met on October 14, 2025 at the Flora Grange Hall at 7 pm. Meeting was called to order, followed by Pledge to flag and roll call of officers and minutes of the September 9th, 2025, were approved.

Reports from committees were given: Lindakay Ebel stated our Community Service book received 2nd place at the Illinois State convention this year, out of 8. Also, our Non-Member, Lisa Rodgers of the Year, who writes for 'The Rhubarb' for Boone County won the Non-Member of the Year from the Illinois State Grange Agriculture, Jack Ratcliffe reported most of the soybeans in our area have been harvested, however, while traveling in the State of Missouri, have not started due to late planting season. Corn in our area is now being harvested.

Fair Board: Jack Ratcliffe stated some of the entertainment has been booked for the 2026 fair, some will be the same, there will be a Mexican dance one night on the track which we have never had before.

Membership: Lindakay Ebel reported membership is down in most clubs and we all need to invite people to our Grange meetings and activities. Quilting – Emalee Colver stated her quilting group will be quilting this week, all are invited, bring your lunch and your work. The group made 15 beautiful little blankets and donated them to the Haven Network.

Lindakay Ebel had written treasurer's report for all in attendance, motion to approve, also had discussion on annual insurance statement. Ken and Amber Fidler, delegates for Illinois State Convention gave a brief report on the convention. Ken handed out the premiums to those who entered the Family Activities and Agriculture Departments.

The forms for the Butter Braids were available this evening and turn back into Laurel as soon as possible with the money. Emalee Colver collected \$42.00 in 'G' bills this evening.

Lindakay Ebel read an email on Loren Due who had heart surgery today and is recovering in ICU in AL, may have to have a second surgery.

Congratulations to Jack and Laurel Ratcliffe who will celebrate their 61st anniversary on October 26th.

Also, Pomona Grange meets on Wednesday, November 5, 7 pm, voting on new Fair board President and Secretary. We all need to attend this meeting and vote and think about who we want to lead our fair for the next two years, as we have had great leadership in the past and our fair has had great attendance and made many improvements because of this.

Next meeting, for Flora Grange, Tuesday, November 11, 2025, 7 pm, Flora Grange Hall. Hope to see you there and invite a guest.

Fraternally, Lindakay Ebel

County Line News

Congratulations to all our new officers who were installed at our last meeting. A special thanks to Dayle and Steve Paulson for being there to help. Also big thanks to Rick O'Dell and Brian and Marissa O'Dell for their help too. We want to congratulate to our very own pharmacist Dr Ned Loy, he took the Wisconsin pharmacy law exam to be able to practice in Wisconsin, the results came back and he passed so he is now a registered pharmacist for the state of Wisconsin, big congratulations again.

Last Sunday some of us went to the GRIT conference. There is always lots to learn. It was beautiful weather for the drive. We are going to do trunk or treat this Saturday at Paulsons museum. The Loys did an awesome job decorating for our Halloween party. The food was delicious. Linda Mullins is recovering very nicely from her surgery, keep up the good work. We had our grange day at the poplar grove airport museum we got to see everything and the food was really good.

HAPPY HALLOWEEN. Cathy Zei



Junior Grange Ambassador Contestant

Scarlette Ellwanger is representing the Illinois State Grange at the National Session as the Junior Ambassador. Here is her essay which was part of the application process for National Junior Ambassador. If she is selected, she will serve as the National Junior Ambassador at the 2026 National Session in Oklahoma.

“Why would I like to represent the National Grange as the NJGA”

I would like to represent the National Grange as the Junior Ambassador because it will give me an opportunity to learn more about the Grange and make more friends. When I have attended National Sessions in the past I really enjoyed making connections with others from across the country and attending workshops where I learned about different topics. At last year’s National Session I helped lead the cookie decorating workshops and kept the kids’ toy areas clean and tidy. I enjoy teaching workshops, and like sharing about my hobbies. I also brought a map of the United States to the National Session and got as many people as possible to mark where they were from. It was really interesting to see how widespread the Grange is and meet people from all across the country. At school I did a presentation about Grange and National Session, and I showed the map to my friends, and talked about all the other things I did while at Session. Being the Junior Grange Ambassador will help me become more confident talking in front of others. I also had the opportunity to be in the recording of the 7th Degree, I found it really interesting and I learned a lot about Grange history as well as ritualism. Some of my mom's Grange friends stayed at our house for the filming of the 7th Degree. We had other Grange friends stay with us from around the country this year. I had a lot of fun getting to spend time with them and getting to know them.

My school has a program called “Big friend-Little Friend” where older students are paired up with younger ones. I have a lot of fun getting to be a mentor to my little friends. We spend time reading, doing crafts, and playing outside with them. Once a month we all have Chapel together and I get to sit between my little friends. I love how excited they get when they see me waiting for them. It really helps the younger grades feel more included in the school when they have the older kids as mentors. I also enjoy being a mentor in the Junior Grange. I help the younger kids with the crafts and activities we do. I really enjoy helping my mom plan and prepare for the Junior programs. I enjoy teaching others about the Grange and how each member gets the opportunity to be involved and make a difference. I believe it is important to be involved in my community and I know that I can make a difference.



Prairie Grange Girls Win 4-H Awards!

Prairie Grange #1832 members Alyssa Gilmore (Youth) and Scarlett Ellwanger (Junior) were honored at the 2024-2025 Boone County 4-H Recognition Program held on October 26, 2025.

Alyssa received the 2024-25 Outstanding Mid-Teen Member, Visual Arts, and Rabbit Awards. She also received County Blue Award certificates for Rabbits, Visual Arts, and a Gold level for Achievement.

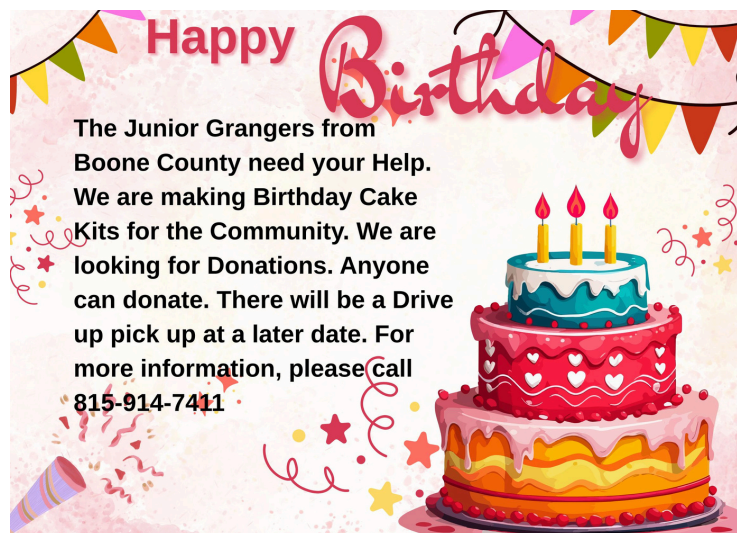
Scarlette received the 2024-25 Outstanding Junior Member, Visual Arts, Clothing and Textiles Awards. She also received County Blue Award certificates for Food and Nutrition, Clothing, and a Gold level for Achievement.

Alyssa and Scarlett are both members of the Grasshopper-Sweet Clover 4-H club and are very active in Grange, 4-H, various sports, and other extracurricular activities.

Community Service

Tis that time of year!! The Christmas Tree will be up in the Community Hall. Please help by decorating it with your donations. There will also be Stockings up for every Grange in Boone County. If you or your Grange would like to share a card to other Granges please feel free to drop them in the stockings. Let's welcome in the Season of goodwill, generosity, and family togetherness and share it with your fellow Grangers.

Marisa O'Dell



Broad Hollow Grange

At Broad Hollow Grange's October potluck, the hall and tables were decorated for Halloween with all kinds of pumpkins, ghosts, witches, and other Halloween items. The program included information about spiders, a poem summing up the fall season, a Halloween candy dice game, a riddle, and a quiz about October followed by a closing thought.

Forty-two people in the community enjoyed a trip to Branson, October 14-16th. There were lots of good shows, good food, and much enjoyable fellowship. Shows included Hot Rods and High Heel's, Texas Tenors, Showboat Branson Belle, David at the Sight and Sound Theater, Clay Cooper, and Dean Z's Elvis. Participants stayed at the Dutton Inn.

In September, after a bountiful potluck, everyone enjoyed a back-to-school program. The program consisted of a humorous poem, "Twas' the Night Before School Started" a math puzzle, and everyone sang, "School Days." There was a pop quiz of riddles, and each told what their favorite

book was or favorite author. An M & M game was played followed by what various objects represented. The program closed with advice from a sea turtle, a polar bear, a penguin, and a glacier. The hall was decorated for the start of school.

Broad Hollow Grange's next potluck will be November 7th, at 6:30 p.m.. Everyone welcome. Bring a dessert or side dish or main dish. A fun program will follow the potluck.

Emerald Mound Grange

Greetings from Emerald Mound Grange, the little Grange that could (and did).

September was slow at the Grange because we took a break from activities to concentrate on State Session. October started out slow but quickly gained speed. Heavy duty cleaning and polishing in the building was done by Chris, a non-granger, but an active volunteer at our Grange Hall. He also helped Marc, our president, mow the property, which can be quite a challenge. The Grange dining room has been decorated with lovely fall and Halloween decorations and is ready for our chili soup dinner on Oct 26 (4 – 7 pm).

During October, our Grange received a certificate in the mail from National Grange. It was the 2025 Diamond Grange in Action certificate. It is very pretty and will be framed and hung on the wall soon. The letter that came with it said that this year there have been a total of 207 Granges who did the Grange in Action while Illinois has one Grange that did. I would recommend that other small Granges who don't go for DistinguishedGrange go ahead and go for the Grange in Action. It is very simple. Do at least 3 events/activities and submit one page with a few photos and captions. We were named a "Diamond" Grange in Action since we did events on Project Sustenance. There is also something called a "Gold" Grange in Action that means you did events/activities/meetings on Mental Health.

Our Grange is still finding ways to donate to the community. In early November, the Lebanon Matthew Ministries (includes the food pantry) is having a Eucre Tournament to raise money for the food pantry. We are one of the sponsors for the tournament to help pay for the fundraiser expenses so they can raise money for the food pantry.

Our next meal after the chili soup dinner will be the Big Breakfast on November 15 from 8 – 10 am. This is popular around here, especially during the cold months. Please come out and support our Grange.

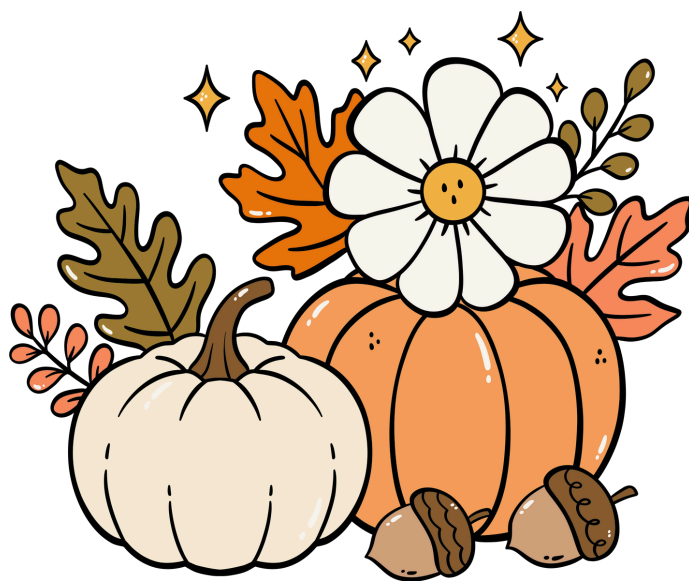
Bluff Grange

Greetings from Bluff Grange. We have been busy. We are still working on getting our parking lot back and hopefully that will give us parking for events to do fundraising.

On Sunday October 19th we had our chicken and dumpling dinner with pre order pick up. Our next fundraising will be held on December 13th with a Artist handmade vendor fair. Then we are also getting ready for our annual Meat Shoot the first Sunday in January.

We have been busy with Grange Hall repairs.

Have a great fall, enjoy the sunshine and blue skies.



2026 Illinois State Grange Youth Contests

All entries are DUE at State Session Friday Morning.

Lego Item or Scene

- 1) Space Lego Set
- 2) Vehicles Lego Set
- 3) Flowers Lego Set
- 4) Animals Lego Set
- 5) Miscellaneous Lego Set

Diamond Art: Must be framed, ready to hang no sawtooth hangers.

- 1) Holidays
- 2) Animated Characters
- 3) Animals
- 4) Nature
- 5) Landscapes
- 6) Western
- 7) Space
- 8) Miscellaneous (Coasters can be a complete set)

Ceramics

- 1) Functional
- 2) Display

Fabric and Food Decorated Items

- 1) Shirt
- 2) Tote
- 3) Apron
- 4) Miscellaneous

Something Stuffed

- 1) Crochet
- 2) Sewn
- 3) Miscellaneous

Cookies: Three Decorated Cookies.

Pollinator Poster, TIKTOK or YouTube

Food Waste Poster, TIKTOK or YouTube

Mental Illness Poster, TIKTOK or YouTube

Hearing/Signing Poster, TIKTOK or YouTube

Anything AG related Poster, TIKTOK or YouTube

3D Model of Solar System, Poster, TIKTOK, or YouTube Video

*Give Thanks
with a
Grateful Heart*





Chaplains Corner

By: Charlotte Mehrtens

Welcome to Fall!! It seems like this has been the longest summer and fall, maybe because we all wished for that much needed rain. The farmers are busy getting their crops out and planting winter wheat, then comes the job of servicing the equipment and storing it for the winter. Thanksgiving holiday is soon upon us. That delicious smell of the turkey baking in the oven giving that delicious aroma as it travels through the house. The kitchen abundant with all the food being prepared and family coming to join in the festive day. Let us always remember why we celebrate His goodness. That He has blessed us and watched over us.

Let us give thanks and praise the Lord Jesus always.

We send prayers for those who are ill and need our daily prayers. Thank Him for the joys and goodness He has given and shared with us. Our help comes in the name of our Lord.

Happy Thanksgiving to each of you.

Well Done Good and Faithful Servant



Judith Beisiegel

1942-2025

Turkey Hill Grange

Judith taught 2nd grade for 34 years. She enjoyed making beautiful quilts and she loved

to cross stitch.

Judith will be missed.



Calendar of Grange Events

2025

11/8-16 National Grange Cruise

11/15 Emerald Mound Big Breakfast 8-10 am

11/15 Bonding Deadline

12/6 Rockford Ice Hogs Teddy Bear Toss

See Karrie Kindberg for ticket info

12/13 Bluff Artist Handmade Vendor Fair

2026

1/3 Ugly Shirt Dance – Everyone Welcome

6 to 9 pm at the Community Grangehall

Wear your ugliest shirt/sweater/top.

Hosted by Boone County Youth Fairboard

\$2 At the door

Silent Auction items

Refreshments available for purchase

3/29 Flora Grange Roast Beef Dinner

4/11 Prairie Grange Consignment Auction

5/1-2 4 MOMZ2MOMZ Consignment Auction

Boone County Fairgrounds

2027

7/18-25 Grange Revival/Smoky Mtns Edition

Bryson City, NC

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.

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