



CELEBRATE AMERICA'S 250TH WITH A TASTE OF GRANGE TRADITION

by **Amanda Brozana**
*National Grange Membership
& Leadership Development Director*

As the United States marks its 250th anniversary in 2026, the National Grange is proud to honor the nation's heritage with a flavorful new feature: Timeless American Recipes. This recurring piece, debuting in the pages of *Grange Today!* and throughout our 250th Celebration efforts, highlights classic recipes that have stood the test of time – from century-old Grange cookbooks to beloved recipes passed through generations and enjoyed at potlucks nationwide.

Collected by members of the National Grange's America's 250th Celebration Committee, each recipe offers more than just instructions – it serves up a story. Whether it's a treasured dessert from a rural Pennsylvania Grange, a hearty casserole popular in the Pacific Northwest, or a simple

bread that generations of members have baked together, these dishes reflect the values of community, stewardship and tradition that define the Grange and America alike.

We invite you to follow along and try your hand at these timeless flavors as we journey through the 250th year. Who knows – one of these recipes might just become a new favorite at your next Grange meeting or family dinner.

Does your Grange have a cookbook – whether long out-of-print or still available for sale? We're compiling a comprehensive list of Grange cookbooks published over the years and want to spotlight those still in print in upcoming Grange publications. If you know of a Grange cookbook, please visit this link to submit information: <https://grange.biz/grangecookbook>.

Learn more on Page 5

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OPINION: SILENCE IS NOT SUSTAINABLE - THE GRANGE'S DUTY TO ACT

by **Chloe Schmitz**

National Grange Intern

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It is no secret that rural America is the backbone of this country, and has been for generations. From the food set on our tables to the energy that powers our homes, the hard-working people of rural communities are the stewards of the land that helps sustain every single one of us.

Yet, time and time again, the profound struggles of rural communities are often overlooked, ignored, or altogether forgotten.

One of the most pressing, yet under-discussed, issues affecting rural Americans today is climate change. While the focus is often centered on the larger global impacts, the reality is that the effects are hitting much closer to home.

With a warming planet comes profoundly altered rural landscapes and livelihoods. Crop seasons are shifting and growing longer, once-reliable water sources are dwindling, and viable soil is diminishing at alarming rates. These, along with numerous other interconnected issues, are making the daily lives of rural Americans more challenging.

This places an overwhelming burden on the 19% of

the U.S. population residing in the more than 95% of land that is classified as rural. This small population shoulders the immense responsibility of caring for the land that provides Americans with food, energy, water, and countless necessities.

These people and this land are not just susceptible to the effects of climate change; they are fighting on the front lines, experiencing almost irreparable damage. We see it through the intensifying droughts, roaring forest fires, flash floods, debilitating winters, and the increasing frequency of extreme weather that destroys not only crops but the infrastructure rural America has been built on.

Yet, climate change extends far beyond the land and the weather; it is actively damaging livelihoods, placing cracks and tears in the fabric of rural communities. A decrease in viable land for agriculture, the bedrock of many rural economies, increases the vulnerabilities of these communities. This manifests in a plethora of ways, from reduced economic stability for thousands of families and further physical isolation to a further loss of accessibility to services like healthcare and broadband access, which are already overwhelmingly scarce.

For many years, the Grange has recognized the urgency of this crisis and is fighting for legislation that will help support rural Americans during this climate crisis. From advocating for the farm bill that continues to support our farmers through

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GRANGE HEIRLOOM FOR JUNE

Use the Grange Heirloom Program to teach your members and the community about some of the key cornerstones of the Grange. Materials are available at <http://www.nationalgrange.org/heirloom-program>.

You are welcome to choose any of the Grange Heirlooms at any time.

Use the hashtag #GrangeHeirloom when you share these important pieces of our Order on social media.

WE MUST ALWAYS BEAR IN MIND THAT NO ONE, BY BECOMING A PATRON OF HUSBANDRY, GIVES UP THAT INALIENABLE RIGHT AND DUTY WHICH BELONGS TO EVERY AMERICAN CITIZEN, TO TAKE A PROPER INTEREST IN THE POLITICS OF ONE'S COUNTRY. ON THE CONTRARY, IT IS RIGHT FOR EVERY MEMBER TO DO ALL IN HIS OR HER POWER, LEGITIMATELY, TO INFLUENCE FOR GOOD THE ACTION OF ANY POLITICAL PARTY TO WHICH HE OR SHE BELONGS. IT IS RESERVED BY EVERY PATRON, AS THE RIGHT OF A FREE CITIZEN TO AFFILIATE WITH ANY PARTY THAT WILL BEST CARRY OUT HIS OR HER PRINCIPLES.

Grange Declaration of Purposes



NATIONAL GRANGE PRESIDENT ADVOCATES FOR 'STRONGER TOMORROW'

by Matthew Weaver

Originally published in the [Capital Press](#)

SPOKANE — Christine “Chris” Hamp recently visited three North Carolina farms as part of her duties as National Grange president.

One farm rotated between raising corn, soybeans, cotton, tobacco and peanuts. The next had pivoted from Christmas trees to shipping wreathes worldwide. The third farm milked a thousand dairy goats twice a day; kept 200 Black Angus and was contracted to provide 2,500 weaner pigs a week.

“Three totally different operations, all with multiple generations that are engaged in the operation,” Hamp said.

The Grange is a nonprofit grassroots community organization advocating for rural America and farming communities.

Hamp wants to be sure that the Grange’s focus and policies allow farmers, their children and grandchildren to continue in the face of heavy regulations, estate taxes and other challenges.

“The goal every single day is for the Grange to be stronger tomorrow than it is today,” she said. “Every single action we take as an organization needs to have a purpose, it needs to be relevant. And it needs to resonate not only with our current members, but it needs to resonate with those folks who aren’t members yet.”

‘Creating calm out of chaos’

Hamp, 57, stood in the middle of the 20-acre property outside of Spokane that she and husband Duane purchased in 2021.

She spent more than 30 years in state and local government, retiring in early 2023.

She originally planned to be a city manager. During the fire storms of 1994, she got involved with state emergency management part-time and fell in love with the fire service.

She particularly enjoyed being on the incident management team.

“It’s creating calm out of chaos,” she said. “It’s going into communities that have been absolutely devastated and finding a way to help, getting their feet back on the ground.”

She’s been in Grange even longer.



Christine “Chris” Hamp, president of the National Grange, stands in her backyard outside of Spokane the morning of May 29. Hamp’s priorities include increasing membership and advocacy as she works to usher the long-time organization into a “stronger tomorrow.”

Photo by Matthew Weaver for Capital Press

She is a fourth-generation member, growing up on a dairy farm originally homesteaded by her great-grandfather in Monroe, Wash.

When she was 5, she joined Tualco Junior Grange #341, and then Tualco Grange #284. She was elected Grange national president in November 2023.

“There’s not very many days in my entire life that I haven’t thought about or somehow been impacted by the Grange,” Hamp said. “The commitment has to be to leave it better than I found it.”

Membership on the rise

There are about 1,400 local Grange halls, and 140,000 members nationwide. While many civic and social organizations have seen massive losses over the past decades, the Grange has experienced the opposite, with a net gain in membership for 2022 and 2023, and holding steady in 2025.

Another net gain is predicted for 2025, said Phil Vonada, National Grange communications director.

Membership was highest in the 1870s, when nearly every farmer was a Grange member, Vonada said.

Hamp uses the expression: “This is not your grandpa’s Grange.”

“In grandpa’s Grange, people had more time than money,” she said. “A lot of these Granges, every project

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GRANGE QUILTS TAKE FLIGHT

submitted by Peggy Johnston
Burns Grange #160 (MI)

Early this year, Naomi Fletcher, a member of Michigan's Burns Grange #160, made a request on Facebook for patriotic quilts or lap robes to present to the ladies of the Upper Peninsula Honor Flight, Mission XXVI, known as the "Women of Valor" flight.

Another Grange member, Fran Longsdorf, went to work making quilts, either sewn or crocheted. Additional Grange participants included Sharon Popler, who made some lap robes, and Peggy Johnston, who purchased material for Fran to make more quilts and who also donated a quilt that had been presented to her brother several months before his death. The total donation was 15 quilts and lap robes from Burns Grange #160.

The Upper Peninsula Honor Flight was the first Honor Flight just for women in the UP, and the second ever in Michigan. This event was held on May 21, 2025, with 166 women participating—the largest all-female honor flight in



Members of Burns Grange #160 (MI) pose with some of the quilts and lap robes created and donated to the Upper Peninsula Honor Flight "Women of Valor."

Photo provided

U.S. history.

They had a very long day, departing from Escanaba, MI, and flying to Washington, D.C., where they visited numerous sites, received honors, and were treated to thousands of "Thank you for your service" comments. Then, upon returning to Escanaba, each

was presented with a handmade quilt.

These quilts were made and donated by many individuals, organizations, and groups across the United States. Burns Grange was honored to be included among them, thanking our brave women for their service.

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and ideas to...**

GRANGE  *Today!*
<http://grange.biz/grangetodaysubmit>

GRANGE TRADITIONS...

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We're kicking off our culinary celebration of America's 250th with a flavorful tribute from Lois Barber, a member of Gardner Grange #68 (KS) and chairperson of the Grange America's 250th Workgroup.

Lois has shared a delightful selection of picnic-perfect recipes—just in time for National Picnic Month

this July! These nostalgic dishes come straight from the ***Kansas State Grange 1940 Cookbook***, lovingly compiled by the “Women’s Work Committee.” Each recipe is a delicious taste of history, capturing the spirit of summertime gatherings and the enduring legacy of Grange home cooks.

Recipes from the Heartland

Barbecued Spareribs

2 pounds pork spareribs	1 1/2 teaspoons salt
2 onions	1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1/2 cup catsup	1 cup water

Use a heavy kettle with well fitted lid, putting one half the ribs in the bottom of the kettle. Cover with a layer of finely cut onion and one half of the sauce made from the rest of the ingredients mixed together. Add the other half of the spareribs, onion, and sauce in the same way. Cover and bake in an oven at 350 degrees for two hours. Serve with hominy.

Pea Salad

1 can peas	1 small onion
1 cup cheese	2 hard boiled eggs
6 small sweet pickles	

Drain liquid from peas. Dice eggs, onion, pickles, and cheese. Then combine and add salad dressing {your favorite mayonnaise} as desired.

Marshmallow Delight

1/2 pound colored marshmallows	1 pint whipping cream
1 1/2 cups diced pineapple	2 tablespoons sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla	

Cut marshmallows in quarters, add pineapple and place in covered container in ice box over night. Whip cream, adding sugar and vanilla, fold this mixture into the marshmallows & pineapple. Pour into freezing tray and allow to partially freeze.

'STRONGER TOMORROW'

Continued from page 3

was done by the membership. Need a new roof? Members showed up Saturday morning, worked all day. Maybe some of the women were in the kitchen making lunch and dinner. Over and over, everything that happened was done with your own hands."

Dues were suppressed because members paid with their labor in many cases. Today, most people would say that time is their most precious commodity, Hamp said.

"Our members don't have a ton of time; that's not the resource that they have to give," she said. "What we do ask them to do, we have got to make sure it's on point – that the meetings are relevant and don't go for hours and hours."

Hamp envisions a rural-centric conference that encompasses all the important issues – commodities, education, health care, transportation, infrastructure and insurance.

She challenges members to invite new folks into their Grange halls. That includes mentoring and preparing the next group of members, she said.

"This is why we need you, and why you need the Grange," she said. "They can't be the best-kept secret."

Leadership style

Hamp balances the Grange's history and traditions with a "fresh and clear vision of what our future can be," said Joe Stefenoni, a National Grange board member and president of the California Grange.

"Chris is a consummate teacher," he said. "If you want to know something, she is more than willing to bring you into that circle

to teach and to grow that new leadership."

Policy recommendations are adopted in local Granges, passed by state Granges and moved to the National Grange, which advocates in Washington, D.C. with Congress and other federal agencies.

Hamp has embraced that bottom-up model, said Beth Westbrook, a member of the Grange's [A]dvocacy board.

"She's a good listener," Westbrook said. "She's the type of leader that says, 'Here's my vision. What are your thoughts about it?' She allows things to be tweaked and evolved, until she has consensus."

Grange members are responding to the opportunities Hamp is presenting, Westbrook said.

"She has the ability to mobilize people to start solving the problems," she said. "It's her firewoman hat she's wearing at that point."

Advocacy

Hamp has written opinions about a variety of key topics as president, including investment in rural healthcare, rural broadband and the farm bill.

She believes advocacy will be the new big draw to the organization.

"I think a lot of Granges have gotten away from it," she said. "A lot of Granges are not known for their advocacy work, they're known for their community service work."

Some folks believe advocacy is harder, don't think anyone would listen to them or dread a confrontational conversation.

"Standing behind the counter

and serving pancakes, it's kind of hard to get somebody's tail knotted up," she said. "But if we sit down and start talking about policy, people get a little itchy about that."

Advocacy means speaking up for those three-generation farm families and saying, "This is why we do it," she said. "So they can continue to live the life the way they've done it for generations. That has got to be doable."

Favorite memories

"When you talk to the grandpas, the thing that gets the sparkle in their eye is, they're talking about the dance, how they met Grandma in the parking lot," Hamp said. "Everything that brings that sparkle to their eye is some of the shenanigans and fun – that's where they went to have their social piece."

Somewhere along the way, a lot of the fun disappeared, she said.

"All of a sudden, people are thinking Grange is supposed to be serious business, and we can't do that," she said. "I've been through our bylaws and there's nothing in there that says we can't have fun while we get this work done."

For the first time, the Grange national convention Nov. 8-16 will be on a cruise ship, departing from Miami, Fla., to the ABC islands in the Caribbean.

Hamp's two-year term will end at that meeting. It's up to the delegates to re-nominate her.

"I serve at the pleasure – if they like what we're doing, then great," she said. "And if they don't, then that's perfectly fine, too."

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RURAL LIFE INITIATIVE GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE ON JULY 31



On June 24, the Rural Life Initiative (RLI) officially launched nationwide, with Granges having the opportunity to apply for one of 32 available grants.

The RLI supports creative, community-driven projects that improve life in rural and small-town America. Whether your Grange wants to host a health and wellness fair, run a youth leadership camp, preserve a local agricultural tradition, or start a program that builds resilience in your area, this grant can help bring your vision to life.

Grants available include:

- **Thirty (30) \$1,000 grants** for projects that can be completed and reported on by September 30
- **Two (2) \$5,000 grants** for projects that can be completed and reported on by December 31

State and Community/Subordinate Granges of all shapes and sizes are welcome to apply for these grants, as long as they meet the following criteria:

- You must include at least one partner organization beyond your Grange.
- You must submit a current membership list with the application proposal.
- You have the flexibility to choose topics based on local needs, but:
 - Projects cannot involve building improvements or equipment purchases.
 - Projects must focus on recruiting and engaging new members.
 - Projects must connect to at least one [Project Sustenance](#) pillar (Food Security, Community and personal resilience, Self-sustainability). *Tip: Watch the [Introducing Project Sustenance webinar](#) for more information on these topics.*

“We are excited to see what Granges will create for their communities,” said National Grange President Christine Hamp. “The flexibility of this grant cycle encourages Granges to truly think outside of the box and the Grange ‘norms.’ I look forward to seeing the dynamic events and powerful programs that this grant helps make possible.”

All applications - for both the \$1,000 and \$5,000 grant - are due by July 31. Even if you’re still finalizing details, don’t wait! A well-developed idea and a committed team are the foundation. The application is straightforward, and support is available from National Grange staff if you have questions or need guidance.

Let’s work together to build stronger, more resilient rural communities. We encourage all Granges—large or small, urban or rural—to apply and make a lasting impact.

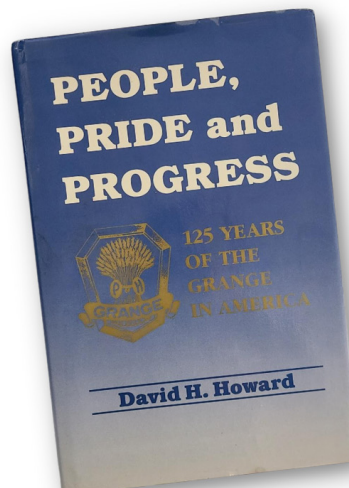
More information about the RLI, links to the webinars, and the application are all available at <https://www.nationalgrange.org/rural-life-initiative>. If you have questions, please contact rurallifeinitiative@grange.org.

Don’t miss your chance—submit your application today!



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'STRONGER TOMORROW'

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Hamp's own favorite Grange memories harken back to when she was a kid.

The Monroe Grange hall was an old schoolhouse with a crawlspace that the youth would set up as a Halloween haunted house.

"It was just a dirt floor, musty and damp and cobwebs everywhere – it was perfect for that," Hamp said. "We'd be down there for a couple of weeks, scurrying around and dragging crap in and making this walk people would have to go through."

At the same time, Hamp says, they were learning about working together. How to vote in favor of or against something, even if it was to vote against something your best friend suggested. How to decide in a meeting what to do with the money you raised. How to be a good neighbor. How to be a good citizen. The importance of being part of the process.

"It's all these things about life that you learned," Hamp said. "I just happened to learn them in Grange."

LAST CALL TO SET SAIL FOR NATIONAL CONVENTION!



The countdown is on! Our **159th Annual National Grange Convention** aboard the *Carnival Horizon* is almost completely booked—and this is your absolute last chance to join us for this unforgettable experience at sea.

There are **only 30 cabins left** in our Grange block - the last remaining cabins on the ship!

- 10 Interior
- 10 Ocean View
- 10 Balcony

Once these final cabins are claimed, no additional space will be available—and the opportunity to be part of this unique convention will be gone for good.

The deadline to book is August 1, but we don't expect these cabins to last that long. If you're planning to attend, we strongly encourage you to secure your

spot today.

You will soon receive a reminder from Carnival when it is time to pay your final balance on your room.

Important Reminder - Register!

If you've already booked your cabin, don't forget to register for the convention itself! Only registered attendees will have access to Grange-focused events and programming onboard. Registration also unlocks exclusive perks and experiences you won't want to miss.

Don't forget - during registration, you also have the option to purchase limited-edition convention "swag" items, including a beach towel, tote, shirt, and insulated tumbler.

Join us as we celebrate Grange fellowship, leadership, and learning - all on the high seas!

Register, learn more about convention, and get information on booking your cabin at <https://www.nationalgrange.org/159ngconvention>.

IT'S TIME TO...

**REGISTER FOR THE
2025 NATIONAL GRANGE CONVENTION ~ AT SEA!**

OPINION

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vital programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program, working to ensure food security for low-income families, and protecting our invaluable natural resources, to supporting crucial environmental protections like the Clean Air Act, the Grange is working tirelessly to give the people who are too often ignored a fighting chance.

Unfortunately, these efforts alone are not enough. This ongoing fight demands a collective awakening. Families, friends, and neighbors need to join the Grange in speaking up and using their voices.

Because silence is no longer an option.

At its core, the Grange's fundamental mission is to fight for its members, and more importantly, its neighbors and everyone who benefits from the prosperity and backbreaking work of rural America. When we are all under attack, facing unprecedented dangers, we have a profound duty to raise our collective voices and stand together. The Grange has always been more than an organization, it is

a community. One that is built on a shared identity rooted in support, hard work, and the unshakable belief that we are stronger together. It is time for collective action, to set aside our differences and work together. Channeling the spirit the Grange has embodied for almost 160 years. It is time to protect our rural areas and the resilient people who call rural America home.

It is crucial to urge your representatives to support legislation like the farm bill, specifically the chapters and provisions that support and fund conservation practices. Stand up, if not for your neighbors, then for yourself. The time for silence is over. Rural America depends on the voices of its community to secure its future.

Join the Grange in fighting this crucial and never-ending fight. Join your community because when you find your people, you find your purpose. And the Grange is committed to never giving up.



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delivery by mid-August

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NATIONAL GRANGE

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