



NATIONAL GRANGE ANNOUNCES RURAL LIFE INITIATIVE: “BRIDGING THE GAPS” GRANTS

\$40,000 in grants available for Community and Pomona Granges

by Philip J Vonada
National Grange Communications Director

The National Grange continues its commitment to revitalizing rural communities with the launch of a new competitive grant cycle through the [Rural Life Initiative](#).

On January 13, during a webinar entitled “From Ideas to Impact,” National Grange President Christine Hamp announced the start of the “Bridging the Gaps” grant cycle through the Rural Life Initiative (RLI), a program designed in partnership with Grange Advocacy to strengthen rural communities through health, wellness, agriculture, and community projects and events.

Bridging the Gaps allows Community and Pomona Granges to identify unmet, underserved, or under-attended needs in their areas, and to create projects, programs, or events to assist in meeting those needs.

“We want to help give Granges the results to show that they can be a change agent in their communities through partnerships that haven’t been possible before,” said Hamp. “This is about building capacity and resiliency in local communities.”

To date, more than \$175,000 has been distributed to State and Community Granges through previous Rural Life Initiative grants and programs.

The grant is as follows:

\$1,000 Bridging the Gap Grants (40 available)

- Applications reviewed as received. **Must apply by February 28, 2026.**
- Projects must be completed by **August 31, 2026**, with final reports submitted by September 30, 2026.

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RURAL LIFE INITIATIVE: BRIDGING THE GAPS

WHAT IS THE RURAL LIFE INITIATIVE?

The Rural Life Initiative is a flagship program of the National Grange, created to empower community-driven projects that strengthen and enrich life in rural and small-town America. Originally piloted in 2024 through seven State Granges and a holiday mini-grant program, the initiative expanded nationwide in 2025, opening the door for all Granges to get involved and make a meaningful local impact. **To date, more than \$175,000 has been granted to local Granges and projects.**

HOW CAN I RECEIVE A GRANT?

In January 2026, a new grant cycle, "**Bridging the Gaps**," was announced, with forty (40) \$1,000 grants available to Community or Pomona Granges who wish to create or expand an event or project that educates their community and addresses a local disparity.

- Grants are open to Community Granges or Pomona Granges
- All grants require a simple application form, due by **February 28, 2026**.
- Grants must include at least one non-Grange **partner organization**.
- Projects must educate the community and address a disparity their community faces.
 - Granges may choose their own projects, but funding is meant to support the project or event, and should not be used for Grange Hall improvements or supplies that do not directly support the event.
 - Grant may be used for new events OR to expand upon a pre-existing event.
- Projects must be completed by **August 31, 2026**, with final reports due by **September 30, 2026**.
- Projects must include a plan for recruiting and gaining members
- Additional can be earned for documented membership growth.

Grant applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. All Granges will be notified in mid-March with fund distribution by **March 31, 2026**.

ACCESS GRANT APPLICATIONS: www.nationalgrange.org/rural-life-initiative

www.nationalgrange.org



BRIDGING THE GAPS

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While the grant amount is fixed, additional incentives are available for each verifiable new member Granges gain through their projects.

Because RLI aims to build stronger communities across the country, there are a few main components to the grants:

- Events must address a disparity seen within your community.
 - The goal of the Rural Life Initiative: Bridging the Gaps grant cycle is to get Granges active, encourage flexibility, and help place Granges at the forefront of educating the community and addressing and mitigating a local disparity within your community.
- You must include at least one partner organization beyond your Grange.
- You must submit a current membership list with the application proposal using the template provided by the National Grange.
- You have the flexibility to choose topics based on local needs, but:
 - Projects cannot involve building improvements or equipment purchases unless they're essential to carrying out the project.
 - All projects must include a plan for recruiting and engaging new members.

"We have seen Granges come alive through the previous grant cycles," said Hamp. "Granges are thinking bigger and getting engaged in their communities again

at a time when this kind of connection and involvement is crucial. They are connecting with each other and building bridges to future success and lasting impact. The Rural Life Initiative is an essential lifeline for community resiliency in towns of all sizes nationwide."

During the January 13 webinar, presenters Beth Westbrook and Nona Bear outlined several ways the **Bridging the Gaps** grant could be used by Granges, walking participants through every step. They encouraged attendees to "dream big" and think outside of the box.

The tips and tricks presented also encouraged Granges to pursue other community-based grants, always aiming for success.

"By giving Granges—and Grangers—the tools to succeed, the permission to think big, and some grant funding to get started, we are sure to see meaningful, engaging, life-changing programs and events," said Nona Bear, one of the webinar presenters and a longtime advocate for rural communities.

Two additional webinars in the **Strategies to Strengthen Our Communities** series will be held on February 10 - "Lessons Learned: Success Stories from 2025," and March 10 - "Engaging New Energy."

"We encourage you to stay engaged - you never know what's coming next," teased Hamp.

To watch the full announcement, visit [the National Grange YouTube channel](#), view the full grant requirements, and submit your applications at the [Rural Life Initiative page](#) on the National Grange website.

STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITIES

A National Grange Webinar Series



LESSONS LEARNED: SUCCESS STORIES FROM 2025

FEBRUARY

10

60 MINUTES

Hear directly from Granges funded in the 2025 RLI grant rounds as they share achievements, challenges, and insights to inspire your next community-focused event.

ENGAGING NEW ENERGY

MARCH

10

60 MINUTES

Join Amanda Brozana to explore strategies for welcoming and involving new members who join through the Rural Life Initiative, fostering active participation, lasting connections, and stronger, more vibrant Grange communities.

Register: <https://grange.biz/RLIwebinar>

All webinars will begin at 8:30pm ET / 5:30pm PT.

Can't make it? Recordings will be available following the event.

HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF THE GRANGE

National Grange launches member survey - all members should be part of the process

For more than 150 years, the Grange has been guided by the voices of its members and supporters. Today, that tradition continues—and we're asking you to be part of it.

The National Grange is conducting a brief 12-question survey to help inform the direction, priorities, and overall look of the organization in the months and years ahead. Your feedback will directly guide how we tell our story, connect with communities, and ensure the Grange remains relevant, welcoming, and impactful for future generations.

To ensure candid and thoughtful feedback, the National Grange is working with an outside consultant to administer this survey. No names or identifying information will be tied to individual responses, and results will be shared only in aggregate. Your honesty and perspective are essential—and fully protected.

As a thank-you for participating, survey respondents will be entered into a random drawing for the following:

- **Ten (10) one-year subscriptions to *Good Day!* magazine**, celebrating rural life and Granges nationwide
- **Two (2) \$250 donations to your Grange**, helping strengthen outreach and support meaningful community programming

Whether you are a longtime member or someone interested in the Grange's mission and future, your voice matters. We encourage you to take a few minutes to complete the survey and help shape what comes next. Please also pass this survey on to Grange members who may not have seen it on social media or in this newsletter.

All survey responses must be received **by January 31**, so please do not delay in participating. The survey can be found here: <https://grange.biz/survey> or by scanning the QR code below. Your thoughtful responses will help guide the Grange's missions and outreach.

Thank you for being part of the process—and part of the Grange.



NEW NATIONAL JUNIOR GRANGE DIRECTOR APPOINTED

by Philip J Vonada

National Grange Communications Director



The National Grange is pleased to welcome Katie Girtler as the new National Junior Grange Director, a role she steps into with deep enthusiasm, creativity, and a strong commitment to young members and the families who support them.

Katie is a member and President of Ono Grange #445 in California, a Grange that was rededicated in December 2024 after losing its historic hall in the Zogg Fire. Her Grange journey began not in

childhood, but through family and community.

"I grew up just a block away from the Danville Grange and never really knew what a Grange was," Katie shared. "It wasn't until my mom and stepdad were invited to Ono Grange that I finally experienced it for myself."

That invitation proved transformative. Shortly after moving to Ono, Katie attended her first Grange event, Cowboy Santa, with her young child.

"I still marvel at the sense of wonder I saw in my then two-year-old's eyes," she said. "That feeling of welcome and joy really stuck with me."

Katie became a member in 2019 and quickly stepped into leadership,



Katie Girtler, President of Ono Grange #445 in California, has been appointed as the National Junior Grange Director.

Photo provided

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JUNIOR GRANGE DIRECTOR

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helping organize community events and building programs that brought families together. Today, Grange life is deeply woven into her family's everyday experiences. She and her husband are raising three children, Joyce, Garth, and Annette, all of whom are involved in Grange activities.

"As a family, we love adventure," Katie said. "We hike, travel, garden, raise chickens, and spend a lot of time outdoors. The Grange fits naturally into that lifestyle."

One recent family trip turned into a creative Grange project, as they documented 15 Grange halls across California and neighboring states in just two days.

"We made it a state geo-Grange project," she explained. "It was such a fun way to connect our kids to the bigger Grange story."

Professionally, Katie brings a background in photography and graphic design, along with a passion for storytelling and advocacy. She is especially interested in helping youth understand that their ideas and voices matter.

"Thinking on a national level can feel really big and unattainable," Katie said. "I've felt that way myself. But the Grange taught me that all our voices are heard, and making a difference can start with simply sharing the spark of an idea."

As National Junior Grange Director, Katie's first priority is listening. She plans to connect with state and local Junior Grange leaders to better understand their needs and challenges.

"I want to ask leaders what they're facing and then figure out how I can be of service," she said. "Every community is different, and I want to meet people where they are."

She is also eager to encourage participation in the National Junior Grange Program Book and highlight new age-appropriate opportunities designed to excite and engage young members.

"My hope is that every Junior Grange leader feels confident encouraging at least one submission," Katie said. "We've opened new programs to make participation more accessible, and I want kids to feel excited about being part of it."

Looking ahead, Katie is enthusiastic about introducing new activities, including a historical craftsmanship project tied to America's 250th anniversary. The project invites Junior members to create feather quills, explore calligraphy, and learn about foundational American documents.

"It's a hands-on way to connect history, creativity, and civic understanding," she explained. "I want kids to feel curious and proud of the stories that shaped our country."

Katie believes Junior Grange plays a vital role in



Katie, with her husband Mac, and kids Joyce, Garth, and Annette.
Photo provided

building confidence, leadership skills, and lasting relationships.

"This program gives kids a leg up," she said. "They learn how to speak in front of others, how to work with adults, and how to build relationships with elders in their communities who genuinely want to support them."

She also sees Junior Grange as a bridge between rural and non-rural youth.

"I grew up in a suburb that used to be a walnut orchard," Katie shared. "Even then, I knew I wanted a ranch. I think it's important to foster that spark in kids, even if they don't grow up in a rural area."

National Grange President Christine Hamp welcomed Katie into the role, saying, "Katie brings a thoughtful, family-centered approach to youth leadership that reflects the very best of the Grange. Her passion for Junior members, creativity, and advocacy will help ensure our youngest Grangers feel supported, inspired, and empowered."

For Katie, investing in youth is both practical and deeply personal.

"Sometimes things are hard, but the hard things shape you into strong, confident adults," she said. "Our kids hear more than we think, and they want to help. Advocacy starts by encouraging their voices and letting their ideas take root."

As she begins her term, Katie is excited to work alongside Junior Grange leaders, parents, and members across the country.

"Together, we'll focus on sparking excitement, imagination, and leadership," she said. "I want our youth to feel confident leading us into the future, whether that path stays within the Grange or goes beyond it."

More information will be available about the 2026 Program Book soon - check nationaljuniorgrange.org.



NATIONAL GRANGE

OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

View from the Hill



NATIONAL GRANGE POLICY UPDATES & ISSUE NEWS

January 2026

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

Dueling plans for more farmer aid

Ranking Democrat Angie Craig (MN) and several of her colleagues on the House Agriculture Committee plan to introduce sweeping legislation that would provide another \$17 billion in economic relief to financially strained farmers, delay cost changes in SNAP food aid, and end the administration's across-the-board tariffs. Meanwhile, Republican Senators John Boozman (AR), Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, and John Hoeven (ND), Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, have been discussing a \$15 billion relief package with House Agriculture Committee Chairman Glenn "G.T." Thompson (R-PA). Their proposal would also raise USDA-backed farm operating and ownership loans. These proposals come as Congress is having difficulties completing the farm bill process after including the farm bill commodity and SNAP titles in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. Congress hasn't passed a comprehensive, five-year farm bill since 2018 amid partisan fighting.

President signs whole milk in schools bill

President Trump has signed the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act passed by Congress last month. The law will let schools serve flavored and unflavored reduced-fat and whole milk, and it overturns a 2010 law that mandated flavored milk be fat-free and traditional milk be 1% fat at most. This action has been a long-term priority for the National Grange..

Dietary guidelines recommend "real food"

The new edition of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2025-2030, released in early January, recommends the return to more traditional foods and stresses that Americans should avoid "highly processed foods" and added sugars, especially sugar-sweetened beverages. The Guidelines recommend eating a variety of animal and plant proteins, including eggs, poultry, seafood, and red meat, as well as beans, peas, lentils, legumes, nuts, seeds, and soy. The first guidelines were published in 1980 and are a joint project of the Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services.

Food for Peace headed to USDA

The Food for Peace foreign assistance program will be transferred from the State Department to the USDA by the Trump Administration. Congressional offices were notified of the change in mid-January, and interagency agreements have been signed. Food for Peace has been housed at the State Department since July, following the shuttering of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) amid allegations of inefficiencies.

USDA to set foreign land reporting standards

The Department of Agriculture is seeking public comment on ways to strengthen reporting of foreign ownership of agricultural land. Foreign acquisitions of agricultural land in the United States increased from about 600,000 acres per year (2013-2017) to 2.6 million acres per year (2017-2023). USDA's policy goal is to find the best way to get correct, comprehensive, verifiable descriptions or geospatial maps of the agricultural land held by foreign interests. A Government Accountability Office (GAO) report found that USDA staff failed to sufficiently verify the accuracy of foreign land ownership data and were slow to share the data with the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, which oversees foreign acquisitions of assets considered important to U.S. security.

AG WORKFORCE

Is Congress serious about immigration law reform?

Although immigration remains as politically polarizing as ever, several lawmakers from both parties say the moment may be right to reform laws governing foreign agricultural workers. Senator Amy Klobuchar. (D-MN), ranking Democrat on the Senate Agriculture Committee, says she recently met with several conservative members of the House and found common ground on the ag worker issue. House Agriculture Committee Chairman Glenn "G.T." Thompson (R-PA) has said the border had long been controlled by cartels, but is now under control by the United States, making a conversation about reform possible. Thompson hopes to introduce an ag worker reform package in February. According to the Department of Homeland Security, border crossings were down 93% during the first year of the Trump administration's return to office. Passing a legal, workable, common-sense pathway to secure an ag workforce for farmers and ranchers has been an annual priority for the Grange.

HEALTH CARE

Grange pushes for early cancer detection

The National Grange has been a long-time, strong supporter of congressional passage of the Multi-Cancer Early Detection Screening Coverage Act (MCED), including this year's bills H.R. 842 and S. 339. In late December, the Grange joined the nation's leading cancer advocate organizations in a display in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Washington Post* to urge Congress to finally pass MCED and authorize Medicare to cover this simple blood test that detects dozens of cancers. In mid-January, these supporters received word that the MCED provision had been included in negotiations for the January

30 government funding package proposal. National Grange President Christine Hamp followed up with personal emails to the top health care staff of both the Senate and House leadership, stressing that the grassroots rural and small-town membership of the National Grange urges Congressional leadership to keep MCED in the January 30 government funding package. Hamp further pointed out that for rural communities now without oncologists and cancer centers, early detection is not a convenience; it is a lifeline.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Support for first responder network

National Grange President Christine Hamp has firsthand experience as a first responder firefighter. Drawing on that experience, she submitted a statement of support to a Senate hearing on the reauthorization of the federal public safety communications system, FirstNet. In her statement, she called the Senator's attention to her op-ed in the [Spokesman-Review](#), which gave a concrete example of FirstNet preventing a tragedy in a rural area. "When every second counts, there is no substitute," she said.

TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board to eliminate barriers to rail service

The Surface Transportation Board has released a proposed rule to repeal regulatory restrictions on access to competitive freight rail service, including reciprocal switching. The proposal was greeted enthusiastically by shippers, who say that by eliminating outdated rules, the Board will carry out Congress's clear directive to allow reciprocal switching when needed to ensure freight rail competition. Reciprocal switching gives shippers who are captive to a single railroad access to a second carrier at a nearby interchange.

Freight rail merger filed

The Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern railroads have now formally submitted merger documents to the Surface Transportation Board. Such a merger would create the nation's first coast-to-coast freight rail company. Shippers are leery of the merger that would give a single railroad control of nearly half of all U.S. rail traffic. Agricultural organizations respond that farmers already operate on razor-thin margins and worry that consolidated railroads will adversely impact shippers and customers who depend upon rail service to move agricultural commodities, fertilizer, ag chemicals, fuel, and other essential supplies. The Surface Transportation Board unanimously rejected the initial merger application after finding the submission complete. The railroads are allowed to revise and resubmit their application.

OF INTEREST...

Lawmakers to leave Congress

Over 50 Republican and Democratic members of the House of Representatives (30 Republicans and 23 Democrats), frustrated with a dysfunctional Congress, have announced they will head for the exits. Those leaving include conservatives, progressives,

and moderates. This development scrambles the calculus on both sides of the aisle ahead of the midterm elections.

2026 will recognize women farmers around the globe

After years of discussion, it's finally official: 2026 is the [International Year of the Woman Farmer](#). Everywhere you go this year, from farm groups, trade associations, state departments of agriculture, and Congress, you're likely to hear about recognition for women who lead from the farm to the agribusiness boardroom. A U.S.-sponsored resolution honoring female farmers was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly, with 123 countries cosponsoring. A handful of women farmers serving in Congress are expected to introduce a resolution in Congress soon. According to the USDA Census of Agriculture, 58% of all farms had at least one female producer.

VIEW FROM THE HILL

is written and compiled by

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PERSPECTIVES

"There is a fountain of youth: it is your mind, your talents, the creativity you bring to your life and the lives of the people you love. When you learn to tap this resource, you will have truly defeated age."

- Sophia Loren, Italian actress and Oscar winner

"The failure to invest in youth reflects a lack of compassion and a colossal failure of common sense."

- Coretta Scott King, American author and activist

"Youth has no age."

- Pablo Picasso, Spanish artist

"Forty is the old age of youth. Fifty is the youth of old age."

- Victor Hugo, French author, activist, and politician

"You are never too old to become young."

- Mae West, American actress, writer, and singer

CELEBRATE THE SEMIQUIN WITH AMERICA250: A GUIDEBOOK FOR GRANGES

by Amanda Brozana

National Grange Membership & Leadership Development Director



This year marks America's semiquincentennial, an event many will remember for decades. Across the country, towns and organizations are already shaping events, programs, and initiatives that honor the past while looking

forward to the future.

Now, the ***How a Uniquely American Institution Celebrates America250: A Guidebook for Granges*** is available just in time to help local Granges around the nation create meaningful, memorable ways to mark the United States' 250th anniversary. Designed as a practical, flexible resource, the 68-page guide offers a wealth of ideas and resources to help Granges plan celebrations that reflect both national pride and the unique character of their communities.

It includes sections on publicity strategies that help ensure local efforts get noticed by neighbors, media, and partners; sample judging rubrics for contests; and adaptable ideas that any Grange can tailor to fit its traditions and membership.

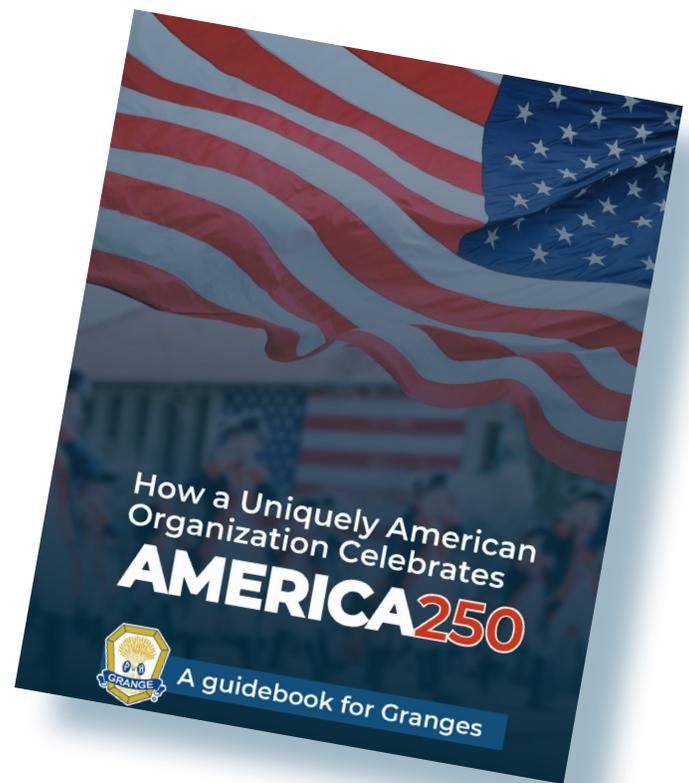
Unlike many event blueprints that expire once the confetti is swept away, the *Guidebook* is intentionally built to live beyond 2026. Nothing in the guide is locked to a single date or theme, making it a reference that can support future programming long after the nation's milestone year has passed, and leaning into the Grange's community-responsive nature.

"America's 250th anniversary is a rare opportunity for communities to come together and reflect on who we are and where we're headed," said Christine Hamp, President of the National Grange. "This *Guidebook* is about giving local Granges the tools to help their neighbors and communities not just observe this milestone but actively participate in it - together."

For many Granges, the anniversary provides a chance not only to commemorate the founding of our nation but also to reinforce the Grange's longstanding commitment to American ideals such as cooperative community service, education, and civic engagement. Whether your Grange chooses to host historical lectures, youth contests, flag-raising ceremonies, community dinners or creative storytelling projects, the guide anchors those efforts in both historical context and practical planning advice.

As local organizations across America plan parades, exhibits, service projects, and reflections on heritage and identity, the message from the Grange guide is clear: there is no single right way to celebrate. Use the guide as a starting point, then make your celebration your own.

The guide is available in the Resources section of the National Grange website at <https://grange.biz/America250>.



Submit your
stories, events,
and ideas to...

GRANGE 

Today!

<http://grange.biz/grangetodaysubmit>

JOIN THE GRANGE FOUNDATION'S COMMON ROUTES CHALLENGE

Through April, the Grange Foundation is encouraging members and friends of the Grange to celebrate unity through movement by participating in the [Common Routes: Choose Your Challenge](#) event.

This virtual -thon allows individuals to support the work of the Grange Foundation at the level and with the activity of their choice, from running a 10K to taking a few long Sunday drives. Pets and children can even take part!

"The idea is simple - use your time on the move to reflect on the impact the Grange has had on your life or community and share that with others," Grange Foundation Chairman John Benedik said. "You can choose how you want to participate, when you want to participate and in doing so, you'll move the Grange Foundation forward into 2026 and beyond."

Adult and Junior racers will receive a cooling towel and sticker pack. If you sign up a child under 5, you will receive a special waterproof "Baby's first 5k" sticker.

You can even choose to have your pets get in on the fun by signing them up to take part in the pup strut - though it's



open to any pet you'd like to participate. They will receive an event-branded pet bandana.

Racers are encouraged to have friends register and enjoy being on the move together, but they may also want to secure sponsors. By encouraging people who do not wish to race to sponsor you, you'll be helping the Foundation and entered into our contest for "biggest fundraisers." Just tell your friends and family to click the donate button on the website, select their amount and choose "Other" and enter your name under the On Behalf Of option.

To honor the idea that you can choose your challenge and move any way you'd like, we've also created a Sunday Driver

and passenger category. Sunday drivers will receive a keychain and sticker pack. Passengers will receive an event sticker pack.

Finally, if you don't want to race or drive but still wish to support the Grange Foundation and have your name added to the event supporters, you can register as a cheerleader.

Registration is open now through Grange Month (April)!

When you register however, you will receive a digital bib so you can show your support and participation on social media platforms. Print the bib and hang it at your hall or office to encourage others to take part. Swag items will be sent by mail.

"This is a great way to get a friend to support the Foundation and learn why the Grange is important to you while walking, running, biking, riding or doing any other type of movement that you choose," Grange Foundation Associate Amanda Brozana said. "No matter what mode of movement you choose, we challenge you to share the value of Grange with others through this event."

Register here: <https://runsignup.com/grangefoundation>

APPLY FOR THE ERNESTINE KEISER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



For the third year, the Grange Foundation is now accepting applications for the Ernestine Keiser Memorial Scholarship, an annual award that supports students who exemplify academic excellence, leadership, and a dedication to service.

Established in memory of Ernestine "Ernie" Keiser, this scholarship reflects her belief in education as a pathway to opportunity and her lifelong commitment to strengthening communities. Through this program, the Grange Foundation continues that legacy by investing directly in students who are preparing to make a positive impact in their hometowns and beyond.

The Ernestine Keiser Memorial Scholarship is open to Grange members who are in pursuing or enrolled in postsecondary education. Applicants should demonstrate strong character, involvement in community or civic life, and a clear commitment to personal growth through education.

Applications must include 2 letters of recommendation as well as an essay - so don't delay in getting started!

Application deadline: March 1, 2026

Learn more and apply: <https://grangefoundation.org/ernestine-memorial-scholarship/>

By supporting education and service-driven leadership, the Grange Foundation continues its mission to cultivate opportunity and resilience in rural and agricultural communities nationwide.



Recipes from the Heartland

The America's 250th Grange Workgroup is celebrating our country's 250th Anniversary by "throwing back" to some classic recipes from Grange cookbooks. Do you have favorite recipes that evoke the American spirit which you would like to see published again? Send them to Lew Gaskill at olgaskill@comcast.net. Please include which Grange cookbook your recipes come from.

This week's recipes comes from the "Men's Family Favorites" section of the **National Grange Family Cookbook** (1979) - here are some great ideas for your holiday table!

"Today, when people think of a man doing the cooking, they actually picture him over the charcoal grill. But, as the following recipes prove, Grange men - like most men - are capable of creating a great variety of tasty dishes. Let the man in your house cook for a change and treat you and the rest of the family to a delicious meal!"

Grilled Flank Steak

Recipe courtesy of Bill Steel
Potomac Grange #1

Yield: 3-5 servings

1 flank steak
1 cup salad oil
3/4 cup soy sauce
1/2 cup lemon juice
1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
1/4 cup prepared mustard
1 1/2 Tablespoons salt
1 teaspoon pepper
1 clove of garlic, sliced

Place steak in double plastic bags. Blend remaining ingredients; pour over steak. Marinate 3 to 4 hours or overnight, turning occasionally. Grill over hot coals for 10 to 15 minutes per side. Baste with sauce. Slice thin across the grain of the steak to serve.

Sauce may be stored in an airtight jar in refrigerator 3 to 4 weeks.



Blueberry Muffins

Recipe courtesy of B. Franklin Hayes
New Hampshire State Grange

Yield: 18 muffins

2 eggs, beaten
1 1/4 cups milk
1 teaspoon salt
2 Tablespoon melted shortening
1 cup blueberries
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 cup sugar
1 1/2 cup flour

Combine all ingredients in a bowl; mix well. Pour into hot well-greased muffin tins. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 to 25 minutes.



HOW TO LIVE TO BE 100 YEARS OLD

Courtesy of StatePoint

Living to 100 may sound extraordinary, but research suggests it's more achievable—and enjoyable—than many people think. Studies show the majority of centenarians rate their health as good, and large numbers of people in this age group are mobile, active and optimistic.

According to the American Medical Association, adopting these seven habits can improve longevity and quality of life:

1. Eat healthy. Think of food as medicine. Choose nutritious, whole foods. Eat more fruits that are dark in color – blue, purple and red – to get the most nutrients, as well as fiber-rich vegetables, especially non-starchy vegetables such as broccoli, carrots and leafy greens. Incorporate whole grains, nuts, seeds, lean meats and fish. Drink more water, or as an alternative, flavored or sparkling water with no added sugar.

Reduce your intake of sugar-sweetened beverages and unhealthy ultra-processed foods, especially those with added sodium and sugar. Drinking sugary beverages, even 100% fruit juices, is associated with a higher mortality risk, according to a study published in JAMA Network Open. Eat fewer processed meats, which tend to be high in fat and heavy on added salt and preservatives. Limit your intake of refined grains, such as breads, crackers, baked goods and white rice. Drink less alcohol.

2. Exercise. Adults should aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity weekly. A recent study published in JAMA found that putting down the television remote and walking can improve healthy aging – highlighting the importance of small everyday habits.

3. Get enough sleep. Adequate sleep improves memory, reduces stress, improves mood, and primes the body's natural defenses against disease. But sleep quality decreases with age. Improve your sleep quality by setting a regular bedtime and wake-up time, insulating your bedroom against noise, avoiding exercise within an hour of bedtime, maintaining a cool and dark bedroom, and limiting fluids within two hours of bedtime. Also avoid alcohol before bedtime and make your bedroom a tech-free zone as screen-time can impact your ability to fall asleep and stay asleep.

4. Live with purpose. A sense of purpose can lead to increased energy, motivation, emotional stability and resilience. Take time for self-reflection and try meditation or yoga. Prioritize your values and beliefs and put them into action toward a goal that's meaningful to you and benefits others.

5. Stay positive. To bust stress, take a break from decisions, connect with others, pet your dog or cat, write a to-do list (stick to three items), take time to recharge, laugh, sing, curb clutter,



Photo (c) Jacob Wackerhausen / iStock via Getty Images Plus

set boundaries, perform mindfulness exercises, practice gratitude, and seek help from a professional when stress becomes overwhelming.

6. Stay connected. Research shows that having social connections is a significant predictor of longevity and better physical, cognitive and mental health, while social isolation and loneliness are significant predictors of premature death and poor health. Unfortunately, there is a nationwide loneliness epidemic that medical experts consider a major public health concern. Combat loneliness with social clubs and community groups, or by taking up a hobby, learning something new or volunteering. If you're struggling with loneliness, reach out to a professional, your doctor, family member or friend. You can also call the 988 crisis helpline for support

7. Get screened. Schedule preventive care, tests and health screenings to help your doctor spot certain conditions before they become more serious. Your doctor can recommend needed tests based on your age, gender and health conditions – including colonoscopies, mammograms, gynecological and prostate exams, and vision screenings.

Today, there are many at-home screening options available. Some are more effective than others, and all work best – and minimize stress around results – when taken in consultation with a doctor.

For more resources on staying healthy, visit <http://www.ama-assn.org>.

“Everyone strives to live longer, but the goal should be to live as healthy as possible for as long as we live,” says AMA CEO John Whyte, MD, MPH. “Simple steps today – eating well, staying active, sleeping enough, and seeing your doctor – can add quality years, or even decades, to your life.”



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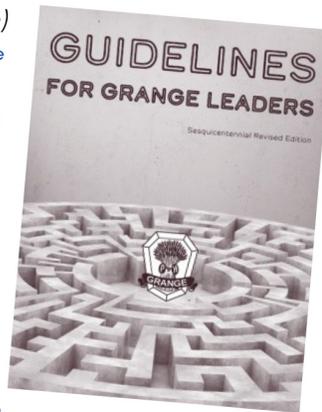
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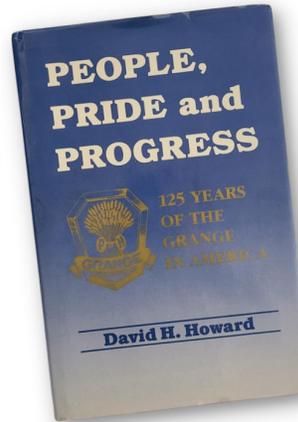
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