

## GRANGE SAVES COMMUNITY-FAVORITE MAPLE SYRUP FESTIVAL

submitted by Megan Stang  
Big Knob Grange #2008 (PA)

Beaver County, our home county, has been hosting a Maple Syrup Festival at a local park for 45 years. This year, they made the announcement that it was canceled, which caused a lot of disappointment and frustration in our community.

Quickly and quietly behind the scenes Big Knob Grange got to work to pull off our own Maple Syrup Festival. The idea felt like a natural fit for the Grange since the event is community and local agriculture focused. We host a few large events such as an annual 5-day Fair, a KCBS sanctioned BBQ competition, and an annual Pancake Benefit Dinner on Shrove Tuesday, so we felt confident in being able to execute such an event. Plus, we have the grounds and space to host it. We worked for 2 weeks learning anything and everything we could about pancakes, sausage, and syrup.

On February 18, 2026, the day after our Pancake Benefit Dinner, we made the public announcement that in just 60 days we would be hosting the first **Big Knob Grange Maple Syrup Festival** on April 18 & 19, 2026! It was a viral sensation. Within 48 hours our announcement post was shared on Facebook over 1,000 times and had 205,000 views on it.

Within those 60 days, there were many late-night meetings walking step-by-step through the whole process, analyzing the quantity needed for all supplies, the number of volunteers needed, and the pancake-to-syrup ratio. Members sampled various breakfast sausages from a local butcher, researched pancake mix, and learned all about buckwheat flour, and maple syrup.

We made the decision to purchase 40-gallon barrels of syrup and process/bottle it ourselves to serve at the festival and to sell bottles to take home. This led to getting inspected and licensed to sell maple syrup, then bottling over 200 gallons. We secured 70 handcraft vendors, ground our own buckwheat flour, booked four bands, lined up volunteers, hung banners, passed out flyers, ran gas lines for all the grills, were interviewed by local newspapers and radio



Volunteers served over 3,600 pancakes at the first-ever Big Knob Grange Maple Syrup Festival.

Photo provided

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# MAPLE SYRUP FESTIVAL *continued from page 1*

stations, learned how to make Maple Kettle Corn and Maple Cotton Candy to sell, created a corn pit for the kids to play in, and planned out a whole lot of other small details.

Beaver County decided to gift us with many supplies from their festival. It was a “passing of the torch” moment. This cut down on our initial expenses, but did add a lot more work to our plate, as we spent time loading and unloading cargo trailers filled with supplies including grills, batter dispensers, syrup bottles, paper products, spatulas, floor mats, popcorn machines, cotton candy machines, and a lot more.

There were doubters along the way who didn’t think we could host such a large event in such a short amount of time, that didn’t think we knew what we were doing, and that didn’t think we could get enough help to do it. The doubt was a great motivator.

The festival consisted of handcrafted vendors, local bands on the stage, a kids play area with a petting zoo and corn pit, Fort Macintosh reenactment group set up in the field, historical crafters doing demonstrations, buckwheat, corn meal, and wheat flour grinding and sales, maple kettle corn and maple cotton candy sales, Boy Scouts camping out on the grounds in between volunteering, and a Grange booth selling cookbooks and syrup.

The meal included the choice of buttermilk pancakes, buckwheat cakes, gluten free pancakes, maple flavored sausage, PA-sourced maple syrup, and a drink (coffee, tea, hot chocolate, water, chocolate milk, white milk, or orange juice). The pancakes were all-you-could-eat. We served guests in our steel building next to our Grange Hall, set up to seat 500 people at a time. All the cooking took place in our Grange kitchen and fair concession stand; there were seven grill tops making pancakes in the concession stand, four in the Grange kitchen, and one in our fair gyro booth making gluten-free pancakes. We had runners with hot boxes transferring the food to the serving line in the steel building.

In all, 3,600 meals were served that weekend! The relief and happiness in seeing a line of people before the doors opened on Saturday and Sunday was worth all the hard work. The grounds were busy, and there was so much infectious positive energy!



**Members of the Big Knob Grange Fair Committee were the driving force in ensuring a community-favorite event was able to continue on in a new format.** *Photo provided*

We received too many thank yous to count, so many compliments on how smooth everything went, and compliments on the food. In addition, we had new membership applications submitted, sold out of the Grange cookbooks we had in stock, and had the opportunity to highlight what makes our Grange so special to an audience that we haven’t reached before.

The Big Knob Grange Maple Syrup Festival will be a new annual tradition. We could not have asked for a better first festival. A few of our doubters congratulated us on a successful event and we received recognition from our County Commissioners for doing such a great job with such a short planning period.

This was only possible through the dedication and teamwork of our Grangers and friends. There were many Big Knob Grange members who volunteered for the weekend but the group in the photo is our Fair Committee, and they are the ones who proposed the idea and brought it to life. Big things happen when you support each other and work together. This group has the mind set of “whatever it takes.” Everyone will jump in and do what needs to be done. Sometimes things don’t go as we plan, sometimes we must pivot and solve problems, but doing it together always makes the goal achievable. We all have different talents and when those come together, great things happen. We are proud to showcase Big Knob Grange and plant the roots a little deeper in our community.

We encourage Granges to not be afraid to step out of their comfort zone, whether it’s a small project or large event. You never know what one idea can turn into. Maybe even collaborate with another organization; we are lucky to have chartered Boy Scout Troop 444 for 72 years now and have a great working relationship. We also feel the best way to gain members isn’t by recruitment, it’s by having events and doing projects that engage the community. When Grange members are having fun, sharing their talents, and showcasing their Grange, others want to join in too!

Like National Grange President Chris Hamp has said “Make it fun. Make it work. Make it yours.”



**The Maple Syrup Festival was held on the Big Knob Fairgrounds, which includes the Grange Hall (left) and the big steel building, where the all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast was served.**

*Photo provided*

# FRUITLAND GRANGE HOSTS TEA PARTY FUNDRAISER

submitted by Laura Hokenstad  
Fruitland Grange #999 (WA)

In May 2026, Fruitland Grange in Puyallup, Washington, hosted its **Second Annual Tea Party fundraiser**, welcoming 65 guests for an afternoon full of delicious food, laughter, fancy hats, and community connection. With more than 10 Grange members helping bring the event to life, this year's tea was a wonderful success and a perfect example of how Granges continue to create meaningful, fun traditions for their communities.

Tables were beautifully decorated, tea was poured, and attendees showed up in truly impressive style wearing stunning hats and fascinators that added whimsy and plenty of personality to the day.

One of the highlights was the Best Hat contest, which featured two prizes; one chosen by the children in attendance and one selected by the adults.

Guests also enjoyed an incredible menu that made the afternoon feel extra special. Refreshments included strawberry mango mimosas, fruit skewers, petite sandwiches like chicken salad mini croissants, English cucumber sandwiches, and smashed avocado toast topped with roasted red peppers, feta, and balsamic vinegar. Traditional tea-time favorites such as scones with clotted cream, jam pennies, and apple rhubarb muffins were a hit. Desserts like chocolate cups with passion fruit mousse, pecan thimble cookies topped with jam, and strawberry sponge cake provided a sweet finish.

In addition to the wonderful food and tea, guests participated in games and a raffle, adding even more fun to an already memorable day. The event created opportunities for neighbors, families, and friends to connect while also introducing new



**Towers of teatime treats greeted guests at Fruitland Grange's 2nd annual Tea Party fundraiser, which was well-attended by the community to benefit future projects.** *Photo provided*

visitors to the welcoming spirit of the Fruitland Grange.

As a fundraiser, the Tea Party not only provided a beautiful social event but also supported the Grange's ongoing mission of service, community engagement, and preserving local traditions. Fruitland Grange, founded in 1932, has long served as a gathering place for the Puyallup community, and events like this continue that legacy in fresh and exciting ways.

What made the Tea Party especially meaningful was the way it brought generations together. Children, parents, longtime members, and first-time guests all shared in the fun, proving that Grange events can honor tradition while still feeling lively, relevant, and welcoming to everyone.

The success of this year's fundraiser has created even more excitement for future events, including the upcoming Abigail Adams Tea Party on July 19th. With such strong community support, Fruitland Grange continues to show how local Granges can thrive by combining service, fellowship, and creative programming.

## 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. We are currently in "Year E," running through February 2027.

Use the hashtag **#GrangeHeirloom** when you share these important pieces of our work and history on social media.



*President, Second Degree*



BEHOLD THESE INANIMATE KERNELS OF CORN! BUT THE GERM HAS LIFE - THE FUTURE PLANT IS THERE... THERE IS NO OBJECT IN WHICH, TO APPEARANCE, LIFE AND DEATH BORDER SO CLOSELY TOGETHER AS IN THE GRAINS OF SEED BURIED IN THE EARTH: BUT WHEN LIFE SEEMS EXTINGUISHED, A FULLER AND RICHER EXISTENCE BEGINS ANEW.

# WELCOME TO OUR INTERN TEAM!

The National Grange is pleased to welcome three interns to our team this summer. Joining us are (left to right) Hailey Lincoln Williamson, Holland Warren, and Savannah Mangold.

Hailey is a Agricultural Science and Agricultural Business double major at SUNY Morrisville; Holland is pursuing a dual degree in Political Science and Environment and Science with a minor in Spanish at Florida State University; and Savannah is majoring in Public Writing and Rhetoric at Middle Tennessee State University.

Together, they will be working on advocacy and communications projects, developing materials for Grange Engage and Grange publications, and learning the political process in Washington, DC.

Beginning this week, each intern will publish an opinion piece related to Grange policy and their personal passions in *Grange Today!*.



The National Grange's 2026 summer intern team (L-R): Hailey Lincoln Williamson, Holland Warren, and Savannah Mangold.

*Photo by Philip Vonada*

## SPOTLIGHT: NATIONAL GRANGE INTERN RECEIVES PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD



Lily Thomas, one of the National Grange's 2025 interns through The Washington Center, recently graduated from Kutztown University of Pennsylvania with a BA in Political Science.

As a part of her internship, Lily helped write, compile, and create the [2025 Rural Health Report](#), which addresses the complex health issues facing rural America. Additionally, Lily published an op-ed advocating for improved cancer care access in rural areas, attended policy panels and Capitol Hill briefings, and participated in agriculture industry roundtables with corporate stakeholders and drafted policy summaries for internal and public audiences. For these efforts, Lily received our department's first Public Service Award for students in the Political Science major program.

Lily is now working on Congresswoman Ashley Hinson's (IA-2) U.S. Senate campaign.

Congratulations, Lily!

Lily Thomas, a 2025 National Grange intern and 2026 graduate of Kutztown University, pictured with her Public Service Award.

*Photo provided*

# OPINION: AMERICA'S GROWING ENERGY CHALLENGE DEMANDS AN ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE STRATEGY

by Hailey Lincoln Williamson

National Grange Intern  
Agricultural Science and Agricultural  
Business Major, SUNY Morrisville

The United States is entering a new era of energy demand. Artificial intelligence, data centers, advanced manufacturing, electric vehicles, and population growth are driving unprecedented needs for reliable and affordable electricity. The question is no longer whether we need more energy production; it is how we can responsibly meet that demand while balancing economic, environmental, and community concerns.

Unfortunately, energy debates often become polarized, with advocates promoting a single solution while dismissing others. The reality is that no energy source is perfect, and no single technology can meet America's growing needs on its own.

Solar and wind power continue to expand because they produce electricity without direct emissions and have seen dramatic cost reductions over the past two decades. However, both face challenges related to intermittency and land use. One practical solution is to prioritize solar development on lower-quality agricultural lands rather than highly productive Class I and II farmland. Dual-use systems, where solar panels are elevated to allow livestock grazing underneath, can further preserve agricultural productivity while generating clean

energy and additional farm income.

Natural gas remains one of the most economical and reliable sources of electricity generation. Its flexibility allows it to complement renewable energy when the sun is not shining or the wind is not blowing. Coal, while declining in use, still provides dependable baseload power in many regions. Modern emissions-control technologies and advanced scrubber systems have significantly reduced pollutants from coal plants, demonstrating that technological innovation can mitigate some environmental concerns while preserving grid reliability.

Hydroelectric power offers reliable, emissions-free electricity, but opportunities for major expansion are limited. New dam construction faces high costs, environmental concerns, lengthy permitting processes, and relatively modest returns in generation capacity compared to other options.

Nuclear energy deserves renewed attention as one of the few large-scale, carbon-free sources capable of producing continuous electricity. While construction costs remain high and permitting timelines are lengthy, next-generation reactors and small modular reactor technologies may help overcome some of these barriers. Similarly, hydrogen shows promise as a future energy carrier and storage solution, though significant infrastructure and economic challenges remain before



widespread adoption becomes feasible.

The lesson is clear: America cannot afford to choose between energy reliability, affordability, and environmental stewardship. We need all three. An "all-of-the-above" energy strategy recognizes the strengths and limitations of every resource while encouraging innovation that reduces disadvantages and improves performance.

As energy demand continues to grow, policymakers should focus less on picking winners and losers and more on creating conditions that allow diverse energy technologies to compete, innovate, and contribute to a resilient energy future. The stakes are too high for ideological debates. America's economic competitiveness, energy security, and quality of life depend on ensuring that reliable and affordable power remains available for generations to come.

To read more about solar on farmland and, in particular, the policy surrounding it, [click here](#).

MAKE TODAY A  Good Day!™

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[NATIONALGRANGE.ORG/GOODAY](https://www.nationalgrange.org/gooday)

# CELEBRATE 160 IN BROKEN ARROW

Every Grange member across the country is invited to join us in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, for the 160th Annual National Grange Convention, November 9-14, 2026.

While the Convention officially opens on Monday, November 9, Officers and Delegates of the National Grange should plan to arrive by Sunday, November 8, for pre-convention activities. All Grange members are also encouraged to attend the Welcome Dinner on Sunday evening as we kick off a memorable week of fellowship, learning, and celebration.

Registration for the 160th Annual Convention opens **August 1**, but there is already plenty to look forward to. In the coming weeks, we'll begin sharing previews of special events, featured speakers, workshops, entertainment, and more.

The Convention Management Team is preparing an exciting lineup of programming designed to engage Grangers of all ages and backgrounds. Attendees can expect opportunities to experience Oklahoma culture, participate in meaningful workshops, hear from outstanding speakers and guests, and connect with fellow members from across the nation. The week will conclude with the annual Celebration Banquet on Saturday, November 14.

This year's Convention will also mark the official launch of the National Grange's 160th anniversary

celebration, kicking off a yearlong commemoration of our organization's history, impact, and future.

Reservations are now open at our host hotel, the Stoney Creek Hotel & Conference Center. Reserve your room today: <https://grange.biz/160hotel>.



**160th National Grange Convention**  
November 2026 Broken Arrow, OK

**160th National Grange Convention**  
**ROUTE TO THE FUTURE**  
BROKEN ARROW, OK 2026

**Sun. 8**  
2:00 pm - Officer & Delegate Meeting  
Welcome Dinner

**Mon. 9**  
9:00 am  
Official Opening of the Convention

**Tues. 10**  
Evening - Oklahoma State Poet Laureate

**Weds. 11**  
Mini-Tours  
Wreath-Laying Ceremony

**Thurs. 12**  
Youth Opening  
Chief Standing Bear

**Fri. 13**  
Workshops  
Presentation of the Seventh Degree

**Sat. 14**  
Workshops  
Celebration Banquet

**Visit BROKEN ARROW**  
All times Central



**November 9-14, 2026**  
**Broken Arrow, OK**

**Visit BROKEN ARROW**

**160th National Grange Convention**  
**ROUTE TO THE FUTURE**  
BROKEN ARROW, OK 2026

**Stoney Creek Hotel & Conference Center**  
Secure your hotel room: <https://grange.biz/160hotel>

# TELL THE GRANGE STORY

*Communication Fellow applications due July 1*



Applications are being accepted for the next cohort of National Grange **Communication Fellows**, a leadership and professional development opportunity designed to help Grange members strengthen communication efforts at all levels. The selected cohort will serve through the conclusion of the 2027

National Grange Convention, focused on storytelling, digital engagement, advocacy communication, and member outreach.

Communication Fellows will work alongside the National Grange Communications Department and other staff on a variety of projects while gaining hands-on experience in social media strategy, photography, writing, video, branding, and emerging digital communication tools. Applicants of all ages

and experience levels are encouraged to apply, with a special emphasis on welcoming participants who are eager to grow their skills and help tell the story of today's Grange.

"Communication continues to evolve rapidly, and the Grange must continue evolving with it," said Philip Vonada, National Grange Communications Director. "This updated Fellowship format is designed to help us better embrace digital communication, expand the ways we connect with members and communities, and ensure the Grange's story is being shared in engaging and impactful ways across every platform."

Previous Communication Fellows are welcome to apply again, though the National Grange strongly encourages first-time applicants to consider participating. Applications are due July 1. Learn more at <https://www.nationalgrange.org/communication-programs/>.

**Submit your stories and Grange successes to...**

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

## Celebrate America250

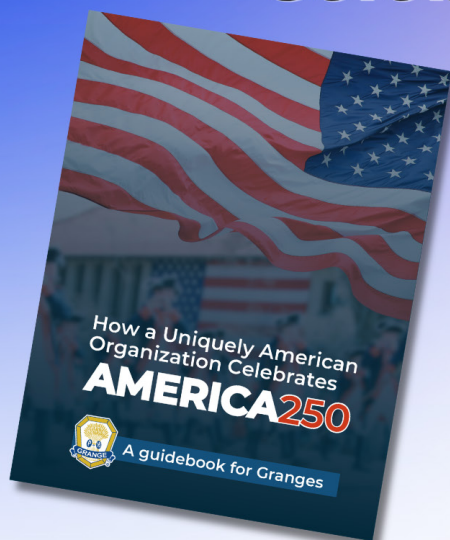


**with the Grange**

All Granges across the country are encouraged to participate in America's semiquincentennial - 250 years of patriotism, freedom, and shared values.

The *Guidebook for Granges* can be downloaded at

<https://grange.biz/America250>



# HAMP WATCH: WHERE IS OUR NATIONAL GRANGE PRESIDENT?

This monthly feature highlights where National Grange President Chris Hamp has been and what she's been up to. Do you want to see her in your neighborhood or at your Grange event? Email her at [champ@nationalgrange.org](mailto:champ@nationalgrange.org). This week, we're looking back at May.



May 1: The annual National Grange Leaders' Conference was held in Sparks, Nevada, at the site of our 2027 National Convention. This conference is not only a great opportunity to learn, and also provides an important time to build relationships into friendships.



May 2: The attendees to the 2026 Leaders' Conference were kept busy listening, learning, and participating - now to put new concepts learned to work.



May 15: The office goes on the road - with the First Dude as driver, the hot spot, and the laptop.



May 30: Ralston Grange #943 (WA) - The annual John Wayne Trail Riders Club dinner and auction held by Ralston Grange is a fun evening for everyone.



May 15 (left): Colonel Harper Grange #1508 (NY) - I had the honor of participating in Colonel Harper Grange's Longevity Awards Presentation & Program through the use of technology.

# 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](mailto:olgaskill@comcast.net). Please include which Grange cookbook your recipes come from.

This week's recipes come from the National Grange's  
**The Glory of Cooking** (1986)

Lew says these recipes  
might be great for  
Father's Day!

## Crab Casserole

Courtesy of Gerald L. Baliles  
Governor of Virginia (1986-1990)

8 ounces crab meat  
1 cup cooked rice  
5 hard-boiled eggs, chopped  
1 1/2 cup mayonnaise  
1 - 6-ounce can evaporated milk

1/2 teaspoon salt  
Dash of pepper  
1/4 teaspoon red pepper  
1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

Yields : 4 servings      Pan Size: 1 1/2 quart  
Preheat: 350 Degrees

Combine crab meat, rice and eggs in bowl. Add mayonnaise, evaporated milk, salt, pepper and red pepper; mix well. Spoon into casserole. Sprinkle cheese on top. Bake for 20 minutes. Serve as main dish or hot appetizer.

## Apple Dessert from Yugoslavia

Courtesy of Kathryn R. McDonald  
Riverside Valley Grange #1047, Washington

2 cups flour  
6 cups shredded Golden Delicious apples  
1 cup packed brown sugar  
2 cups quick-cooking oats  
1 1/2 cups sugar  
1 teaspoon soda,  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 cup margarine, softened  
Butter  
Cinnamon

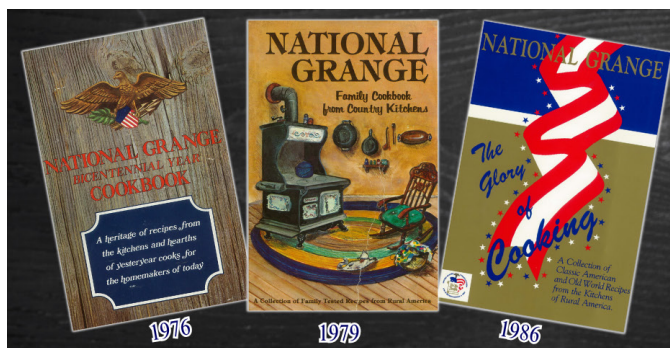
Preheat: 425 Degrees

Combine first 6 ingredients in bowl, mixing until crumbly. Place slightly more than half the crumbs in baking dish. Layer apples and sugar over crumbs; dot with butter.

Sprinkle with cinnamon and remaining crumbs .

Bake for 30 minutes; reduce temperature to 350 degrees.

Bake until bottom is brown. Serve hot or cold with whipped cream, ice cream or lemon sauce.



Available through the Grange Store  
for digital download



SUPPLY STORE

[www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org)

or

[issuu.com/grangegoodday](http://issuu.com/grangegoodday)

# GRANGE MEMBER BENEFIT: HARVEST HOSTS



Harvest Hosts is a membership program that offers RVers *unlimited overnight stays with no camping fees* at 5,500+ unique locations across North America. From peaceful farms and animal sanctuaries to wineries, breweries, drive-in theaters, and museums, members enjoy memorable experiences while supporting small businesses. Each host offers a unique setting to relax, explore, and connect with local culture. Some locations even allow extra nights or offer electric hookups for a small fee—perfect for when you want to stay just a little longer.

National Grange members can enjoy 20% off their first year of membership with code **GRANGE20** at checkout. [Click here to learn more!](#)

## Would you like to be a Host?

Harvest Hosts offers a free marketing platform that connects small businesses, private properties, and campgrounds with over 250,000 travelers who value local experiences. Members have driven more than \$200 million in direct revenue to local communities since 2010. [Learn more about becoming a Host location here!](#)

**BACK IN STOCK**



**SUPPLY STORE**

[www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org)

### VETERAN RECOGNITION PIN

Are you looking to honor a veteran in your Grange or community? This special .75" pin combines honoring their service in the military as well as honoring their Grange membership. Perfect for adding to a Quilts of Valor presentation or Veteran recognition ceremony.



Order online through the Grange Supply Store at [grangestore.org](http://grangestore.org) or by calling Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109.

**5 for \$25.00**  
PLUS SHIPPING

## NATIONAL GRANGE

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**Publisher** - Christine Hamp, National Grange President. Available to members at [champ@nationalgrange.org](mailto:champ@nationalgrange.org) or by phone at (509) 953-3533

**Editor** - Philip J Vonada, National Grange Communications Director. Contact to submit a story idea for *Grange Today!* or *Good Day!* magazine, request assistance with publicity, business cards, social media, and more. Email [pvonada@nationalgrange.org](mailto:pvonada@nationalgrange.org) or call/text (814) 404-7985

**Leadership Training & Membership Development** - Amanda Brozana, National Grange Membership and Leadership Development Director. Contact us to learn more about membership recruitment or how to start or reorganize a Grange, leadership training, and more. Email [abrozana@nationalgrange.org](mailto:abrozana@nationalgrange.org) or call/text (301) 943-1090

**Legislative and Policy Issues** - Burton Eller, Legislative Director - *National HQ*, ext. 114 or email [beller@nationalgrange.org](mailto:beller@nationalgrange.org)

**Membership Recognition, Grange Supply Sales, Grange Programs and Member Benefits** - Loretta Washington, *National HQ*, ext. 109 or email [Lwashington@nationalgrange.org](mailto:Lwashington@nationalgrange.org)

**Free Grange Websites, Emails, Good Day! subscription questions, and Membership Database** - Stephanie Wilkins, IT Director. *National HQ*, ext. 101 or email [swilkins@nationalgrange.org](mailto:swilkins@nationalgrange.org)

**Lecturer** - Dr. Richard Stonebraker, [lecturer@nationalgrange.org](mailto:lecturer@nationalgrange.org) or (301) 606-1221

**Junior Grange Programming** - Katie Girtler, Director - [junior@nationalgrange.org](mailto:junior@nationalgrange.org)

**Grange Youth & Young Adult Programming** - Samantha Wilkins, Director - [youth@nationalgrange.org](mailto:youth@nationalgrange.org)

**Grange Youth Fair Program** - [grangeyouthfairs@grange.org](mailto:grangeyouthfairs@grange.org)

**National Grange Community Service** - [communityservice@grange.org](mailto:communityservice@grange.org)

**Distinguished Grange** - Connie Johnston, Administrator [distinguishedgrange@grange.org](mailto:distinguishedgrange@grange.org)

**Grange Foundation** - John Benedik, Chairperson [ngfb@grange.org](mailto:ngfb@grange.org)

