



the CONNECTICUT GRANGER

Published Monthly

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The Official News Magazine of the Connecticut State Grange

December 2025

From the President's Desk



Robert Buck
State President

Bethlehem Grange No. 121
president@ctstategrange.org

The 159th Annual National Grange Convention was great! Convention at Sea was different than usual, but doable and fun. I applaud those who had the courage to take a new route in convention planning. First of all, most of the Grange hall paraphernalia was absent and after the opening in the Seventh Degree, the dress code for regular sessions was more casual. Only the officers wore sashes, but not the delegates. While I like the tradition, it was refreshing to be different. This was my first cruise and the ABC islands were new to me and interesting. I got in some birding between Miami and the three islands and saw over 20 new species of birds. I met and talked to new people on the Carnival Horizon and on the islands as well. It was definitely a learning experience. Across the trip, I was able to put my French and Spanish to use and found I could understand the local language of Papamieto to a large degree, especially in the written form. Some of the birds seen were Boat-Tailed Grackle and Wood Stork in Miami; and on the islands, Magnificent Frigate-Bird, American Flamingo, Tricolored Heron, Yellow Oriole, Venezuelan Troupial, several

kinds of doves, and my favorite due to its name, the Bananaquit, a colorful and pretty little bird known as the chickadee of the tropics. Also Great Blue Herons, Ospreys, House Sparrows and Northern Waterthrushes which we have here. The sparrows sound different than ours.

My stateroom was on Deck 1. The Meridian Restaurant where Ted, Stephanie and I shared dinner every night was on 3 and the Marketplace buffet on 10 where we ate breakfast and lunch. I got my exercise by taking the stairs (yes, 10 flights), except for 2 or 3 times. The head chef we were told was Asian Indian so the food was great and varied. I attended several shows and they were fantastic. The group of eight

putting them on was called the Playlist Players. Three shows I saw were Amor Cubano, Celestial Strings, and The World Works Here. You can look them up on YouTube under "Carnival Playlist Productions" and catch short snippets from the different shows. We got to meet the cast as well.

The staff on board the ship as well as our tour guides for all excursions were all very nice. On Aruba, I went to Eagle Beach where I looked for birds and ended up having a conversation with three young people (a young Aruban lady named Shaqedy) and two gentlemen, James and another (missed his name) at a concession stand for kayaks and jet-ski rentals; on Bonaire, the tour took us to the Kaminda Lac wetlands where we saw flamingos and a Crested Caracara (hawk) and the

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Building on 140 Years of Progress

Terri Fassio, State Public Relations Co-Director

Since 1885, the Connecticut State Grange has been a cornerstone of community organizing in our state. As a non-partisan, non-denominational organization with over 30 active chapters, we've long served as gathering places where neighbors come together to strengthen their communities, regardless of political affiliation or religious background.

Today, our Community Granges continue this tradition through potluck dinners, educational programs, youth activities, and community service projects. We provide meeting spaces for local organizations, support agricultural education, and advocate for policies that benefit not just rural and suburban towns, but all of Connecticut. Our members volunteer countless hours to make their communities better places to live.

The Connecticut Grange has always been at the forefront of progressive change. We championed women's equality decades before the 19th Amendment, advocating for women's property rights and full participation in civic life. We pushed for railroad regulation to protect farmers and

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Connecticut State Grange
A part of the National Grange



NEXT ISSUE:
Articles Due December 15

From the President's Desk

Continued from page one...

beach beyond ringed by mangroves; on Curacao, I took a Highlights of Curacao and Mambo Beach tour. Mambo Beach is a shopping arcade on the beach. On the way, we stopped at Senior and Co. Distillery where Curacao liqueur is made. The Chukalati chocolate flavored liqueur is tasty, but so is the orange flavored one. The capital of Curacao, Willemstad, is both picturesque and a very Dutch looking city.

Some highlights of the 159th Convention follow. Concerning

resolutions, the one concerning dues increase passed even though we voted against it as this was your will. Regardless, the fact is that we need to increase dues to come into modern times. The resolution to keep the convention in the 48 contiguous states was voted down. A new program to be introduced by National Grange is PIP or the Performance Improvement Plan to strengthen existing Granges by increasing membership and push states to open a new Grange. It is to follow the SMART goals paradigm: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. I believe that PIP will dovetail with our new Mentoring Program. Our officers of CSG have been assigned to Granges and meetings will be held to discuss and settle upon duties they will perform as mentors. The mentoring most likely will differ Grange to Grange as needs of Granges are different. The new Grange Engage platform was rolled out and is the new digital platform to connect Granges across the land. This year was an election year and there were some changes. Chris Hamp was re-elected as President. However, Walter Hartley of RI moved from Assistant Steward to the Executive Committee to replace Lynette Shaeffer of IL while Dwight Baldwin of IA replaced Walter. Richard Stonebraker of MD replaced Tom Gwin of WA as Lecturer. The professionally-produced recorded version of the Seventh Degree was shown for the first time with the cast wearing the old costumes one last time before they are retired due to their fragile condition. The production was well done and well received. The issue of how to distribute the recording for viewing in the states (or not) was assigned to a study committee. Also in that discussion is the possibility of recording the other six degrees. Jody and Jodi Ann Cameron did a

remarkable job acting as convention liaisons to put all this together. They had good people at Carnival Cruise Lines to work with. National Grange President Chris Hamp and her officer team put on a great convention, smooth and efficient. Congratulations on re-election Chris.

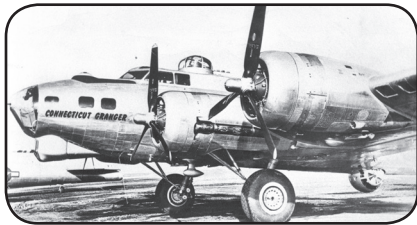
Back to our 140th Annual Session here at home. I want to thank all for making this a successful event. In January, Ted and I plus some others will head up to Colchester, VT (near Burlington) for the Northeast Leaders Conference, Jan. 9-11. In May, National Leaders Conference will be held in Reno/Sparks, NV. The next National Convention, the 160th, will be held in Broken Arrow, OK.

Those of you who were at State Session got to see the presentation on the new book "Perseverance: Connecticut Granges Make Their Mark on History." You know how much work has gone into this project. Between State Session and National Convention, I proof-read 355 pages of the some 500 pages of the book. I found it very interesting and learned some new things too. For instance, Jerome Keech of Pomperaug Grange, Past State President 1965-66, instituted a bicycle safety program. I remember taking part in such a program at the Alice Peck Elementary School in Hamden while in 4th grade ca. 1972 on my metallic red Schwinn banana bike. Reading the biographies brought back many fond memories of both departed and living Grangers, especially Past State President Duane Wetmore, a close family friend for years. I saw how Sister Lin Erickson recommended term limits for state officers to try to involve more people in the CSG. I can't wait for the release of the first edition! I encourage every Granger to buy a copy, and every Grange to donate a copy to their local library. Granges with sufficient funds might consider buying extra copies to

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the Connecticut Granger

Published Monthly



WW II Flying Fortress "Connecticut Granger"

STAFF

President/Editor Todd A. Gelineau
Vice President Terri Fassio
Treasurer Jody Cameron
Secretary Noel Miller

DEADLINE/CORRECTIONS

News is due on the
15th Day of each month
and should be sent to:

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100 Newfield Road
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Winchester Center, CT 06094
or Todd Gelineau, Editor
P.O. Box 1134, Sharon, CT 06069
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donate to libraries in surrounding towns. There are 169 towns in CT and only 29 community Granges and three Pomona Granges.

Connecticut State Grange was one of two State Granges (the other was Wisconsin) to receive an award for community service reporting of

hours. While there has been internal controversy over collection of hours and their manner of reporting to our community service chairman and his reports to the National Grange Community Service Team, I assure you that our methods have been endorsed by those at National as OK.

I encourage all to put this issue to rest and would further ask that all work together amicably. Sometimes, we don't agree on all, but let us ever heed the motto, "In essentials, Unity, in non-essentials, Liberty, and in all things, Charity."

The Return of the Dairy Dinner



Dave Roberts
State Lecturer

Riverton Grange No. 169
Lecturer@CTStateGrange.org

Rekindling a Connecticut Tradition: The Return of the Dairy Dinner

One of the great joys of being your State Lecturer is visiting our local Granges and witnessing the creative ways members bring their communities together. Recently, I had the pleasure of attending Whigville Grange's Dairy Dinner—a lively, welcoming event that reminded me just how powerful a shared meal can be. The evening was filled with laughter, good food, and fellowship, and it celebrated something deeply rooted in our Grange heritage: our connection to Connecticut's proud dairy industry.

After attending that event, I found myself reading about Riverton Grange's long history of Dairy Dinners. Decades ago, Dairy Dinners were a staple of many Connecticut Granges. These gatherings not only honored our dairy farmers but also served as important fundraisers and opportunities for neighbors to enjoy wholesome, locally produced food. Milk, butter, cheese, and ice cream often took center stage, with recipes reflecting the bounty of our local farms and the creativity of our Grange cooks.

During the mid-20th century, Connecticut's Grange halls were filled with the aroma of baked macaroni and cheese, creamed vegetables, and fresh rolls—



followed, of course, by homemade ice cream. Dairy Dinners celebrated June Dairy Month and were often held in partnership with the state's dairy promotion boards or local farm cooperatives. They strengthened ties between rural and town residents, showcased agricultural pride, and reminded all of us of the essential role that dairy farms play in our state's economy and culture.

In recent years, as smaller farms have disappeared and Granges have faced new challenges, many of these traditional events have faded. But seeing Whigville Grange's success and reading about Riverton's history convinced me that the time is right to bring back Dairy Dinners to re-engage our members and communities. These events can be simple or elaborate—anything from an ice cream social to a full meal—and they offer a wonderful opportunity for Lecturers to collaborate with local farmers, 4-H clubs, and agricultural organizations.

Reviving the Dairy Dinner tradition can accomplish several

goals: promoting agriculture, strengthening community bonds, and showcasing the Grange as a vibrant, active organization. It's also an excellent way for Community and Pomona Granges to celebrate our shared heritage while creating new memories for the next generation.

So, here's my challenge: as we plan for 2026, I encourage every Community and Pomona Grange Lecturer to consider hosting a Dairy Dinner in your area. Build this into your monthly program. Consider applying for a \$150 Community Grant for a new event/partnership for your dinner? Whether you're reviving a long-lost tradition or starting a new one, I would love to hear your ideas and help you make it happen.

Let's celebrate Connecticut's dairy heritage together—one delicious meal at a time.

If your Grange is considering organizing a Dairy Dinner in 2026, please reach out to me at Lecturer@ctstategrange.org or 860-469-5067. How can I help?



Meet Helia! Helia won Most Creative Scarecrow for Cannon Grange in this year's event in Wilton.

Virtual CONNECTICUT STATE GRANGE
**SOCIAL HOUR
 2026 SCHEDULE**

E-mail information@ctstategrange.org
 for Zoom Meeting Access Information

zoom

**FEB
19**

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19 - 7:00 PM EST
 TOPIC: HOW TO KEEP YOUR GRANGE MEETINGS
 FUN AND INTERESTING

**MAY
21**

THURSDAY, MAY 21 - 7:00 PM EST
 TOPIC: CT STATE GRANGE HISTORY BOOK
 PROJECT - VOLUME 2 UPDATE

**AUG
27**

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27 - 7:00 PM EST
 TOPIC: GRANGE HOLIDAY PLANNING SHOULD
 START IN THE SUMMER

**DEC
17**

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17 - 7:00 PM EST
 TOPIC: 2026 CONNECTICUT STATE GRANGE
 VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY

★ CONNECTICUT STATE GRANGE ★
 FAMILY ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

FAMILY ACTIVITIES
 ZOOM MEETING

SUNDAY
 December 14, 2025 • 7 pm

All Granges are urged to attend
 to learn about our contests and programs for the
 upcoming year. **OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS.**
 Send an e-mail to familyactivities@ctstategrange.org
 for Zoom Meeting Access Information
 and for more information.



Bridgewater Grange participated in the community Trunk or Treat event. Everyone had a wonderful time visiting and ringing the church bell thanks to all who volunteered to make it an amazing evening.

Thank you for participating



Dawn Percoski
Family Activities Dir.
Vernon Grange No. 52
CWA@ctstateGrange.org

I'd like to thank everyone who participated in our G dollar contest. We raised \$2779.00 and presented the check to our State President to help with the costs for state session. The winning Granges for the most collected were Ekonk (over 50 members), Hillstown (under 50 members) and Eastern Pomona for the most collected by their subordinates! This was a big win for all.

We had lots of fun with the basket raffles. Carol Innis, Debbie

Hanlon and Sue Belle Isle were the winners. Debbie Hanlon also won the weight guessing game of Norm the Gnome.

We are in our second year now for the "Everything Gnome" theme contest. The only changes in this year's program are the baking contest and our special craft contest of decorate a picture frame. I sent home many of the Chairman packages from those attending the State Session and will be mailing the rest out. Our yearly zoom meeting will be held on Sunday, December 14th at 7:00 pm. There will be only 1 short meeting so please plan to be on it or send someone for your Grange. Anyone can join in this meeting as well.

And finally, we had a banner year at the NEGB. The Craft department had a significant increase and brought in \$20,888.00! The amount continues to increase due to the quality of donations which allows me to increase the prices of those items while at the same time being less expensive than other vendors throughout the fair. People know this and come into the fair just for our items. Our reputation truly precedes us! I'd like to thank each and everyone of you who took the time to make and donate items for us to sell. This money goes towards building improvements which are costly.

The CFA committee wishes you Happy Holidays. Be safe and enjoy time with friends and family

IS THIS FOOD EXPIRED?

UNDERSTANDING DATE LABELS

The dates that food companies put on packages are not regulated and do not mean that the food is unsafe to eat, except in the case of baby formula. Most foods are still tasty and nutritious after the date has passed. Not sure if food is spoiled? Check for off odor, flavor or texture.

"BEST BY" OR "BEST IF USED BY" DATE

The date tells you when the food will have the **best flavor**. It is **still safe to eat** past this date.

"USE BY" OR "EXPIRATION" DATE

This is the last date that the product will be at its **peak quality**. It is **still safe to eat** past this date. (**except for baby formula**).

"PACKING/MANUFACTURING" DATE

This is the date used by manufacturers for tracking. It is **not an expiration date** - it is not related to food quality or safety.

"SELL BY" DATE

This tells the store how long to display the product for sale. It is **still safe to eat** past this date.

GOOD FOR UP TO ONE YEAR AFTER THE DATE:

- Packaged food like cereal, pasta, dried beans, baking mixes
- Frozen foods
- Canned goods, (incl. soup, condiments, meat, fruit, veg.)

GOOD FOR UP TO 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE:

- Butter
- Cheese
- Eggs

GOOD FOR UP TO 7 DAYS AFTER THE DATE

- Milk
- Yogurt
- Cream Cheese

*Provided by the
Share Food Program*



Greenfield Hill Grange #133 held a Masquerade Party & Dinner at the Grange Hall on October 25. In addition to dinner there was judging of costumes and a special guest presentation by author/historian Michael Bielawa about 1950s Bridgeport and an infamous "Men in Black" episode.

Chris Hamp Re-Elected National Grange President



by Matthew Weaver, *Capital Press* (WA)

Christine “Chris” Hamp, of Spokane, WA, was re-elected as president of the National Grange Nov. 14 during the national convention.

“Being re-elected is both a tremendous honor and a huge responsibility,” Hamp told *Capital Press*. “It tells me our members believe in the direction we’re heading, and trust me to continue guiding this organization into our 160th year and beyond. To me, this isn’t just a vote of confidence; it’s a call to keep pushing forward.”

The Grange will mark its 160th anniversary in November 2026 in Broken Arrow, Okla.

“Grange has shaped my life and leading it into the future is that huge responsibility, but one that absolutely gets me excited every single day,” Hamp said. “The batteries are charged, we’re rarin’ to go.”

Topping Hamp’s goals for her next term is to strengthen and grow membership.

“Making sure we’re supporting new Granges and revitalizing existing ones,” she said. “Elevating the succession planning process, making sure that those next leaders are getting the training and development, and they’re ready to be next up.” Grange will refresh its branding, something that hasn’t happened in more than six decades, Hamp said, to connect with both new and long-standing membership.

The national conference took place Nov. 8-16 on a cruise to the Caribbean islands of Aruba, Bonaire and

Curaco.

Hamp considers the event a success. Many members had never been on a cruise before. There was a “strong attendance” from first-time convention attendees, she said.

“It was a push, I think, for a lot of our folks,” she said. “I think it succeeded expectations. They loved the energy, the fellowship, the opportunity to experience the Grange in a new environment. We got our work done; we had a whole bunch of fun doing it. We showed that it didn’t have to look like it’s always looked.”

Hamp’s goals include positioning Grange as a unifying force in rural America.

“That it’s that trusted place our neighbors and friends go in these small communities,” she said. “It’s that place that’s safe, trusted space, that the information we provide has been well-vetted. In today’s world, even moreso, it’s so necessary, so needed and very much wanted.”

National Grange Officers

Elected at the National Convention, Nov. 8-16, 2025

Christine E. Hamp (WA)	President
John Benedik (NJ)	Vice President
Walter Hartley (RI)	Executive Committee
Susan Noah (OR)	Executive Committee
Joseph Stefenoni (CA)	Executive Committee
Buddy Overstreet (TX)	Executive Committee
Richard Stonebraker (MD)	Lecturer
Debbie Campbell (PA)	Secretary
Kay Hoffman Stiles (MD)	Chaplain
Christopher Johnston (MI)	Steward
Doug Baldwin (IA)	Assistant Steward
Kathy Gibson (MA)	Lady Assistant Steward
Joe Goodrich (VT)	Treasurer
David Allen (NC)	Gatekeeper
Cindy Greer (CO)	Ceres
Barbara Foster (WV)	Pomona
Welina Shufeldt (OK)	Flora



Grange members from across the country gathered for a group photo aboard the Carnival Horizon during the National Convention held Nov. 8-16, 2025. Many in attendance had never been on a cruise before and some had little or no Grange experience in their past.

Hank the Burro



During the National Convention the elephant (above) came to his room to keep him company. Hank also worked hard during the sessions (below).



SPEAK LIKE A "CHAMP"

Speak like a "CHAMP" is a monthly message designed to get everyone speaking the same language to encourage positive teamwork as we Grange.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

Chain of Command refers to the formal structure of authority and responsibility within an organization, outlining the hierarchy through which instructions, decisions, and communication flow from higher levels of authority to lower levels. It establishes clear lines of accountability, ensuring that every member of the organization understands their role and to whom they report. The chain of command is fundamental in any structured group where coordination and accountability are critical. It provides clarity and structure while enabling effective operation and leadership.



Please join the
Harmony Grange
For a Victorian Christmas Tea
December 14, 2025

Tea or Hot Chocolate, Finger Sandwiches and Desserts
at 1:30 p.m.

Presentation at 2:00 p.m. A Victorian Christmas
Harmony Grange

103 Hurd Ave Monroe, CT parking at Cul-de-sac

Cost \$20 per person-Children Ages 5-12 \$10-under 5 free
Limited seating (60)

Please make reservation to Deb Heim 203-558-7399 or
email debpothier@aol.com

November 10-14, 2026
Broken Arrow, OK



Stoney Creek Hotel & Conference Center

Secure your hotel room: <https://grange.biz/160hotel>



Chaplain, Third Degree



**BEWARE OF COVETOUSNESS; FOR A MAN'S LIFE CONSISTS
NOT IN THE ABUNDANCE OF THINGS HE POSSESSES, BUT
IN THE RIGHT USE OF GOD'S BLESSINGS.**

Progress

Continued from page 1...

consumers from monopolistic practices. We pioneered cooperative organizing, helping members pool resources and negotiate better prices. And we established community centers that became the heart of rural life.

These weren't common positions — they were bold, forward-thinking reforms that improved lives across Connecticut.

To revitalize our organization, we must embrace that thinking-outside-the-box spirit while staying true to our foundation. This means:

- Expanding our focus beyond agriculture to address issues facing all Connecticut communities —

affordable housing, environmental sustainability, local food systems, and community resilience.

- Emphasizing our non-partisan nature as a refuge from today's divisive politics, where people of all political persuasions can work together on common goals.

- Becoming true community gathering places again — hosting events, supporting local causes, and opening our doors to diverse groups.

- Leveraging our history to attract members who value social unity and community improvement, while maintaining our character that welcomes everyone.

The Connecticut State Grange has 140 years of making communities stronger. Our best days can still be ahead — if we

remember who we've always been: neighbors helping neighbors build a better Connecticut.



Legislatively Speaking



Noel Miller
Legislative Director
Coventry Grange #75
millernoel434@gmail.com

A lot of things have happened since the last time I wrote for the Granger.

At State Session we had 15 resolutions. Two resolutions were sent to the Legislative Committee for re-write and brought back to next year's session. Resolution #6 regarding Tolls on Connecticut Interstate Highways, needs to address special transportation funds. They say if tolls are put up the State will have to refund the Federal Government for all highway projects since tolls were last in operation.

Resolution #9 regarding Leaking Above Ground Fuel Oil Tanks- establish a registration program for new fuel oil tanks, both commercial and residential, and Connecticut DEEP or appropriate State agency

sends notices of tanks 15-20 years old.

We are looking into these resolutions and will report during the year. Just a note, Oxford Grange had a leaking oil tank, and on the first of November, Granby Grange had a leaking oil tank. So all Granges need to check their fuel tanks both above and in-ground for leaks.

Since the last article, the Federal Government was on a 43 day shut-down laying off Federal workers, closing Federal buildings and parks. TSA workers and air traffic controllers were left unpaid and SNAP benefits are due to expire and the ACA sign-ups have proceeded without funding from the Federal Government. Depending on your coverage, your premiums may double or triple. It passed on Nov. 11 with the Senate promising eight Democrats a vote for SCS funding before the end of the year. This remains to be seen.

The Big Beautiful Bill was

promoted as one without pork or attachments. This turned out to be false.

Restricting Food Safety Standards- allowing questionable food items for sale and industries self-inspecting food for human consumption.

Restriction of Hemp THC minimum levels. Before it was legal up to 0.6 THC. Now legal to 0.4 THC. This will have effects on all THC products, including the new THC beverages scheduled to roll out in 2026. The lobbies for whiskey and wine producers donate to Dems and Republicans. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky recived some \$800,000 to tank Kentucky's hemp growers. Farmers first!

The big deals on tariffs are proving to be empty promises. The China deal for 12 million metric tons of soybeans this year and 25 metric tons for the next three years, has come to a screeching halt. No deal. Beef from Argentina and a \$40M bail out will not help any farmers in the United States, only corporations win.

Happy Holidays to all and to all a goodnight.

The views expressed in the Legislative Column are not necessarily those of the Connecticut Granger or the Connecticut State Grange.



E. CONNECTICUT POMONA #14

Corr: Carol Hnath

Dec. 6: "Holiday Fun" at Ekonk Community Grange Hall, Sterling at 7PM

The next meeting of Eastern Connecticut Pomona Grange #14 will be held on December 6th at Ekonk Grange Hall. The program will be "Holiday Fun". Everyone is asked to bring a Christmas themed poem, short story, game, or short skit to contribute to the program. The collection items for this meeting are non-perishable food items such as mac and cheese, granola bars, etc.

Please remember that we will be holding a community service project with Habitat for Humanity on April 25, 2026 and that we have also set aside the date of July 18, 2026 for a Pomona activity. Suggestions for the activity which have been made so far include a mystery dinner, visits to Mystic Seaport or Mystic Aquarium, the town of Essex, a visit to a farm for ice cream, We will be discussing these ideas at our future meetings so come and get involved in the planning!

We hope to see you at the meeting on December 6th - and don't forget your non-perishable food item donations which are very much needed at this time!

SENEXET GRANGE #40

Corr: Diane Miller

Dec. 17: Christmas party

Dec. 24: Christmas Pie Sale

We continue to hold regular meetings with a program. We held a meet the candidates session on October 18 with the candidates engaged in meaningful conversations. We hosted the Windham County Farm Bureau annual meeting and dinner. It is always informative to hear what is happening in the local farming community. It was also a pleasure to hold a winter boot drive at the municipal building in Putnam. This helps us promote the local Grange and serves as a great community service.

We are working on improving the heating system in the hall as well as the electrical system.

Winter will be upon us and we appreciate those who use the hall for other activities.

Our pie sales are one of our biggest fundraisers and bring many community members into our hall. We continue to use material and resources to promote membership into our organization during that time.

Happy Holidays and stay safe.

VERNON GRANGE #52

Corr: Cherie Robinson

Dec. 5: Holiday Fun

Jan. 9: Ritual (on Zoom)

February 6: Something Sweet (on Zoom)

Visiting other Grange meetings is so much fun. We had a great time bringing our program of a humorous look at old age to Coventry Grange and then to Hillstown Grange. Coventry Grange visited us in November. Lecturer Marcia Miller brought an interesting, informative program on herbalist uses of tinctures and oils from birch trees, a haiku, and a moving poem for Veteran's Day. The fun and fraternity of these visits is great. I hear that years ago, Lecturer exchanges were done quite often.

Let's bring this back! Vernon Grange would love to talk to you about a program exchange!

December will be the last time we will meet in person until April. We will be on Zoom in January, February and March. Join us from the warm cozy comfort of your favorite armchair.

Until then, warm wishes from all of us in Vernon Grange for a season filled with thanks giving, peace and joy.

NORTH STONINGTON COMM. GRANGE #138

Corr: Nancy R. Weissmuller

Jan. 9: It's a Surprise

Jan. 23: Snow Date for January (otherwise no meeting)

At our one November meeting we learned about Thanksgiving and we took a quiz to see how much we really knew about it. One thing we learned was that, sadly, they had no mashed potato's at that first meal because potatoes came to America much later than the Pilgrims did.

We had a very successful breakfast on November 8th to raise funds for our Wreaths Across America project. Veterans who attended the meal received a free breakfast and a goodie bag. This year, on December 13th, we will place approximately 190 wreaths on Veterans' graves in three cemeteries in town.

We have purchased food for Thanksgiving Baskets for fifteen needy families and gift cards to help many children in town have a happier Christmas.

To those of you who have been so prompt in sending in your dues, we give many thanks. To those of you who may have forgotten, Santa is watching! And, if Old Man Winter will just save all his snow for Christmas Eve, next time we will tell you all about delightful December.



MOUNTAIN LAUREL POMONA #15

Corr: David Roberts

The holiday season is fast approaching, and we wanted to remind you to mark your calendars for the Mountain Laurel Pomona holiday luncheon and meeting on Saturday, December 13.

A catered lunch will be served at 12:30 PM at the Riverton Grange Hall, 17 Riverton Road, Riverton, followed by our first official Pomona meeting of the year at 2:00 PM. The Riverton Grange hall is accessible to all attendees. Please RSVP to me if you plan to attend the complimentary lunch.

Most Pomona officers were installed by the Noel Miller Installation Team. For those officers who have not yet been installed, we will conduct your installation at the beginning of the meeting.

Pomona Lecturer Debbie Vail asks that you please bring scarves and gloves/mittens for elementary school children as our service project.

Our Lecturer's Program will be the Holiday Gift Exchange — With a Twist, so please bring a wrapped holiday gift valued at about \$10.

Thank you for your ongoing support of Mountain Laurel Pomona Grange No. 15. Continue encouraging other Community Grange members to join and support our Pomona Grange.

WINCHESTER GRANGE #74

Corr: Todd A. Gelineau

Dec. 10: Christmas Party (Grab Bag Gift), Ref. Steve Serota, Debbie Vail.

Dec. 23: Meeting Omitted

Jan. 13: Out With The Old- In With The New, Ref. by Bill & Betty Ahrens

Winchester Grange held its annual Holiday Super Prize Party in November with a full hall of guests enjoying the teacup auction filled with prizes of all sizes and values. Thank you to everyone who donated items and asked for donations from area businesses.

We will hold our Christmas Party on Dec. 10 with a grab bag gift exchange (if you would like to participate). We will take Dec. 23 off for the holiday and will resume our schedule on Jan. 13 with a program about the new year.

Planning ahead, we will hold a Baked Potato Dinner on Friday, Feb. 13 from 5 to 7 PM at the Grange Hall. All proceeds from this event will be donated to charities related to cancer.

Until next time, enjoy the holidays.

TAGHHANNUCK GRANGE #100

Corr: Barbara Prindle

Our November contra/square dance had a good turnout. It was advertised as being our last dance due to the small attendance for the last year.

Our new Community Service project this year is Wreaths Across America. On December 13th at noon, we will be helping place wreaths at the Cornwall Cemetery that is located at 24 Cemetery Hill Rd in Cornwall Ct 06753. Please come and join us, volunteers are needed to participate in the ceremony. We also donated \$340.00, that is enough for 20 of the 165 wreathes to be placed.

This month we also donated \$1000.00 to the Cornwall Fire Department. They are raising money for two new trucks. They are an instrumental part of our community, not only for Cornwall but Sharon, Warren and the other surrounding towns. These brave men and women not only battle fire, rescue victims,

provide back up where needed but do so much more for the community. We are happy to help them get the tools that they need.

We are starting to prepare for our annual cookie exchange. We are asking Grange members to make 4 dozen of the same cookie to bring to our next meeting on December 11th. (meeting and refreshments start at 7pm). We will be making up over 30 plates this year to give to our local food pantries and to our brothers and sisters who are housebound. You are all invited to participate and if you have any questions, you can call Debbie Hanlon @845-418-9755. We will also be having a gift exchange (\$15 limit), this is optional. Bring a wrapped gift and have it marked brother or sister or either. If you bring a gift, you get a gift.

We are looking forward to the first volume of the Grange Book that will be about the history of the Grange. For our Grange we will be pre ordering four books. One we will donate to the Sharon Hotchkiss Library and one to the Sharon Historic Society. The other two are for our Grange with one to be kept in our Grange Hall and the other one will be used for our Grange booth that we set up at different events and fairs that we go to.

We wish you all a wonderful and safe holiday season.

BETHLEHEM GRANGE #121

Corr: Dorothy Fairchild

December 7th will be our last meeting of this year, and we will be meeting at the restaurant of choice. Call AL Maddox for more information.

I have some exciting news from the CT State Grange Session. The 2025 CT State Grange has awarded our Bethlehem Grange "farmer" AL (Skip) Maddox as the (adult) Agricultural Professional. The Maddox farm was once a cattle farm, dairy farm, and at present an egg

Continued next page...

producing farm with 100 chickens. At one time, AL had an ox as a pet!

Other awards included the Community Service Award, the Lecturers Appreciation Award, and the CWA Award.

We donated a complete Thanksgiving dinner and in addition collected food items for the food bank.

The United States of America will be celebrating its 250th birthday on July 4th next year. Let us gather ideas to make it a grand celebration together. Happy Holidays!

BRIDGEWATER GRANGE #153

Corr: David Roberts

Dec. 5-6: Christmas in Riverton

Dec. 7: AA meeting

Dec. 12: Catered Srs. Lunch; Noon

Dec. 13: Mountain Laurel Pomona #15 catered lunch (12:30 PM) and holiday meeting (2:00 PM)

Dec. 19: Riverton Grange meeting via Zoom; 7:00 PM; Lecturer's Program by Judy Doyle

Dec. 26: Catered Seniors Luncheon; Noon

Riverton Grange #169 held its regular monthly meeting on November 7th, where members received an update on the recent Connecticut State Grange Convention. Riverton Grange was honored with several awards at the convention, including: Gold Status Community Grange; #1 Community Service Grange (for Granges with more than 50 members) #3 Community Service Grange (1+ Program); Lecturer's Appreciation Award; Honor Lecturer's Appreciation Award

Riverton Grange also nominated The Stead Farm, owned by the Chatfield family of Barkhamsted, for a State Agricultural Award. We are proud to share that The Stead Farm was selected and honored as the Agricultural Promoter of the Year. Even more exciting, the Chatfield family has submitted a Family Membership application to join Riverton Grange!

All of these achievements — along

with our continued membership growth — reflect the dedication of our outstanding members and our strong commitment to community service. During the meeting, Lecturer James Mele presented Immediate Past Lecturer Raine Pedersen with her two well-deserved awards.

Vice President Dawn Anstett presented the Lecturer's Program, which focused on the 3rd Degree and was thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance.

Co-chair Raine Pedersen provided an update on our 8th Annual Veterans Appreciation Dinner, held on November 1st. This event honored all veterans, their families, and friends, with a catered dinner at the Riverton Grange Hall, live music, and heartfelt stories shared by veterans about their service. President Dave Roberts thanked co-hosts Raine Pedersen and Tim Sweeney, along with all the volunteers who made this celebration another great success.

On November 27th, Riverton Grange participated for the fifth consecutive year in the Annual Thanksgiving Meal Distribution Initiative, in collaboration with the First Church of Winsted. This effort is part of our Project Sustenance program, which supports seniors, individuals with disabilities, and shut-ins experiencing food insecurity. Members purchased and cooked nine turkeys and delivered Thanksgiving meals to local seniors on Thanksgiving morning.

We also celebrated two remarkable birthdays: Steward Robert O'Connor, who turned 94, and sister Debbie Roberts, who turned 93. Both members continue to inspire us with their spirit, service, and dedication to the Grange.

Our Kitchen Renovation Committee, led by sister Judy Doyle, continues to make great progress. The design plans are now 100% completed and ready to be submitted to the Town of Barkhamsted for review.

Looking ahead, our next fundraising event will be Christmas in Riverton, held December 5–6. Stop by our historic Riverton Grange Hall to enjoy the Festival of Trees (with proceeds benefiting the Pleasant Valley Community Food Pantry), along with our bake sale and Christmas market. The hall will be open Friday, December 5, from 5:00–8:30 PM, and Saturday, December 6, from 10:00 AM–4:00 PM.

Visitors can enjoy free wagon rides around the village, as well as the new Festival of Lights at the Riverton Fairgrounds. Luminaria will light the village sidewalks from December 5–7. Come experience an old-fashioned Christmas in the charming village of Riverton!

Finally, on December 13th, Riverton Grange will host Mountain Laurel Pomona's first meeting of the new year, featuring a catered Italian Feast at 12:30 PM, followed by the meeting and a Christmas gift exchange at 2:00 PM. Mittens and scarves for local children will also be collected for donation to a nearby elementary school.

BRIDGEWATER GRANGE #153

Corr: Dean Perry

Greetings everyone. The Bridgewater Grange is still active. Many thanks to Renee, Shirley, Diane and Dean for the "Haunted Church" on Halloween night. And many thanks to Carol, Aaron and Don for volunteering at "Loaves and Fishes" on November 1st. We have a meeting on November 12th and we will plan and prepare for Thanksgiving visits and baskets and the Bridgewater Christmas Tree Lighting on the 5th of December. On our monthly meeting, Dec th, we will have a meeting followed by a Christmas party.

SIMSBURY GRANGE #197

Corr: Marguerite Smith

Happy Holidays from Simsbury

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Grange!

November 3rd - MUSIC MONDAY
- We started the month of November off with acoustic guitarist, Nikki Mira. Nikki is a talented acoustic guitarist, singer and songwriter and performs folk, jazz, blues and pop songs. Everyone loved listening to Nikki perform and hanging out with their friends!

November 7th - Filmmaker Ray Asselin joined us once again to present his fifth of five Beaver Pond Wildlife films, fall/winter. Community members continue to enjoy our social hour before the film and consistently bring hor d'oeuvres or snacks to share with others.

November 10th - Monthly Grange meeting - Topics included planning for the welcoming of new members in January, state session highlights, building maintenance, a Simsbury Grange display for the month of December at Liberty Bank in town, planning for 2026 programming to highlight the 250th celebration of the US, collection of personal care items and cleaning supplies at our December events to contribute to Simsbury's Food Pantry, and the making of a snuffle mat by a few of our grangers to donate to Dogstar Rescue in Bloomfield.

December 1st - MUSIC MONDAY
- Don't miss it as this is the last one of 2025! Gracin Dorsey and Joel Weik helped us kick off our year-long Music Monday events back in February. Gracin is an accomplished guitarist, singer and songwriter. You will love his deep voice and bluegrass/country/folk vibes. Joel is a FABULOUS Fingerstyle guitarist. You won't be able to keep from smiling as he plays. Yes! It's that much fun. Please join us as we listen to these wonderful performers and say goodbye to 2025.

December 5th - Surprise Ray Asselin Film - Ray is back with a fun and endearing wildlife film about beaver families. Join us for a social hour at 6:00pm and film at 7:00pm. Yes! We will have shrimp and other tasty hors d'oeuvres/finger foods. Donations welcome. Extra parking

is available at Farms Village Plaza. NOTE: Please bring a personal care item or two (toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, hair brushes, diapers, etc.) and/or household cleaning supplies to contribute to Simsbury's Food Pantry. Thanks in advance!

December 11th - Monthly Grange meeting at Simsbury Grange - 236 Farms Village Rd. West Simsbury - 7:00 pm. Please bring personal care items and/or household cleaning supplies to donate to Simsbury's Food Pantry. HAPPY NEW YEAR!

WINDOW TO THE PAST



This Month

Photographs are a treasured part of Grange history. Many of them, unfortunately, do not come neatly labeled on the back with names, dates, people or places. These photographs have a history to tell... but about whom or what? Please help us uncover the mystery of faces and places as we look through the Window to the Past. You can contact us by calling (860) 626-5074 or on the web by emailing: submissions@ctstateGrange.org.



Last Month

No answers were received for last month's photo.



NUTMEG POMONA #16

Corr: Joanne Cipriano

The next meeting of Nutmeg Pomona No. 16 will be held at Wallingford Grange Hall on Sunday, Dec. 7 at 2 PM. Lecturer Robert Charbonneau's program is entitled "Christmas Treats". Wallingford Grange will provide the refreshments. We will have a \$5 grab bag for those who wish to participate. As with all our meetings, we will have a country store.

This will be the first time we have met at Wallingford Grange. Come and see how they have spruced up their hall.

Members are reminded to bring a can of soup for our Community Service project.

CHESHIRE GRANGE #23

Corr: Ruel Miller

Dec. 10: Christmas Program-Open Meeting and Ginger Bread House Decorating

As mentioned in my last article, several members recently attended the State Grange session in Norwich. Four of our Cheshire members are State Officers. The session went very well with good attendance. We recently had a fund raising roast beef dinner/luncheon for a local hiking club. Our treasury was nicely enhanced with many members handling kitchen and serving duties. We are collecting food in November as part of the town wide event for the Cheshire Food Pantry. Our new Lecturer, Diane Calabro has quite a slate of very interesting programs for



Wallingford Grange's winning team of the first Halloween Scavenger Hunt.

us this year. We extend an invitation to all to join us for our December 10th Christmas meeting.

WALLINGFORD GRANGE #33

Corr: Stephen Fengler

Recently, Wallingford Grange had a Wallingford themed Halloween scavenger hunt. Congratulations to the winning team of our first Halloween Scavenger Hunt! They were the team with the most correct answers who submitted the earliest to win a spooky, sharable gift basket and Halloween champion medals. Hope to see everyone again next year on Oct. 24, 2026!

At our November grange meeting, Wallingford Grange members donated Thanksgiving side kits to the local food pantry. Thank you to all who donated! At our next grange meeting on Thursday, December 11th at 6:30pm, we will be collecting inside twin brightly colored blankets or crocheted/knitted blankets for the blind veteran unit at the VA. In addition, in December, we will be doing a holiday cookie swap

Some special events Wallingford Grange is looking forward to hosting include the Making a holiday gift jar (December 3rd 6pm-8pm), Pancake Breakfast with Ornament Making and a Santa Visit for Youth

(December 13th 8:30am -11am), and Pasta and Cultures Event (January 13th: 6pm-8pm), Zen Rock Wrapping (Wednesday, January 21st), and a New Year Pancake Breakfast (January 10th: 8:30am-11am).

To stay informed about these different happenings and upcoming events at Wallingford Grange, please follow our "Wallingford Grange" Facebook page. Hope to see you at these events!

HARMONY GRANGE #92

Corr: Carol & Jim Ritter

Dec. 6: Cook and Serve Dinner for Spooner House residents

Dec. 14: Deb Heim will present a Victorian Christmas

Dec. 19: Monthly meeting will be a Christmas Party for members and guests

Resilience: The Festival of Trees event is sadly not happening this year. We discovered vendors need a lot of notice! Instead, we are all very excited to invite the vendors to our Spring Fair May 2. We will still have our plant sale but everything will happen at the Monroe Green. Stay tuned for more details.

Food Security: The Community Service Committee has big plans for the holiday season. We've reached out

Continued next page...

Redding Grange Fair

to the Monroe Foodbank who would like donations for the holidays. After delivering donations for Thanksgiving dinners, we will continue collecting to help our neighbors with Christmas dinners also. Shelton Spooner House will let us cook and serve dinner for residents on Dec. 6.

Self-Sustainability: The day before the Ag Fair our Grange's water well quit. After late evening calls to the First Selectman, the Health Department, and GI John, we installed a porta potty and were able to continue with a wonderful Ag Fair. Finding new members is self-sustainability for a Grange. We have added three wonderfully active new members: Aimee Smith, Claudio Murolo, and Michael Murray.

BEACON VALLEY GRANGE #103

Corr: Joanne Cipriano

Beacon Valley Grange decided at its last meeting in place of the usual potluck supper for our Christmas Party to have a chicken parm and pasta dinner. Who doesn't like pasta? Meeting date is Dec. 12th- supper at 6 PM and meeting at 7. Letter for the program is "S" for Santa. We will have a \$5 grab bag and Country Store.

We received fourth place in the Community Service Contest at State Session. This is thanks to the many hours of community volunteering by our members and Jean Meehan for filling out the report.

Our next Tag Sale and Open Mic is on Dec. 20th. We have many new items. Members and friends have been very generous. At 3 o'clock during the Open Mic we will have the drawing for our semi-annual raffle. We have plenty tickets to sell, so just give me a call and I will be happy to sell you some. We will also have some special snacks. We will not be having the tag sale or open mic during the months of January and February.

We extend our sympathy to Sandy Fitzner on the passing of her mother Helen. We hope by the time you are reading this, Lee Behlman is well



Images from the Redding Grange Fair in October.

on the road to recovery following surgery.

The members of Beacon Valley Grange offer holiday wishes to our fellow Granges/Grangers. May 2026 be one of your best years yet.

HEMLOCK GRANGE #182

Corr: Maureen Sanborn

Dec. 12: Christmas Tree

Dec. 26: Omitted for Christmas

Jan. 9: Winter Games

Jan. 23: Omitted, unless regular meeting is cancelled.

Coffee and refreshments will be served following the meeting.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH What is your Grange doing for Fundraisers?

We had two responses to last month's question about fundraisers....

Riverton Grange is currently fundraising for our kitchen renovation project. Our main fundraising efforts include:

- Vendor Marketplace (Christmas in July, Riverton Fair, Christmas in Riverton)
- Tag Sales
- Catered Meals
- Pursuing Community Grants

Granby Grange is fundraising for our hall electrical upgrade and our basement and kitchen renovation projects. Our main efforts include:

- Annual Rubber Duck Race
- Chili Cook-Off
- Pursuing Community Grants

Would you like to share your fundraising projects in an upcoming issue? We'll keep this question open for at least one more issue. Email Granger@CTStateGrange.org with your responses.

Happy Holidays

Happy Greetings from
Rob & Maggie Buck

**We wish all of our Grange
friends a very
Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year**
Jane & Ruel Miller

Happy Holidays from
Noel & Marcia Miller

**May your meetings be
productive, your programs
be entertaining and your
refreshments be delicious as
we start a New Year.**
Beacon Valley Grange #103

Happy Holidays from
Oxford Grange #194

**Wishing all a happy
holiday season and a healthy
& happy New Year**
Vernon Grange #52

**Happy Holidays &
Happy New Year!**
Granby Grange #5

**Happy Holidays
from the Hnaths**
CT, MD & FL
Ekank #89

**Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year
to all our CT Friends**
Phil & Maureen Prelli

**May your Christmas
be the merriest and your New
Year more joyous
than the last.**
Jody & Jodi Ann

Santa's Coming
Paisley Cameron

**Peace on Earth and
Good Will to All**
Greenfield Hill Grange #133

**Wishing you a happy, healthy
& prosperous New Year**

**Greetings & Blessed Health
and Joy with words of
encouragement and friendship**
Simsbury Grange #197

**Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year -
your friends at**
Hillstown Grange #87

Happy Holidays from
Bethlehem Grange #121

**The gift of love, the gift of
peace, the gift of happiness.
May all these be yours this
Christmas and New Year.**
Joanne Cipriano

Holiday Greetings from
George & Sharon Russell

**Wishing all CT Grangers
a joyful holiday season filled
with peace, purpose and
Grange fellowship.**
Dave Roberts, State Lect.

**Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year**
Bethlehem Grange #121

**Merry Christmas
Fellow Grangers!**
Oxford #194

**Happy Holidays from the
Officers & Members of**
Coventry Grange #75

**Wishing you all a
Crafty Holiday!**
Family Activities





Charles W. Dimmick
State Chaplain
Cheshire Grange No. 23
chaplain@ctstateGrange.org

*Pride goes before destruction,
and a haughty spirit before a fall.*
Proverbs 16:18

Do nothing from selfish
ambition or conceit, but in humility
count others more significant than
yourselves. Philippians 2:3

There are many words which
have more than one meaning,
sometimes with one meaning
being “good” and another being
“not so good”. Pride is one of these.
Pride can refer to satisfaction, as
in satisfied that something one
has accomplished came out well;
or pride can be boastfulness, which
is the kind of pride that our Bible
quotations above refer to.

The big difference to me is that
one type of pride is constructive
while the other type of pride is
destructive. Solomon, in the Book
of Ecclesiastes, tells us “Whatever
your hand finds to do, strive to
do well”, which is echoed in the
Grange Master’s final charge in
closing the Grange. In other words,
we should work constructively for
the common good so that we may
be proud of what we accomplish.
The other kind of pride, the bad



kind, is defined as an excessive
view of oneself without regard
for others. It is one of the seven
deadly sins, and often considered
the most serious of the seven,
as it may be the root of all
sin. It directly contradicts the
commandment that we must “love
your neighbor as yourself”. From
this sort of pride it is a short
step to avarice, greed, lust, envy,
and wrath. Being overly proud
alienates others, which can ruin
friendships or make it difficult
to form new friendships. It can
hinder your own personal growth
and learning, as it keeps you from
acknowledging your mistakes,
or feel that you already know
everything and therefore do not
need to learn anything new.

Prideful people find it difficult,
sometimes impossible, to apologize
for their actions or admit fault.

They find it difficult to seek help
when they need it, or to collaborate
or cooperate with others for the
common good. Thus they may
miss out on many opportunities
for success. Excessive pride can
lead to overconfidence in one’s
own abilities, which increases
the likelihood of making poor
decisions. But the worst problem
with excessive pride is that it
isolates a person, both from God
and from their fellow human
beings.

In Memoriam

Frank W. Forrest, Sr.
Hillstown Grange #87

“Well done, good and faithful servants.”