



the CONNECTICUT GRANGER

Published Monthly

Vol. 66, No. 5

The Official News Magazine of the Connecticut State Grange

February 2026

From the President's Desk



Robert Buck
State President

Bethlehem Grange No. 121
president@ctstategrange.org

With all that is going on today in the world, politically, socially, and otherwise, it is easy to forget that there is some good around us. When I go to work in the morning, I exit I-84 on the Route 8 southbound ramp and get off on Sunnyside Ave./Riverside St. It is a difficult exit due to restricted sight lines as well as being on a hill. I frequently get people stopping to let me out from the exit that are going up as well as downhill on Sunnyside Ave. Waterbury is not often thought of as a place with a lot of good and courteous drivers, but there are quite a few I would say which refreshes my faith in humankind. In like manner, dealing with Grangers does the same for me and I hope for each of you, whether that is locally, or at a meeting, conference or convention.

This month, the "Speak Like a CHAMP" phrase is "Grange Forward." I like to think of this as a verbal phrase which signifies progress, relevance, and momentum. These are three important ideas pertaining to our work. We can value the past, but must move ahead boldly. Being bold relates to the idea of relevance and once this is achieved, you gain the recognition for what is being done and hopefully

this builds the momentum among your members to keep making progress.

Maggie and I just returned from the Northeast Leaders Conference in Colchester, Vermont. We were blessed with mild weather for northern New England in winter. The conference was well attended with 14 from Connecticut. National Grange Vice President John Benedik of New Jersey joined us as did National Grange Young Adult Ambassador Jomni Tarbell of New York. Next year's conference will be in Cortland, NY. On the Northeast Connection officer group, Jody Cameron will be stepping down as Treasurer to avoid conflict of

interest as he is also a Convention Coordinator for National Grange. The NE Connection members voted to reduce the convention assessment to the seven northeast state Granges from \$5,000 to \$3,000 due to the robust financial condition of the Northeast Connection accounts. The New England Grange Building Trustees officers will remain the same. We had a great year at the Big E raising about \$25,000 in the store, and over \$9,000 in the quilt raffle to benefit St. Jude's Children's Hospital. The quilt raffle set a record which will be hard to beat! A new addition to the group of Grange Building Trustees voted into existence about a year ago provides for a Youth Member on the Board. There will be three

...Continued next page

Who Are You?



**Jody & Jodi Ann
Cameron**
Membership Co-Dir.

Ekono Comm. Grange No. 89
membership@ctstategrange.org

Who are you? What an interesting question. Who are you? Can you answer it? Do you know who you are? When you are asked "what is the Grange?" how do you answer? Do you know who you are? Do you tell them the Grange was organized blah blah blah..... zzzzzzzzzzz.

Or do you tell them about YOUR Grange, where the wheel meets the road, do you tell them about the im-

pact your Grange is currently having on your community? Do you tell them what you are doing TODAY to make your community better?

I know this next statement is not going to be popular for some, but please, PLEASE get out of the past. Our Grange history is rich in teaching and learning that have or should have given us the foundation to build a solid future. Many of our longer-term members have paved the way for us, but now are becoming roadblocks. Closed minded to new ways, new ideas, new life. Folks, the Grange lives at the local level. We've said this repeatedly,

...Continued on page 4



Connecticut State Grange
A part of the National Grange



NEXT ISSUE:
Articles Due February 15

From the President's Desk

Continued from page one...

of these eventually with one being voted in each year so they will rotate over a three year period. The very first one of these is to be Violet Donihee of Coventry Grange #75. Congratulations and welcome to the Board Violet! We want the input of young people.

During the conference, we had a workshop on the subject of working with committees which as a roll playing exercise was both fun and educational. I was also involved in a membership committee discussion

which allowed us to share some thoughts with each other. One of the highlights was a State President's panel involving six of us as Sherry Harriman of Maine was unable to attend. We each had to respond to six questions followed by questions from the audience and discussion. It was challenging and productive as we had to face both strengths and weaknesses. We each had to address questions about ritual, training of leaders, communications, what we call our officers, and other topics.

Presentations were made to us by several speakers: Anson Tibbetts from the Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets; Mary Fay of 4H in Vermont; and Wanda Emerich of the William H. Miner Agricultural Research Institute in Chazy, NY (north of Plattsburg, near the Canadian border). All were most interesting and informative.

Sunday morning closed with a church service by Vermont State Grange Chaplain Jenny Nelson followed by final reports and farewells.

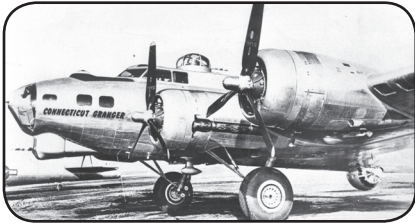
Now it is time to get back to work. State officers will soon meet on Zoom to iron out the form of the Grange mentoring program. This program is to be open-ended as individual mentors and Granges will work to decide on what form the program

will take according to the specific needs of each Grange. There is no set agenda and I want to make it clear that mentors are not looking to impose their or my will on Granges. They are there to be resources to help you all move forward by working on being relevant or improving the relevance you already have in your communities. I would like to see all Granges set goals in areas needing improvement according to the SMART goal paradigm. This goal setting exercise might give Granges ideas on which to work with their mentors. Our program will dovetail nicely with the National Grange Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) which will be rolled out by summer. Consider getting involved as a Grange in Action. All your Grange needs to do is three activities to qualify and file a report with Loretta Washington of National Grange to get a certificate for your efforts. If enough Granges participate, then our State Grange qualifies to be a State Grange in Action.

Another National Grange program is the Rural Life Initiative. Applying for this program could get your Grange a \$1,000 or even \$5,000 grant if your project is worthy of the latter level. Information on this program is printed in this issue and is also available at nationalgrange.org.

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:

Connecticut State Grange
100 Newfield Road
P.O. Box 3

Winchester Center, CT 06094
or Todd Gelineau, Editor

P.O. Box 1134, Sharon, CT 06069
Granger@CTStateGrange.org
(USPS 563-220)

the Connecticut Granger

is published monthly for \$10.00/yr. by:

Connecticut Granger, Inc..
100 Newfield Road, P.O. Box 3
Winchester Center, CT 06094

Periodicals postage paid
at Winsted, CT 06098

POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to:
Connecticut Granger,
100 Newfield Road, P.O. Box 3
Winchester Center, CT 06094



The Connecticut delegation to the NE Leaders Conference held in Colchester, VT in early January.



Todd Gelineau, State Secretary

At the 2025 State Grange Annual Session, Delegates adopted a resolution establishing a Grange Mentor Program. The purpose of the program is to provide a point of

contact for each Grange in the state. Mentors are not Deputies. Rather, they will serve as resources for our Granges, answering questions and providing support as needed. Each elected state officer has been

assigned 1 or 2 Granges.

The State Officers will be receiving training in mid-February and should be in touch with your Grange soon. In the meantime, if you have questions or need help, please reach out. They will be happy to hear from you.

National Rural Life Initiative

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 and 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 and 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. Grange 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

President Robert Buck

Norfield #146

Cannon #152

Vice President Ted Powell

Lyme #147

N. Stonington #138

Lecturer David Roberts

Winchester #74

Bridgewater #153

Steward Jaimie Cameron

Simsbury #197

Granby #5

A. Steward Donald Lanoue

Redding #15

Greenfield Hill #133

L.A. Steward Dawn Anstett

Whigville #48

Bridgewater #153

Chaplain Charles Dimmick

Wallingford #33

Wolcott #173

Treasurer Jody Cameron

Killingly #112

Stonington #168

Secretary Todd Gelineau

Taghhannuck #100

Riverton #169

Gatekeeper Aili McKeen

Harmony #92

Oxford #194

Ceres Jane Miller

Exec. Comm. Ruel Miller

Beacon Valley #103

Pomona Carol Hnath

Senexet Grange #40

Vernon #52

Flora Michelle DeDominicis

Cheshire #23

Coventry #75

Exec. Comm. Alma Graham

Ekonk #89

Exec. Comm. Nancy Strong

Hillstown #87

Exec. Comm. George Russell

Bethlehem #121

Exec. Comm. Noel Miller

Stafford #1

Hemlock #182

Who Are You?

Continued from page 1

without strong, or at least relevant Community Granges, the Grange CANNOT survive. Without the Community Grange, there is no Pomona, no State and no National Grange, so....no Grange

Your Grange and your members

need to know who you are, what you do and why you do it.

By knowing the answers to these three questions, your membership will be far more involved and connected. Your ability to talk up Grange will be easy and natural. People will be able to relate to your programming and outreach and will be able to make a conscious decision to participate in your activi-

ties or join your Grange.

Like it or not, we are not the only game in town, people and families are being pulled in many directions at once, social media is replacing personal contact, life, work, and family are dictating the use of the very valuable free time we each have and if we as Grange members cannot tell anyone Who You Are, we cannot compete!



Grange Public Relations: It's Time to Shake Things Up!

*Terri Fassio,
Public Relations Co-Director*

2026 is here, and it's the perfect time to put your Grange front and center in your community. Ready to make some noise? Here are some tried-and-true tips to boost your visibility and make your events shine.

Tell Your Story (Because It's Worth Telling!)

Your Grange isn't just another community organization — it has history, heart, and character. When you're promoting that upcoming fair or craft bazaar, don't just list the details. Share the good stuff!

How long has your Grange been around? What makes your annual events special? Slip a quick paragraph about your Grange's legacy into press releases, post a #ThrowbackThursday photo on Facebook, or add a fun fact to the bottom of your posters. People connect with stories, not just schedules.

Be the One to Reach Out

Here's the truth: local media outlets are swamped. They won't magically discover your amazing Grange — you need to get on their radar.

Send that email. Make that

phone call. Invite a reporter to your next event. Just remember to give them at least 3 weeks notice. A little proactive effort goes a long way toward getting coverage.

Keep It Simple (Really!)

Feeling overwhelmed by Facebook, press releases, and a mountain of media contacts? Take a breath and start small.

Pick **one** thing to focus on first. Master writing a solid press release, then tackle social media. Not comfortable with computers? Check out beginner classes at your local library, senior center, or adult ed program — many are free or low-cost. Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither is a good communica-

tions strategy.

Get Organized, Stay Ahead

Want to level-up your Grange promotions? Stay organized and come prepared.

- Keep a log of when you send press releases
- Set calendar reminders for follow-ups
- Schedule Facebook posts in advance for consistency
- Create an email folder for important messages
- Include ALL the details in your announcements (yes, even the time and cost!)

When you write for the Connecticut Granger or any publication, don't make readers hunt for information. Tell them what they need to know upfront — it's that simple.

The Bottom Line

Good public relations can transform your Grange's visibility and impact. Start with achievable goals, use the resources available to you, and watch your community connections grow. You've got this!

November 10-14, 2026
Broken Arrow, OK

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>

Looking forward to the year ahead...



Dave Roberts
State Lecturer

Riverton Grange No. 169
Lecturer@CTStateGrange.org

I've just returned from the Northeast Leaders Conference held in Colchester, Vermont, and I'm pleased to report it was an energizing and productive gathering. Thirteen Connecticut State Grangers attended this year's conference at the Hampton Inn in Colchester, joining fellow Grangers from across the region for learning, networking, and inspiration.

One of the highlights for me was the quality time spent with my fellow State Grange Lecturers from Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York. Together, we continued planning for our upcoming North East Lecturers Association (NELA) Conference, which will take place April 17–19, 2026, in Cortland, New York. I've written previously about this exciting, all-are-welcome conference, but I'd like to share a few additional details this month.

Conference attendees will be staying at the Quality Inn Cortland, located at 188 Clinton Avenue, Cortland, NY, conveniently next door to New York State Grange headquarters. To reserve your room for Friday and Saturday nights (April 17 and 18, checking out April 19), call 607-756-5622 and be sure to mention "Grange Conference." Reservations must be made by April 1 to receive the reduced nightly room rate of \$110 plus tax, which includes

a complimentary full breakfast both mornings.

The weekend will be packed with opportunities to learn and connect. The conference theme is America 250. Attendees will participate in five seminars and workshops, all led by State Grange Lecturers. One of the many highlights will be a tour of the New York State Grange Museum, and we're also planning a fun side trip to round out the experience. Food will be provided by New York State Grange members, so the cost for attendees will be very reasonable for the two lunches and one dinner. All attendees will receive a reusable bag full of goodies and a complimentary Lecturer's Handbook to take back home.

On Sunday morning (April 19), following the church service, I'll be partnering with Massachusetts State Grange Lecturer Deb Goodrich to co-host a 90-minute workshop focused on Project Sustenance and the Rural Life Initiative—two vital efforts shaping

the future of our organization and our communities. You won't want to miss it. If you would like to be part of this workshop and help in its planning, please contact me.

If there is sufficient interest, I would like to host a van to transport Connecticut Grangers to and from Cortland. There will be no charge to ride, but we do need to gauge interest. Please contact me by April 1 if you would like to travel with fellow Connecticut Grangers.

Finally, a friendly reminder: Connecticut State Grange's color is ORANGE, so please wear something orange on Friday during our opening ceremonies to show our state pride.

This is truly a low-cost, high-impact event, open to all Grangers and even potential Grangers. Since NELA conferences are held only once every other year, I hope you will choose to take part in this special 2026 opportunity. I look forward to seeing many of you in Cortland this April.

Help is needed for the Big E Quilt



Dawn Percoski
Family Activities Dir.

Vernon Grange No. 52
CWA@ctstategrange.org

Hello all,

I hope winter is treating you well. I have a request from Aili McKeen regarding the CT Quilt for the Eastern States as it is our turn this year. The article didn't make it into the Granger on time, so I have been asked to send it along to the FA chairman to bring to their Granges. The date is to be ignored as it states in the flyer Feb. 1st. She is hoping to get responses as soon as possible though.

Happy Quilting and I hope you are working on your other projects as well.

*Calling All
Quiltmakers!*

**It's Connecticut's turn to make the
Raffle Quilt for the
New England Grange Building
at the Big E!**

ASAP

**Reach out to Aili McKeen, ~~before Feb 1~~
if you'd like to contribute to this effort.
Details to be worked out by the group.**

text 203-671-4089

email ailimckeen@gmail.com

Legislatively Speaking



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

As I write this article we have started the second year of the Trump presidency. Boy am I exhausted, I bet you are too.

It's a stressful time with arguments with other nations and various states along with taking on Europe, China, and Russia. In Washington there's the push for a new ballroom, a second floor on the West Wing and an arch over the Potomac.

There's disturbing news of ICE rounding up people as illegals. A young mother was shot and killed by an officer and was called a domestic terrorist following the incident. Videos taken at different angles show Miss Good was trying to leave the area but was shot three times. We have been told that what we see with our eyes and hear with our ears is wrong.

On January 10 an alert went out about Connecticut Farmer PA 490 tax table increasing this year which will have higher property taxes on farmland. A group of Republicans and farmers met at the Capitol calling attention to the event, most blaming the Governor for his stand on solar energy or affordable housing. Yet the next day the UConn Extension Service released the following statement:

"In October 2025, the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), in consultation with the Department of Agriculture (DoAg), released recommended land use values for farmland, forest, and open space under Connecticut's PA 490 program.

These recommended values were compiled using data from rental rate surveys with an analysis by an

independent contractor and review by a certified appraiser. Over the past few weeks, CT DoAg has heard from a number of agricultural producers who expressed concern over some of the increases, in particular pasture and swamp land.

Upon further review and taking additional factors into consideration, the appraisal methodology was revised resulting

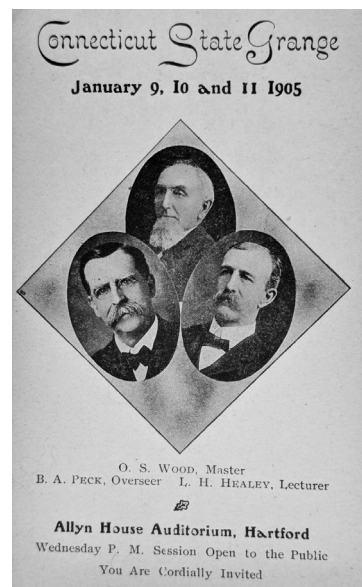
in updated recommended land use values. The corrected publication can be viewed on OPM's website under Land Classification."

This issue was highly politicized without the full facts.

An Executive Order was signed requiring schools to serve whole and 2% milk.

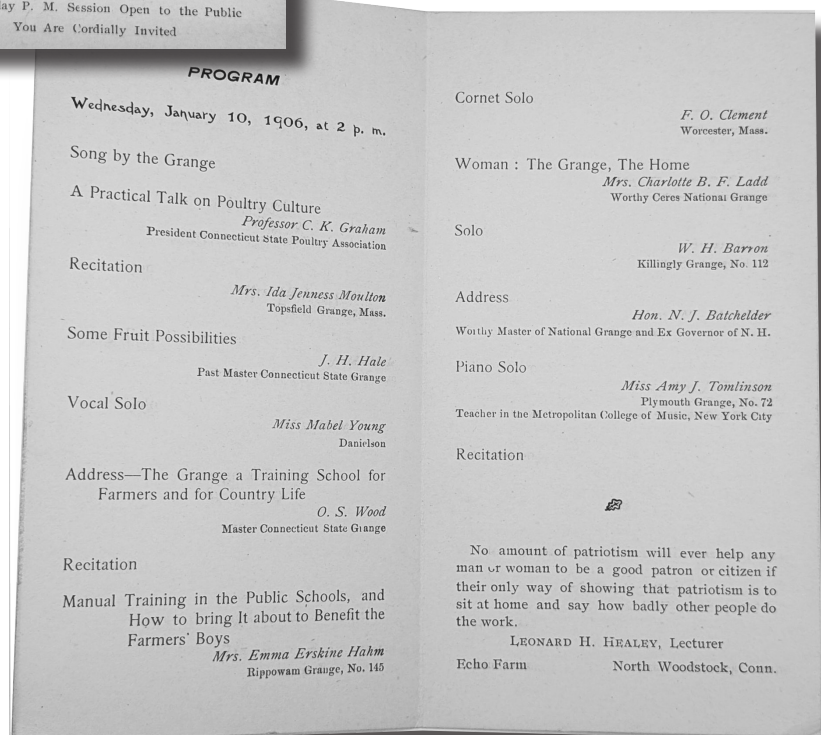
In this new year, we all need to watch out for each other, giving rides, getting groceries, fellowship and friendship because this is what Grangers do.

Memories of 1905



The Dudley Farm Museum in Guilford, CT recently featured the 1905 State Session program for the Connecticut State Grange in a social media post as their "Object of the Week", saying the following...

"Flashback Friday to Connecticut State Grange's January 1905 program! We found this gem in our historic Farmhouse's library room. The Connecticut State Grange consists of nearly thirty local chapters supporting service, agriculture and more. #Objectoftheweek #AgricultureCommunity #DudleyFarmMuseum





Rural Mental Health Facts

Rates for depression are higher in rural America than in urban areas¹, and suicide rates among people living in rural areas are 64 to 68 percent higher than those in large urban areas.²

Addressing mental illness is a significant challenge in rural America due to unique barriers that include twenty percent fewer primary care providers than in cities³, in addition to:

- A lack of psychiatrists in 65 percent of rural counties⁴;
- A lack of psychiatric nurse practitioners in 81 percent of rural counties⁴; and
- A lack of access to broadband internet in 28 percent of rural homes⁵.

There are additional challenges to mental health that are inherent in a rural lifestyle, which can include:

- Self-imposed barrier of asking for help when taught to pursue self-reliance as a virtue;
- Lack of trust in anyone to maintain confidentiality in a small, close-knit community;
- Fear of negative judgment from others as being incompetent or less capable;
- Difficulty getting an appointment with limited availability of mental health professionals;
- Time and transportation required for long-distance travel to meet with a mental health professional;
- Lack of adequate health insurance coverage;
- Feeling of isolation without having access to talk with someone outside of the community who understands mental health challenges in rural America;
- Weakening agricultural economy, financial instability; and,
- A solitary way of life.

Rural Minds™ Backgrounder

Rural Minds serves the mental health needs of rural Americans by:

- Listening to and providing forums for courageous people to share their experiences with mental illness;
- Connecting rural Americans across the country with existing mental health resources, including crisis and suicide hotlines, via www.RuralMinds.org;

- Identifying gaps in mental health information and services;

- Partnering with community leaders and organizations on mental health initiatives;

- Collaborating with individuals and organizations to improve rural mental health including rural residents, donors and volunteers, large and small nonprofits, and socially responsible corporations with a strong interest in the health of rural Americans; and,

- Developing new educational resources and support services to address the unmet needs for mental health in rural communities throughout the United States.

The Rural Minds mission is to serve as the informed voice for mental health in rural America and to provide mental health information and resources.

The Rural Minds vision is to end the suffering, silence and stigma around mental illness in rural America.

Sources:

1 Capriotti T, Pearson T, Dufour L. (2020, February 18). Health Disparities in Rural America: Current Challenges and Future Solutions. Clinical Advisor. Retrieved from <https://www.clinicaladvisor.com/home/topics/practice-management-information-center/health-disparities-in-rural-america-current-challenges-and-future-solutions/>

2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). Disparities in Suicide. Retrieved from, <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/facts/disparities-in-suicide.html>

3 JAMA, Assessment of Changes in Rural and Urban Primary Care Workforce in the United States From 2009 to 2017, Original Investigation Health Policy, October 28, 2020; Donglan Zhang, PhD1; Heejung Son, MS1,2; Ye Shen, PhD2; et al

4 Andrilla CHA, Patterson DG, Garberson LA, Coulthard C, Larson EH. Geographic Variation in the Supply of Selected Behavioral Health Providers. Am J Prev Med. 2018 Jun;54(6 Suppl 3): S199-S207. doi: 10.1016/j.amepre.2018.01.004. PMID: 29779543

5 Vogels, E. (August 19, 2021). Some digital divides persist between rural, urban and suburban America. Pew Research Center. Retrieved from, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/08/19/some-digital-divides-persist-between-rural-urban-and-suburban-america/>

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.

GRANGE FORWARD

Grange Forward is a unifying expression that signals progress, relevance, and momentum. It embodies the organization's commitment to innovation, service, and leadership in rural America. **Grange Forward** affirms that the Grange honors its heritage while actively shaping its future through bold vision, strong partnerships, and engaged membership. It is both a rallying cry and a strategic mindset – encouraging every member and every hall to move with purpose, adapt with confidence, and lead with courage. **Grange Forward** reflects a movement ready for its next chapter.

SAVE THE DATE

NATIONAL GRANGE LEADERS CONFERENCE

May 1-3, 2026 - Sparks, Nevada

Hole in the Wall Gang Camp



To the Connecticut State Grange,

We were delighted by your recent gift to The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp. Thank you for this act of generosity and compassion, which will bring experiences of hope, joy and belonging to children with serious illnesses and their families... right when they need them the most.

As a parent of a Hospital Outreach participant stated so beautifully, "In the beginning when Hazel was getting chemo, she was going to clinic four or five days a week, and it's monotonous, and it's hard, and it hurts. And those days when [Hospital Outreach] was there, she was excited. She wasn't in school; she wasn't getting to see friends, and that was her activity and her interaction. Having that time to move in a joyous way and not in this horrible way. It was... the best."

It is no small feat to bring a sense of normalcy to children facing such immense challenges to offer them the opportunity to just be kids. This is the true definition of "a different kind of healing" and it is what we strive to do- with your partnership- every single day. We

are strengthened by your faith in this mission and proud to work alongside you to ensure that the magic of Camp continues to reach more families across the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic each year.

Thank you again for creating a profound and lasting impact on the lives of so many.

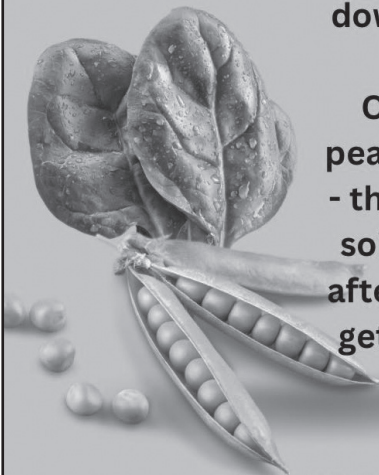
With my deepest gratitude,
James H. Canton
Chief Executive Officer

About the Camp: The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp was founded in Ashford, CT by actor Paul Newman in 1988. The camp is named after the gang in Newman's film "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid."

The State Grange Family Activities Committee designated this camp as one of its special projects for 2024-2025 and a donation of \$380 was donated to the Camp as a result of the project.

**Winter's not
downtime, it's prep
time -**

**Order seeds for
peas, spinach & kale
- they thrive in cold
soil, taste sweeter
after frost, and you
get an early spring
harvest.**



LYME GRANGE CT 147



Grange Declaration of Purposes

**FOR OUR BUSINESS INTERESTS WE DESIRE TO BRING PRODUCER
AND CONSUMER INTO THE MOST DIRECT AND FRIENDLY
RELATIONS POSSIBLE, REMEMBERING THAT 'INDIVIDUAL
HAPPINESS DEPENDS UPON GENERAL PROSPERTY.'**



ERNESTINE "ERNIE" KEISER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Applications Due March 1, 2026

Scholarship is available for Grange members in good standing, who are graduating high school seniors or continuing two-year community college, four-year college/university, or postsecondary vocational school students attending an accredited school. Students pursuing graduate degrees or higher vocational certifications are also eligible to apply.

LEARN MORE AT [HTTPS://GRANGEFOUNDATION.ORG/ERNESTINE-MEMORIAL-SCHOLARSHIP/](https://grangefoundation.org/ernestine-memorial-scholarship/)



E. CONNECTICUT POMONA #14

Corr: Carol Hnath

Mar. 7: Meeting at Hillstown Grange Hall, 7 pm (in case of inclement weather and cancellation of meeting, it will be held on March 14th.)

The next meeting of Eastern Connecticut Pomona Grange will be held on Saturday, March 7, 2026 at Hillstown Grange Hall, 617 Hills Street, East Hartford at 7:00 p.m. In case it is necessary to cancel the meeting due to inclement weather, it will be held the following Saturday, March 14th at Hillstown Grange Hall. If you have any question if the meeting will be held please check with an officer or check the Pomona Facebook page for the information. The program, “Dandelions”, will be presented by the Lecturer.

Our collection items for the March meeting are cleaning products. We will continue discussing the scheduled social activity on July 18th and will also hope to have more information concerning our Community Service project with Habitat for Humanity scheduled for April 25th. Please join us to participate in these discussions.

We had an enjoyable meeting in December with several members of Kent County Pomona in Rhode Island visiting us. The group included the President of the Rhode Island State Grange and newly installed member of the National Executive Committee, Walter Hartley. A picture of the ‘Christmas Chorus’ singing “The Goats 12 Days of Christmas” was shared in the January issue of

the Granger. Since our Lecturer was absent due to the pending birth of a grandchild out of state, each officer was asked to bring a Christmas item (reading, skit, poem, etc.) to share for the program. A fun and varied program was the result!

SENEXET GRANGE #40

Corr: Diane Miller

Feb. 25: National Bird Feeding Month

Again the members have been busy with pie sales. We worked on the hall and are having new heaters installed. Some of the men who are part of the “Corn Hole Gang” volunteered to install the heaters. This certainly will be a big help. We want to make everyone more comfortable.

The Winter Line Dancing group will continue at our hall on Sundays at 1-2:30PM. thru Feb. 15. This is a part of the Woodstock Recreation programs.

We will continue to prepare questions and ideas for possibilities to use the hall as a senior center. Many seniors have expressed interest in being able to get together more often.

The hall is available for rental. The Grange meets on the fourth Wednesday for our regular meetings.

VERNON GRANGE #52

Corr: Cherie Robinson

Feb. 6: (Zoom) Sweet Somethings

March 6: (Zoom) Deep Forester on Forest Management

April 6: Dandelions

From the cozy comfort of our homes, we are meeting on Zoom for the next few months.

Grange ritual was the focus of our Lecturer’s Program in January. We agreed that the conferring of the first four degrees is beautiful, meaningful and needed to tie us to our roots while giving us direction for the future.

We have made plans for our scarf and hat donation and distribution.

DEEP Forester Frank Cervo will join us on Zoom on March 6th give us insight on the CT forestry program and what we can do as Grangers to

help protect this natural resource. This promises to be an informative presentation. Join us from the comfort of your home.

We will continue to meet on Zoom with the plan to return to in-person meetings in April, weather permitting. Please join us if you can, we will be glad to provide the zoom info so you can join us on your screen or phone.

NORTH STONINGTON COMM. GRANGE #138

Corr: Nancy R. Weissmuller

Mar. 13: Lecturer: Ritual Program

Mar. 27: Lecturer’s Program State Contest Entry

Our one program in January was indeed a “Surprise”! The new title was “An Interview With an Aspiring Ballerina”. The ballerina, named Julia Watrous, is the beautiful, talented 15 year old granddaughter of our Lecturer, Sue Pianka. Sue first gave us a brief history of ballet. We then learned that the profession is very expensive, Point shoes cost between \$90 and \$170 and a professional ballerina can go through hundreds of point shoes a year! Sometimes a pair will be worn out in a single performance. A single tutu can take 90 hours to make and can cost thousands of dollars. A professional will go through 100 and 150 tutus during her career. Julia answered questions about her daily routine, then demonstrated the many different dance moves a ballerina must perfect. The piece de resistance of the evening was Julia’s performance of the “dance of the Spanish hot chocolate in the Land of Sweets” which she performed in The Nutcracker this year. Julia had to leave right after her performance as she had an audition the next day. We understand it was successful and we certainly understand why.

And if this snow that is falling outside our windows will just not reach the distressing, predicted depth, next time we will tell you all about fabulous February!



MOUNTAIN LAUREL POMONA #15

Corr: David Roberts

The second regular meeting of Mountain Laurel Pomona Grange No. 15 for Grange Year 2025–2026 will be held on Saturday, February 28, at Bethlehem (Grange) Memorial Hall, located at 1 Main Street South, Bethlehem, CT 06751. The meeting will begin promptly at 2:00 PM.

Lecturer Debbie Vail has arranged for Les Hulcoop to fill in for her at this meeting while she is recuperating. He will present an engaging gardening program for our attendees. Refreshments will be served following the meeting. All members (and potential members) are strongly encouraged to attend as we continue our work together in the new Grange year. We look forward to seeing you.

GRANBY GRANGE #5

Corr: David Roberts

Granby Grange held its regular monthly meeting via Zoom on Jan. 11.

During the business session, President Judy Doyle provided updates on the ongoing hall renovation. These included the electrical upgrade project, the oil tank situation, and extensive clean-up work on both levels of the historic hall by Grange and community members. Thanks to these efforts, the hall is looking remarkably updated. President Doyle reported that Granby 4-H, one of our community partners, has asked to become an Associate member of Granby Grange and will submit an application.

Members voted to host a Chili

Winchester Granny Pants



(Left) Sue Addison and Ted Powell (right) participate in "Granny Pants" at the January meeting of Winchester Grange #74.

Cookoff on Saturday, March 28, at the Granby Grange Hall from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM. There is no fee to enter the contest. Those wishing to attend and sample the chili, cornbread, and beverages may do so for \$10, which also allows them to vote for their favorite chili. Please contact Chair Judy Doyle at 503-320-7274 for details.

The 4th Annual Granby Grange Duck Race, chaired by Lecturer Dave Roberts, will take place on Saturday, May 2, at Salmon Brook Park, Pavilion 2, from 12:00 noon to 1:30 PM. This year's event will feature nearly \$2,000 in prizes and a maximum of 700 rubber ducks in the race. It is still only \$5 to sponsor one duck or \$20 to sponsor five rubber ducks. The first 20 ducks across the finish line will win a prize, as will the last duck to finish. Join us for this family fun-filled event. To sponsor a duck, just contact Dave at Granbydavidroberts@gmail.com or Venmo @David-Roberts-232.

Granby Grange will hold its next meeting on Sunday, February 8, at 2:00 PM.

WINCHESTER GRANGE #74

Corr: Todd A. Gelineau

Feb. 10: Hearts & Flowers (Country Store), Ref. Mary Lou Keefe

Feb. 11: Snow Date for Feb. 10

Feb. 20: Baked Potato Dinner, 5-7 PM, Dine-In or Take-Out

Feb. 24: Chips & Dips, Ref. Debbie Vail & Steve Serota

Winchester held its first meeting of 2026 on Jan. 13. Quite a few members were either unable to attend or were under the weather. Sue Addison stepped up to fill in for the Lecturer and featured a game called "Granny Pants." State Vice President Ted Powell was a good sport joining in on the fun.

Due to the tremendous amount of snow that fell the day before, the second meeting of Jan. was canceled. The next meeting will be on Feb. 10 and will be "Hearts and Flowers." Coming to Grange is a great way to cure cabin fever. Join us!

On Friday, Feb. 20, Winchester will hold a benefit Baked Potato Dinner with proceeds to benefit the American Cancer Society. Help us help others! Join us from 5-7 PM. Admission is \$10 with homemade dessert and beverage included. The meal will be large baked potatoes with all the fixings to include:

Continued next page...

butter, chili, broccoli, cheese, sour cream and chives. See you there.

TAGHHANNUCK GRANGE #100

Corr: Barbara Prindle

Feb. 12: Something About Books by Barbara Prindle Ref: Lynn Cline

Feb. 21 and if needed **Feb.22:** 1PM to 3PM: Open house to decorate picture frames.

Mar. 12: Into Spring by Debra Tyler Ref: Barbara Prindle

Apr. 9: Spring Cleaning In & Out by all Members Cleaning begins at 6PM, Ref: Debbie Hanlon.

May 14: Bring your favorite picture by Mike Taylor Ref: Lynn Cline

NOTE: Refreshments & Social Hour time at 7PM with Meeting at 7:30PM unless otherwise noted.

Picture frames are piling up at our Hall. At our January meeting we set February 21st and if necessary, February 22nd from 1PM-3PM for the CWA/Family Activities picture frame decorating contest with judging at State Session. We added 5 more G-notes to our collection.

Taghhannuck's new project for the year is "Nominating Local Farm as Grange Farm School-East". Our Grange Farm School Committee will give a 5-minute presentation at each of our meetings under "For the Good of the Order". In collaboration with Motherhouse and Local Farm they will offer 4 seasonal activities in our Hall, including a related short reading from our blue book and based on our Sign of the Order. This will bring together the ritual part of the Grange and good farming methods and awareness of ecosystem principles. They plan to have four seasonal activities in our Hall open to the public. These will link the 4 seasons and the 4 Degrees. We hope this will answer "what is the Grange" that people always ask members. At our last meeting the committee had the program "The Grange, a Quick History". Let me know if you want a copy.

On January 24th from 1:30pm-3:00pm Mother House and some Grange members will paint beehives in memory of Barbara Bartram.

As always you are welcome to join us at our meetings or any of the events.

BETHLEHEM GRANGE #121

Corr: Dorothy Fairchild

Feb. 8: Bethlehem Grange meets at 2pm

Feb. 28: Mt. Laurel Pomona meeting

We made a monetary donation toward the 250th Birthday Celebration of the birth of our country and we are planning for additional activities.

Cheryl and Ray conducted an interesting program on the country of Aruba. We had a fun time working on a GECKO puzzle.

We draped our Charter upon the death of Sister Sharon Ann Fairchild. She was the wife of Fred Fairchild. Sharon was Past Master of Watertown Grange#122 until it had merged with Bethlehem Grange. Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to Fred and family.

As noted above, we are hosting a Mountain Laurel Pomona meeting on Saturday, February 28th. Hoping for good weather and safe travels.

RIVERTON GRANGE #169

Corr: Dave Roberts

Feb. 1: 46th Veteran of the Month ceremony; 6:00 PM, Sunday

Feb. 6: Riverton Grange meeting via Zoom; 7:00 PM

Riverton Grange #169 held its regular monthly meeting on January 16 via Zoom. Community Service Chair Tim Sweeney updated members on the Veteran of the Month ceremonies, scheduled for the first Sunday of each month at 6:00 PM at the Riverton Grange Hall. The ceremonies are co-hosted by Riverton American Legion #159. The 2026 schedule is almost complete for every month.

Kitchen Renovation Committee Chair Judy Doyle continues to make great progress and updated members on the latest status. The project has been approved by the Town of Barkhamsted and is now out for bid. Once the bids are finalized, the committee will review funding options.

SIMSBURY GRANGE #197

Corr: Marguerite Smith

Simsbury Grange kicked off 2026 with an awesome musical showcase of local talent. Musical friends included: John Melrose hosting Steve Balkun, Chris Sheehan, Chris Ogren, Jill O'Brien, Tim McDonald and Judy Stickels. We LOVED having all of these musicians in our grange hall. Many community members came out on a cold winter night to support them. Hope to see you next month!

January 8th was our monthly meeting where we held an obligation ceremony for five new members. We are SO excited to have two adults and 3 young people join us in the work of our grange. Welcome Diane, Nancy, Nina, Aidan and Claire!

February 2nd - Music Monday - Join us for Saintshouse, the musical persona of Eddie Gautier, a Connecticut-based musician known for country, Americana, and rock covers/originals, who also significantly supports the veteran community through organizations like Soldier Songs and Voices. You won't want to miss Eddie. He's an active part of the local music scene, often playing at venues like the Talcott Mountain Collective and Luppoleto Brewing Co., recognized for his songwriting and community engagement.

February 23rd - Simsbury Grange is sponsoring another great film! This time it will take place at Simsbury library in the Program Room on Monday, Feb 23 from 6:30-8:00 pm. The film is: Old Growth Forest: Nature's Biotic Water Pump. This program will likely draw many people so be sure and register soon on Simsbury Public Library's Calendar of Events page. Reg. will close on Feb 11 at 6:30.

March 29th - Sunday - Be sure and join us for our 4th annual Seed Giveaway upstairs and Lego Build downstairs from 2:00-4:00 pm. You can register on Simsbury Public Library's calendar of events page. Bring the kids and have them build a Lego creation to enter in our June 2026 fair. See you there!

Pasta Program



A wonderful community education program at Wallingford Grange on January 13th featured Nicholas Imbriglio of Passionately Pasta. Nick shared the history of pasta, his love of pasta and a demo.

The nation's leading cancer advocates are calling for action.

The Medicare Multi-Cancer Early Detection Screening Coverage Act would create a pathway for Medicare to cover MCE tests. Currently, routine screening exists for only five cancers, leaving most without screening options. Early detection equals better outcomes.

WITH AN UNPRECEDENTED 400+ COSPONSORS, CONGRESS, IT'S TIME TO PASS H.R. 842/S. 339

preventcancer[®]
FOUNDATION

ACCC[®]
ASSOCIATION OF CANCER CARE CENTERS

American Cancer Society
Cancer Action Network

CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY

FIGHT
COLORECTAL CANCER

GO² FOR LUNG CANCER

9-0
GRANGE

OFFICIAL PROPERTY
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance

preventcancer.org

Part of the PREVENT CANCER FOUNDATION

WINDOW TO THE PAST

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.



This Month

We heard from Joyce Jordan -- "About the windows to the past which was in the last issue of the Granger which was January 2026 - The three men - I don't know the first guy on the left. The middle guy is Bob West he was the master of Tolland Grange and the guy next to him is Ernie Dimmock. He was also a member of Tolland Grange but I don't know the guy on the left. Just its escapes me whatever his name is, but anyway thats what I wanted you to know."



Last Month



CHESHIRE GRANGE #23

Corr: Ruel Miller

Feb. 4: Why is Football The Number One Sporting Event in the USA?

Feb. 18: Connecticut Patriots

The county AA Chapter held it annual Alkathon over the Christmas and New Years holidays. This event has been held at our hall for many years. They pay us a stipend, snake out our sewer line, and then finish by washing, cleaning, and waxing our dinning room floor to include the kitchen and the two restrooms. As mentioned earlier, we have had some inquiries to rent out our hall. Insurance regulations require they be carefully screened. We are compiling a list of areas that we will need to address involving our hall such as painting and our front steps. We will meet downstairs in February.

WALLINGFORD GRANGE #33

Corr: Stephen Fengler

Wallingford Grange in the month of December held a collection of over 20 twin size afghans, blankets, and quilts for the Veterans in the VA Connecticut Blind Center in West Haven. Thank you to everyone who donated! These blankets provide a home atmosphere and warmth during the time Veterans are inpatient in West Haven for a 4-6 week training program away from their homes. The brightly colored quilts helps Veterans with low vision more easily find their bedrooms and add color to an often boring hospital room. We look forward to doing this collection again next year, so if you knit, crochet, or

sew, please think of this for next year!

In early January, we also had a wonderful community education program featuring Nicholas Imbriglio of Passionately Pasta. Nick shared the history of pasta including about it's origins since ancient Egypt, how it evolved between both Asia and Europe, and how the many different shapes of pasta were made. He also shared about his love of pasta and provided a demo on how to make your own pasta using flour and water. Thank you Nicholas for leading this event!

Some special events Wallingford Grange is looking forward to hosting include a Fly Tying Workshop (February 3rd: 6pm-8pm), Pancake Breakfast (February 14th: 8:30am-11am), Youth Mason Jar Ice Cream Event (February 17th: 10am-12pm), History of Cheese Lecture

(March 10th: 6pm- 8pm), Pancake Breakfast (March 14th: 8:30am-11am), Wallingford in Tune Concert (March 28th 12pm-6pm), and History of Wallingford Farms Lecture (April 14h: 6pm-8pm).

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!

HEMLOCK GRANGE #182

Corr: Maureen Sanborn

Feb. 13: Love is in the Air

Feb. 27: Omitted, unless regular meeting is canceled

Mar. 13: Irish Lucky Charms

Mar. 27: Omitted, unless regular meeting is canceled.

Coffee and refreshments will be served following the meeting.



The Connecticut State Grange History Book - Volume 1

Perseverance: Connecticut Granges Make Their Mark On History

*Celebrating 140 Years of the Grange in Connecticut
through the Eyes of our Members*

• COST: 85.00 per book plus shipping •

CUSTOMER INFO:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

CONNECTICUT STATE GRANGE

✉ secretary@ctstategrange.org

📍 P.O. Box 3, Winchester Center, CT 06094

Payment:

☐ CHECK: _____

☐ CASH: _____

☐ OTHER: _____

**Please make checks payable to the
Connecticut State Grange**

**ORDER
FORM**

#	DESCRIPTION	COST	Qty	TOTAL
01	Book Recipient: _____ _____	\$85.00 per book	_____	\$ _____
02	Book Recipient: _____ _____	\$85.00 per book	_____	\$ _____
03	Book Recipient: _____ _____	\$85.00 per book	_____	\$ _____

Shipping & Information:

• History Books cost \$85 each

• Shipping will be via USPS Flat Rate Side-loading Medium Priority Mail Box, and will cost the following per shipping address:
Shipping Cost Per Book = \$14.00

• Pre-orders will be accepted through **February 15, 2026**.
Books will then be printed, and shipping will begin late-March, 2026.

SUBTOTAL: _____

SHIPPING: \$14.00 x # of Books = _____

TOTAL DUE: _____

PAYMENT IN FULL MUST BE MADE AT TIME OF THE
PRE-ORDER. WE WILL NOT BE INVOICING ORDERS.

MAKE PROJECT SUSTENANCE PART OF YOUR GRANGE'S 2026 RESOLUTIONS



PROJECT SUSTENANCE

GROWING FOOD SECURITY, SELF-SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE IN AMERICA'S HOMETOWNS

What is PROJECT SUSTENANCE?

Project Sustenance is the National Grange's signature program, designed to align and elevate the community-based work Granges are already doing through three clearly defined pillars:

Self-Sustainability projects build practical skills and long-term independence for individuals and communities. Granges might host workshops on gardening, food preservation, financial literacy, home efficiency, or skill-sharing across generations. Other ideas include tool libraries or repair events. By empowering people with knowledge and hands-on experience, these initiatives promote confidence, adaptability, and a culture of self-reliance that strengthens both individuals and the community as a whole.

Food Security projects focus on improving access to affordable, nutritious food while strengthening local food systems. Granges may consider community gardens, seed libraries, food pantries, meal programs, or partnerships with local farmers, schools, and food banks. These efforts can address hunger, reduce food waste, and promote healthy eating, while reinforcing the vital role agriculture plays in every community. Food Security initiatives help ensure neighbors have reliable access to food today while building stronger, more resilient food networks for the future.

Have you had a successful project, event, or program connected to one of the Project Sustenance pillars?

We want to hear about it!

Visit <https://grange.biz/pjsubmission> to let us know how it went.

We are still building a content library of projects that Granges can replicate in their communities.

Help us make a difference -
one project, one community at a time.



Learn more and access ideas and resources at
<https://www.nationalgrange.org/projectsustenance>



Greenfield Hill Grange #133
1873 Hillside Road
Fairfield, CT



ST. PATRICK'S DAY CORNED BEEF & CABBAGE DINNER

March 14, 2026

6:00 pm
(Doors open 5:30)



FOR RESERVATIONS call

THIS IS A RESERVATION ONLY EVENT:

Jim at 203-259-8023

Steve at 203-367-4373

Reservations by March 5th
No tickets sold at the door
Donation \$23.00 per person



www.facebook.com/Greenfield.Hill.Granger



CONNECTICUT STATE GRANGE



Virtual SOCIAL HOUR

TOPIC:

**How To Keep Your Grange Meetings
Fun and Interesting**

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2026 7:00 PM

Join us for a casual social gathering. Stop by and say Hello!
You don't have to be a Connecticut Grange Member to attend.



Send an e-mail to information@ctstategrange.org
for the Zoom Meeting Access Information

TAGHHANNUCK GRANGE



Craft Night

featuring
Frame
Decorating

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST
AND IF NEEDED
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND
TIME: 1PM TO 3PM

Materials will be provided but feel free to bring your own.

Call Debbie ASAP @ 845-418-9755 to register.
Be sure to let us know your ideas
so we can get the materials you would like to work with.

Butter Making



Wallingford Grange held a youth event featuring butter making. There was also a tasting of milk, buttermilk and chocolate. Many registered for the Jan. 19 event but only a few braved the snow. Up next- Mason Jar Ice Cream in February.

Hillstown Grange

617 Hills St, East Hartford

February 21 • 10AM - 2 PM

Comfort Food and Shop

Shop with LOCAL VENDORS!

Gourmet Grilled Cheese
& Tomato Soup
11 AM - 1 PM



SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESSES!

WINCHESTER GRANGE

BAKED POTATO DINNER



\$10 per person

Homemade Dessert & Beverage included



Baked Potato with all the Fixings!

Butter • Chili • Broccoli • Cheese • Sour Cream and Chives

50% of proceeds to benefit the American Cancer Society
Help Us to Help Others!

FRIDAY
FEBRUARY 20, 2026

5:00 - 7:00 PM • Dine-In or To-Go

Door Prize
Drawing!

Winchester Grange Hall

100 Newfield Road • Winchester Center, CT
(Intersection of Route 263 & Newfield Road)

www.WinchesterGrange.org





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

You shall not covet. *Exodus 20:17*

And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." *Luke 12:15*

God's warning against covetousness is a warning for our own good. Wanting what belongs to another is a gateway sin that will lead us to many other sins, such as theft, envy, greed, and even murder. Collective covetousness among a group of people or among the leaders of a group of people may even lead to war. Covetousness is a type of basic instinct seen in animals and small children, and we must train both our children and our pets away from this instinct. Remember your parents trying to teach you to share? It was for your own good.

In the long run, being covetous leads to misery, and learning not to be covetous leads to Joy. You will generally be much happier being satisfied with what you have than always wanting more than you have. St. Paul, in his first letter to Timothy, talks directly about this: "But godliness with contentment



is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs." I have included this extensive quote, because I couldn't have said it any better.

One way to wean yourself from covetousness is to work positively to develop those attributes which are the opposite. This includes generosity, benevolence, charity, unselfishness, kindness, liberality, helpfulness and many others, all of which may be grouped under

the heading of unselfish love for all people. The rewards of unselfishness are many, including: It improves the quality of your life. It gives you an appreciation for life and a comprehension of its higher values. In most cases it also improves your physical and mental health. Not only will your own happiness increase, but you are more likely to attract friends and decrease your chances of being lonely. So, guard against covetousness.

In Memoriam

Theodore Drumm, G.S.
Taghannuck Grange #100

Sharon Ann Fairchild
Bethlehem Grange #121

"Well done, good and faithful servants."