



the CONNECTICUT GRANGER

Published Monthly

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The Official News Magazine of the Connecticut State Grange

March 2026

From the President's Desk



Robert Buck
State President

Bethlehem Grange No. 121
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On my way to work this morning, someone made a hasty and rather abrupt lane change which made me wonder if he/she knew where he/she was going. I assumed probably not, but it brought me back to our discussion of Mission and Vision statements at the kick-off Grange Mentor Program Sunday night. Do you and by extension your Grange know where you are going? What is your current mission and vision for the future? Some stated that this is a hard discussion and may not be necessary. In some cases this may be true but I guarantee that some Granges need this discussion. It is a difficult topic because it forces people to face difficult realities that you may be wandering aimlessly without a purpose. And by the way, just quoting old Grange pamphlets isn't particularly meaningful as missions and visions can and should change.

I hope you have all read The Cameron's column from the February Granger: "Who Are You?" This is the other half of the above question and probably should precede it. We all want to think we have some idea of our identity, both personal, and by extension, our Grange. By asking who we are as a Grange, whether it is Community, Pomona, State, or National, we are really asking what those bodies do that makes a

significant difference. Today. Not in the past, except as a side-note perhaps. We are in the present and moving forward, not back. The questions of "what you do?" and "why do you do it?" tie in with my first question of where you are going in the world.

The mentoring team met and they were presented with my vision for the program. They are to be available to you the Granges and your specific needs. While I have provided an outline of topics or guidelines for the process, I want them to be receptive to your specific needs. This will and should vary from Grange to Grange as no two are the same. There are also a few adjustments to the mentor assignments and these will

be updated in this Granger.

The Mentor Program is to tie in with the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) from National Grange. While its formal rollout is after the National Leaders Conference in early May, I have chosen to jump the gun and get an early go on it. National Grange Executive Committee Susan Noah from Oregon joined out Sunday Mentor kick-off. The PIP will require Granges to assess and evaluate themselves on paper (think of it as homework) which will be collected. These programs are to strengthen Granges and increase membership. Do or Die! You don't want your Granges to pass on the The Great Grange Above, do you?

In two months, Vice President Ted Powell and I will travel to the

...Continued next page

Creating Memorable Experiences

by Terri Fassio, Public Relations Co-Director

The truth is that people today are drowning in information but starving for connection. Experience-based engagement is about creating moments that stick with people long after they've left your Grange hall. And the best part? It's exactly what Granges were built to do.

When your Grange shifts from hosting meetings to creating experiences, magic happens. You're building genuine community bonds — there's something about canning tomatoes together or learning to square dance that breaks down the walls. These activities give people a reason to keep coming back because they genuinely don't want to miss out. That's the difference between attendance and engagement.

Plus, experience-based programming is your secret weapon for attracting younger generations. Millennials and Gen Z are looking for authentic experiences and opportunities to learn practical skills. When you offer hands-on workshops, farm-to-table dinners, or heritage craft classes, you're speaking their language.

What Does This Look Like in Practice?

• Hands-on workshops: Think beekeeping basics, sourdough bread baking, furniture restoration, or natural dyeing. People love learning skills they can actually use.

...Continued on page 2



Connecticut State Grange
A part of the National Grange



NEXT ISSUE:
Articles Due March 15

From the President's Desk

Continued from page one...

Nugget Resort in Sparks, Nevada for National Leaders Conference. These are always good and I can't wait.

For some time, National Grange has been lobbying as part of a consortium on the MCED (Multi-Cancer Early Detection Act), and this finally passed Congress. This is significant to rural folks who are more heavily affected cancer and other chronic health conditions due to a lack of available healthcare options.

The new National Lecturer, Dr. Richard Stonebraker from Maryland, has ended all contests

in his department. He felt that all the competition took away from the true purpose of his position. That is to educate, train, and offer guidance, and be a resource for all Lecturers. He is a vocational agricultural educator by profession. I applaud him for having the courage to make such a change and do things differently. We all need to consider his approach I think. States are encouraged to run their own contests as they wish.

With the changes to healthcare coverage likely to come out of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, our National Legislative Director, Burton Eller, would like anyone actually experiencing changes to their coverage to report those changes to him with advocacy education and awareness.

As winter wears on, consider working on craft projects at home and in your Granges to make items to donate to the New England Grange Building store at the Big E. This year is the year for Connecticut to make a quilt for the quilt raffle. Dawn will be looking for help in producing this quilt so all you quilters, consider donating your time and talents to helping produce a worthy product. Also consider donating your time to work in the store for part of the duration of the Big E.

Food security is an important consideration in our society today, and a worry for many. Food prices have increased drastically in the past couple of years. Project Sustenance is a worthy project of the National Grange in which to be involved. A limited food bank like Winchester Grange, dinners, chili cook-offs; the possibilities are many.

Creating Memorable Experiences

Continued from page one...

- Seasonal celebrations: Host a maple sugaring day, apple pressing party, or wreath making festival where people can participate in the process, not just observe.

- Intergenerational skill shares: Pair older members who know traditional crafts with younger folks eager to learn. Quilting bees, woodworking sessions, crochet and knitting classes, and preserving/canning workshops create wonderful cross-generational opportunities and connections.

The key is making it participatory. People should leave with something that they've had a hand in making, enthusiasm for the Grange, or a new skill — but ideally all three.

Marketing Your Experiences for Maximum Impact

Creating amazing experiences is only half the battle — you need people to know about them!

- Use social media: Post photos and videos from your events showing people having fun. Use both local and Grange hashtags and tag community partners.

- Leverage word-of-mouth: Your best marketers are happy participants. Encourage attendees to bring friends and even consider a "bring a friend for free" policy.

- Partner locally: Cross-promote with coffee shops, libraries, the historical society, farmers market, other local organizations, other Granges, and even the local community college.

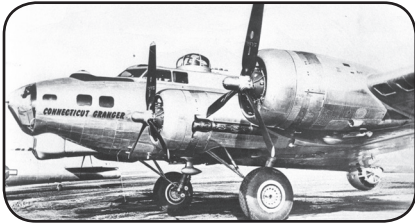
- Create shareable content: Design eye-catching colorful flyers with compelling photos and clear details about what participants will DO, not just information on how to attend.

Start small. Pick one experience-based event and try it. Then learn from it, and build from there. Your community is hungry for authentic connections and meaningful experiences. Your Grange is perfectly positioned to provide exactly that.

So what memorable experiences will your Grange create first?

the Connecticut Granger

Published Monthly



WW II Flying Fortress "Connecticut Granger"

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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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P.O. Box 3

Winchester Center, CT 06094
or Todd Gelineau, Editor
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Join us in Cortland for Lecturers Conf.



Dave Roberts
State Lecturer
Riverton Grange No. 169
Lecturer@CTStateGrange.org

We held our 17th Connecticut State Grange Lecturers Roundup on Sunday, February 15. Our guest speaker was Larry Segall, referred to us by Chuck Strand, Executive Director of Rural Minds. Larry shared his expertise as a mental health care provider, helping attendees better understand mental health therapy, work to reduce its stigma, and learn about free services that support mental well-being. The discussion was informative, engaging, and timely.

Now is the time to register for the 2026 North East Region Lecturers Association (NELA) Conference, which will be held April 17–19, 2026, at the New York State Grange Headquarters, 100 Grange Place, Cortland, NY 13045. I am offering free transportation to and from the conference for any Connecticut State Grange members and their guests. Please contact me if you would like to attend and ride with us.

With our nation approaching its 250th anniversary, this year's conference theme, "America 250," will explore how Grange education, community engagement, and shared history continue to shape our local, regional, and national story. The conference will feature workshops, discussions, and fellowship designed to inspire and equip participants for the years ahead.

This event is open to everyone—not just Lecturers. Members, friends, and anyone interested in Grange education and programming are warmly encouraged to attend. The conference begins at 7:00 PM on Friday, April 17, and concludes by 11:00 AM on Sunday, April 19.

Affordable and Flexible
Registration
Conference Registration: \$20 per attendee
Saturday Lunch: Soups and sandwiches – \$15
Celebration Dinner: Turkey buffet – \$25

Attendees may pay for individual events or save \$5 by registering for all three for a total of \$55. Whether you attend for one meal, one day, or the entire weekend, the 2026 NELA Conference offers a meaningful and affordable opportunity to learn, connect, and celebrate. Our next conference won't be held until 2028, so you won't want to miss the 2026 NELA Conference.

Conference attendees will stay at the Quality Inn Cortland, located at 188 Clinton Avenue, Cortland, NY, conveniently next door to the 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 mention "Grange Conference." Reservations must be made by April 1 to receive the reduced nightly rate of \$110 plus tax, which includes a complimentary full breakfast both mornings.

We hope you'll join us in Cortland this April as we reflect on America's past—and look ahead to the next 250 years.

NELA 2026 Conference Registration Coupon

North East Lecturers Association Conference
April 17–19, 2026

New York State Grange Headquarters,
100 Grange Place, Cortland, NY 13045

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Email/Phone: _____

Please check all that apply:

- ☐ Conference Registration – \$20
- ☐ Saturday Lunch (Soups & Sandwiches) – \$15
- ☐ Celebration Dinner (Turkey Buffet) – \$25
- ☐ All Events Package – \$55 (Save \$5!)

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Dietary restrictions or special needs:

Please make checks payable to: NELA
Mail this coupon and payment by April 10, 2026, to:
Dave Roberts, Treasurer
North East Lecturers Association
P.O. Box 155
Riverton, CT 06065

Wallingford takes a bird walk



Members of Wallingford Grange gathered at the Tyler Mill Preserve in Wallingford on Feb. 21 for a Winter Birdwatching Walk. The walk was led by Jeff Kohan who pointed out local birds, learning simple ID tips, and talked about discovering how our rural landscape supports wildlife. After, members met back at the Grange to learn more about winter bird watching with hot beverages and snacks.

Hot Potato



State Lecturer Dave Roberts visits with Winchester Grange Lecturer Ramona Fassio at the Baked Potato Dinner.



Winchester Grange held a very successful Baked Potato Dinner on Feb. 20 with the food selling out and the profit was divided between the Grange and the American Cancer Society who received \$670.

Hank the Burro



From Hank the Burro -- Maggie, Rob, and I joined the folks at Hemlock Grange last night. We were joined by Ted and Stephanie as well as Noel. A good time was had by all, and then they fed us. Yum-yum. Someone made great brownies and the UConn corn chips and salsa were yummy.

Connecticut's Founding Fathers



On February 18th, Cheshire Grange had special guests along with a presentation about four of our CT founding fathers.

For many Grange members, it seems that the 1976 Bicentennial celebrations weren't that long ago. How quickly fifty years goes by! On July 4, 2026, our nation will commemorate and celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The journey toward this historic milestone is an opportunity to pause and reflect on our nation's past, honor the contributions of all Americans, and look ahead toward the future we want to create for the next generation and beyond.

On February 18, Cheshire Grange welcomed Ray Bennett and his daughter, Susanna Bennett for their program about the Connecticut signers of the Declaration of Independence. Ray is a member of Cheshire's Semiquincentennial Steering Committee, a group in charge of celebrating America's 250th birthday in Cheshire. He has lived in Meriden and Cheshire, a lifelong Connecticut resident. Every Fourth of July, the Bennett Family provides the Town of Cheshire with a presentation celebrating the Signing, so creating patriotic programs for our Nation's Semiquincentennial is nothing new for him.

Ray and Susanna gave a rousing

lecture about the four Connecticut signers, Samuel Huntington, Roger Sherman, William Williams, and Oliver Wolcott. They also included signer Lyman Hall, who was born in Wallingford, but later moved to Georgia. Ray explained that the early American patriots felt that God dictated and supported their actions, quoting scripture from the St. Paul that mirrors some of the verbiage used in the revolutionary documents of this time. Each signer knew they were committing a treasonable act against the then British government which would be punishable by hanging. While most of the Connecticut signers became future governors of our state, Susanna explained that other signers were punished. Their homes were burned to the ground. Their property was taken. Their families suffered. The Bennetts used multimedia to share some of the 52 signers speaking in their own words. [The Signers, The White House]

Learning the stories about these Connecticut signers made for an exciting and captivating program at the Cheshire Grange. The Bennett Family invited all our Grange family to attend the morning presentation on July 4th at Bartlem Park in Cheshire (search, "Town of Cheshire 250," for details).

Additional news from last night includes five member applications submitted. These will be voted on at our next meeting. Good luck to our potential new members.

THE BRIDGEWATER GRANGE #153 PRESENTS

SATURDAY

EASTER EGG HUNT

APRIL 4th | START 10am

FOR AGES 1-10

LOCATED AT BRIDGEWATER'S PRATT PAVILION

At the corner of Hut Hill Rd & Sarah Sanford E

Join Bridgewater Grange #153 on Saturday, April 4th at 10am for an exciting Easter Egg Hunt hosted by the Grange at Bridgewater's Pratt Pavilion. The Pavilion is located at the corner of Hut Hill Road & Sarah Sanford East. This fun event is designed for children ages 1-10.

Don't miss out on the festive family fun and community spirit!

Legislatively Speaking



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

Spring is just around the corner. Maple sugar is flowing and greenhouses are prepping the seed bed for this year's great bloom. Yet many farmers are struggling with discussions of which crops to plant, which contract to sign, and what program to sign-up for now that will give the greatest return at the fall harvest.

Many of our farmers are still awaiting the promised farm bailout funds, improved market trade deals, and promises made but yet to be kept. Where we are now is worse than the 1980s farm crisis. Many farms have been sold, food prices have been raised throughout the year. The next year can have a devastating effect on all Americans and the world.

The upcoming mid-term elections are being addressed as a National Security event. The SAVE Act, or the SAVE America Act, will require passports or birth certificates as identification for elections. Remember Real ID when we had to bring all of our documents to the DMV to be verified and get the gold star on our licenses so we can fly. This cost us millions, and now we have to do it again. This time they require passports and birth certificates to be able to vote. But what happens to women who got married, can they vote? What about people who changed their names, can they vote? How about those who can't find their birth certificates due to fires, weather disasters, can they vote? The Constitution says the states shall regulate elections,

yet the present push is for the Federal government to regulate the elections.

Last month the President signed a bill to have whole milk to be served in schools. We have requested this for many years. Whole milk is healthy as the promotion goes, "Does a body good." Days later we found out that the roll out was for Raw Milk, but was pulled back because of a listeria death of an infant drinking raw milk. Food safety is

Try the new Baking Contest



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

As I am writing this article, it's a balmy 8 degrees (without the wind-factor). But it's the perfect time to do some baking. It makes the house smell wonderful and helps warm you up! Have you tried to make this year's baking contest for the Blueberry tea cake recipe? I made this and documented each stage with pictures.

Those of you who made it to December's Zoom meeting were able to see it and were excited to try it. There were a couple of things that

and will always be the priority for all consumers.

AG Day will be at the State Capitol on March 18th from 10-1. We will be there to greet and visit with our legislators and other agricultural groups. Come out and see what is happening in Connecticut.

While we are still in the cold and damp season and the seed catalogs are in the mailbox, now's the time to reflect on the past year and plan for the future.

Happy spring!

were mentioned, one was that it tasted bland. I said a tsp of vanilla added would be acceptable but I baked 2 batches one with vanilla and one without. Both came out really good. The second comment was regarding the pan size. I will say that a 13 x 9 pan is too big and made a really thin cake. If you have a smaller rectangle pan or a small square pan, they come out a bit higher and are easier to cut. I actually enjoyed this recipe very much and it makes a very small batch. Perfect to take some with you when you visit someone. Sit and have a cup of tea (or coffee) and enjoy this with a friend. Thank you, Claudia Sopstyle, for this recipe!



Are you or a loved one considering surgery?
Do you need guidance on what questions to ask in advance?
Do you want to remain in your home?
Do you want to make sure that your loved ones are prepared?
Do you know how to advocate for yourself?

Consider using this program from the National Grange.

Learn more at
<http://www.seniorsurgeryguides.com>

This program was funded through a Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) Engage Washington PCORI Engagement Award (EAW #10059)
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Revised Mentor List

At the recent Zoom meeting of the Connecticut State Grange mentors, there were several adjustments made to Grange assignments. Below is the final list of Mentors and their assigned Granges.

President Robert Buck

Norfield #146

Cannon #152

Vice President Ted Powell

Lyme #147

Stonington #168

Lecturer David Roberts

Winchester #74

Bridgewater #153

Steward Jaime Cameron

Simsbury #197

Riverton #169

Assistant Steward Donald Lanoue

Redding #15

Greenfield Hill #134

Lady Assistant Steward Dawn Anstett

Whigville #48

Bridgewater #153

Chaplain Charles Dimmock

Wallingford #33

Wolcott #173

Treasurer Jody Cameron

Killingly #112

N. Stonington #138

Secretary Todd Gelineau

Taghannuck #100

Gatekeeper Aili McKeen

Harmony #92

Oxford #194

Ceres Jane Miller and

Executive Committee Ruel Miller

Beacon Valley #103

Pomona Carol Hnath

Senexet #40

Vernon #52

Flora Michelle DeDominicis

Cheshire #23

Coventry #75

Executive Committee Alma Graham

Ekonk #89

Executive Committee Nancy Strong

Hillstown #87

Executive Committee George Russell

Bethlehem #121

Executive Committee Noel Miller

Stafford #1

Hemlock #182



Wallingford made Jar Ice Cream in February.

Harmony Grange 92 Basic Backyard Maple Sugaring

Fee is \$5.00 person
12 and under Free

Fee includes
coffee/donuts and
chance to win door
prizes!



Spots are limited!
reserve your seat by
contacting the Harmony
Grange Facebook page or
email
smith9801@hotmail.com
and pay at the door

Saturday, March 14 @ 11:00 AM

103 Hurd Ave, Monroe, CT

Join us for this informative hour long lesson on
basic backyard maple tapping/sugaring

Greenfield Hill Grange
1873 Hillside Road -- Fairfield, CT

good Friday

April 3, 2026



Eat IN
Or
Take OUT

**Batter Dipped Fish
or
Batter Dipped
Shrimp
French Fries
Cole Slaw
Dessert
Water & Soda Bar**

6 PM
doors open at 5:30 PM

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

Please order by
March 27, 2026
Jim 203.259.8023
Steve 203.367.4373

Donation \$24.00

(Sorry about the price increase, just keeping up with cost increases)



www.facebook.com/Greenfield.Hill.Granger

William Pearl



William and Mary Pearl

by Faith Quinlan

William W. Pearl was born on September 27, 1914. He was the son of Mabel Waite Pearl and William A. Pearl. He had 3 sisters, Beatrice, Dorothy, and Eleanor, plus two step siblings from his father's second marriage. He was a long-time resident of Hampton, CT and graduated from Windham High School where he became a charter member of the Future Farmers of America in CT. He headed the Tri-Ag Chapter and served as State President for three years and attended the FFA National convention as the first representative from Connecticut, representing the National FFA at the National Grange session in Hartford in 1934. At this same National Grange Session he became a Seventh Degree member.

William W., a 4-H member since boyhood, became a trustee of the Windham County 4-H camp. His reputation within the organization earned him the role of CT representative and judge of cattle at the National Dairy Show in St. Louis, MO in 1932.

William W. married his first wife, Mildred Hersant Pearl, and they had three children together. There were 2 daughters, Joyce and Joanne, and a son William L.

He was a farmer from 1935 to 1958 and owned 287 acres with 75 acres of corn, over 100 heads of purebred holsteins, and 70 dairy cows. When he left farming in 1958, he went on to become an insurance salesman and real estate agent. His education also included graduating from being a Dale Carnegie School in public speaking

and the Graham breeding school. He founded the Pearl Agency, an insurance and real estate firm.

In 1969 his wife Mildred passed away and he remarried in 1970 to his second wife, Mary Braque LaVangie Pearl and became a stepfather to her two children.

Mary was his wife when he became State Master of Connecticut. She is noted for her contributions to the Junior Sheep Show at the Little River Grange Fair where she is quoted in the Aug. 1977 Hartford Courant, saying, "We offer it to encourage the participation of young people, who might be hesitant about competing against adults."

His father, William A., passed away in 1971 at the age of 90. He had been a rural mail carrier in Hampton for over 40 years before he retired in 1950. He was a member of Pomona, State, and National Granges for 77 years beginning with Little River Grange #36.

William W. Pearl became a Grange member in 1928, when he joined Little River Grange #36 in Hampton, Connecticut. Through his beginnings in Subordinate Grange he was Assistant Steward, Overseer and then Master (1934 and 1939). At the Pomona level he Assistant Steward, Steward, Overseer, and then Master in (1943-44). His roles at the CT State Grange were as Quinebaug Pomona Deputy (1939), Gatekeeper, Assistant Steward, Steward, Overseer, and then Master in 1969-1973.

Mr. Pearl held a lot of community roles with some of the most distinguished including, President and Chairman of the Board of the Patrons Mutual Insurance Company in Glastonbury, member of the Hampton Board of Assessors, served on the Governors, Environmental Policy Committee, Chairman of the Salvation Army Service Unit in Hampton, CT, President and long-time member of

the Board of Directors for the Eliza Clark Memorial Clinic in Pomfret, CT, also an original member of the Windham County Men's Fellowship Association and a longtime member of the Hampton Congregational Church, a charter member of the Future Farmers of America in Connecticut including serving as the FFA CT State President for three years. He also helped organize the local Dairymen's Association of Rhode Island and Connecticut, served on the state and local Boards of the Artificial Breeders Association of Connecticut, a lifetime member of the Holstein Friesian Association, and a member of the Willimantic Board of Realtors.

At the 85th Annual Connecticut State Grange session held in Meriden Connecticut. William W. Pearl assumed leadership of the 23,000 member Patrons of Husbandry for a two year term. He was re-elected for a consecutive term at the 87th Annual session.

In 1965 Kingsley Beecher of Winsted, the State Master at the time, invited the National Grange to meet in CT. It had previously been held in CT in 1907 and 1935. The invitation to return was answered in 1972 while William W. was Master. The 106th annual National Grange Convention would be, according to the Hartford Courant 11/12/72, "One of the largest conventions in Hartford's history." It was held at the Hartford Hilton and 10,000 Grange members from 38 states were expected to attend. Former Governor John Demsey, Governor Thomas Meskill, Mayor George Athanson were invited to speak as was the Secretary of Agriculture, Earl L. Butz.

In 1973, Pearl was still CT State Master and a Hampton resident when a proposed extension to Interstate 84 (I84) from Windham to the Rhode Island border was debated. Ecology Action of Hampton took a strong stand against the proposal but Pearl supported the completion of I84 citing the benefits that come with improved highways.

William W. Pearl died in 1989 at the age of 75.



E. CONNECTICUT POMONA #14

Corr: Carol Hnath

March 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 would love to have more of our members join us at our meetings. Please consider this an invitation to do so!

VERNON GRANGE #52

Corr: Cherie Robinson

March 6: Guest Speaker DEEP Forester (Zoom Meeting)

Apr. 10: Dandelions

May 1: In Memoriam

At our February meeting, titled Sweet Somethings, we heard of the origins of the CandyLand game in a polio ward in the 1940's. Also presented was Maya Angelou's essay on the Sweetness of Charity, as our Grange Salutation beseeches us to dispense Charity.

Please join us March 6th on Zoom for a presentation by DEEP Forester Frank Cervo. Frank will discuss forest management and what we as a Grange can do to assist in this effort. We will hope to be back to meeting in our hall in April and would love to see you. Please check with us to be sure we are back to in person meetings

NORTH STONINGTON COMM. GRANGE #138

Corr: Nancy R. Weissmuller

March 13: Lecturer: Ritual Program

March 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. Our lovely ballerina 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!

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.

RELENTLESS POSITIVITY

Relentless Positivity is the intentional practice of maintaining a constructive and forward-looking attitude, even when facing difficulties. It is not blind optimism – it is disciplined optimism. This mindset sets the tone for productive conversations, strengthens resilience, and helps teams overcome setbacks. **Relentless positivity** encourages members to focus on solutions, celebrate progress, and create an environment where challenges are met with courage and confidence.



MOUNTAIN LAUREL POMONA #15

Corr: David Roberts

Thank you to everyone who attended our February 28 Meeting #2, hosted at Bethlehem (Grange) Memorial Hall. We appreciate Pomona Lecturer Debbie Vail for arranging for Les Hulcoop to present an engaging program on gardening. We wish Debbie a speedy recovery!

Next Meeting: Meeting #3 will be held on Saturday, May 9, 2026, at the Whigville Grange Hall, 153 S. Main Street, Whigville (Burlington)

GRANBY GRANGE #5

Corr: David Roberts

Granby Grange held its regular monthly meeting via Zoom on February 8. Members were honored to welcome Connecticut State Grange President Rob Buck and Vice President Ted Powell, who both joined the meeting. It was announced that Vice President Powell will serve as Granby Grange's Deputy and Mentor during our efforts to reinvigorate this historic Grange.

During the business session, members voted to welcome Granby 4-H as the Grange's first Affiliate member. The Grange also voted in a new member, David Suzenski, whom members look forward to welcoming at the next in-person meeting.

Grange President Judy Doyle provided updates on the ongoing renovation of the historic Grange hall. Progress includes an electrical upgrade project, addressing the hall's oil situation, and extensive clean-up work on both levels of the building. Members

Taghhanuck Grange Farm School



Taghannuck Grange held a Farm School in February with 28 participants enjoying the "Beekeepers Meet & Greet".

voted to spend almost \$15,000 on the hall basement refurbishment (new basement windows and ADA-accessible door). Thanks to the efforts of Grange members and community volunteers, the hall is looking remarkably updated and refreshed.

Several upcoming events were announced. The Town of Granby Volunteer Fair will be held on February 28 from 10:00 a.m. to noon at the Granby Senior Center. On Saturday, March 28, Granby Grange will host a Chili Cookoff at the Grange hall from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. There is no fee to enter the contest. Attendees may sample chili, cornbread, and beverages for \$10 and vote for their favorite chili. For more information, please contact Chair Judy Doyle at 503-320-7274. The Granby Drummer generously ran a donated advertisement promoting this event.

The 4th Annual Granby Grange Duck Race, chaired by Lecturer Dave Roberts, will take place on Saturday, May 2, from noon to 1:30 p.m. at Salmon Brook Park, Pavilion 2. This year's race will feature nearly \$2,000 in prizes, with up to 700 rubber ducks competing. Sponsorship is \$5 per duck or \$20 for five ducks. Prizes will be awarded to the first 20 ducks to cross the finish line, as well as the last duck to finish. This popular event promises fun for the whole family. To sponsor a duck, contact Dave Roberts at Granbydavidroberts@gmail.com or via Venmo at @David-Roberts-232.

Granby Grange's next meeting will be held on Sunday, March 8, at 2:00

p.m. Members are hopeful that winter weather will cooperate so meetings can resume in the Grange hall. All are invited to attend!

WINCHESTER GRANGE #74

Corr: Todd A. Gelineau

March 10: Wearing of the Green, Ref. Patrick O'Brien

March 24: Family Activities Program, Ref. Ramona Fassio

Apr. 14: The Pink Moon (Country Store), Ref. Mary Lou Keefe

Apr. 28: Baseball is Here, Ref. Kim & Randy Carlson

Due to illness and frigid temperatures, our attendance at February meetings was smaller than normal but we were able to hold both meetings despite being preceded by large snowstorms two days prior.

On Feb. 20 we held a tremendously successful Baked Potato Dinner. We thank Angela Cain for donating much of the food for the event and to Earl & Sandy Phillips for donating the chili. Every bit of the food was gone by the end of the evening and the proceeds have been divided between the Grange and the American Cancer Society which will receive \$670. Thank you to everyone who supported this event now in its second year.

We are looking to hold a tag sale possibly in April when the cold weather breaks. Watch this column for updates. Until then, spring is coming!

TAGHANNUCK GRANGE #100

Corr: Barbara Prindle

Continued next page...

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

Mar. 4: Spring Seed Swap & Starting Seeds 4:30PM-6:00PM

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

June 3: Cultivating/Care of Soil 4:30PM-6:00PM

June 6 & 7: Rummage and Plant Sale 9AM-3PM

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

Our Grange Farm School Committee's Beekeepers Meet & Greet was a big success with 28 participants. Chris Hopkins opened by explaining Patrons of Husbandry then read a bit about agriculture from our source book. Iris Herman was our speaker and brought bee keeping exhibits. A lively Q&A took place including long time beekeepers and newbees. We were happy to have Bill and Kathy Barnes from Wallingford Grange in attendance.

The Farm School Committee's 4 seasonal meetings/events will be held: Mar.4th-Spring/Seed Swap & Starting Seeds. June 3rd -Summer/Cultivating/Care of the Soil. Sept.2nd Autumn/Preserve Our Harvest and Dec 2nd Winter/Care of our Tools all are 4:30PM-6:00PM.

As I write this, we will be holding a Craft Night on February 21st and if needed on the 22nd with members and the public featuring Frame Decorating with the intention to entering them at State Session. Family Activities continues to collect G-Notes which we will also bring there.

RIVERTON GRANGE #169

Corr: Dave Roberts

March 1: 47th Veteran of the Month ceremony; 6:00 PM; at the hall

March 6: Riverton Grange meeting; 6:00 PM – 118th Anniversary

Potluck/Birthday celebration, followed by the monthly membership meeting at 7:00 PM, at the hall

Riverton Grange#169 held its regular monthly meeting on February 6 via Zoom. During the meeting, Community Service Chair Tim Sweeney updated members on the Grange's Veteran of the Month ceremonies, which are held on the first Sunday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the Riverton Grange Hall. These meaningful ceremonies are co-hosted by Riverton American Legion Post #159 and remain an important way the Grange honors local veterans.

Kitchen Renovation Committee Chair Judy Doyle reported continued progress on the long-anticipated kitchen renovation project. The plans have received approval from the Town of Barkhamsted and are now out to bid. Once bids are received, the committee will review funding options and determine next steps.

During the business session, members voted to submit an application for a \$1,000 grant from the National Grange Rural Life Initiative. If approved, the grant would support an America 250 program running from Memorial Day through Labor Day. The project will be co-chaired by Dawn Anstett and Tim Sweeney.

The meeting concluded on a celebratory note as members extended birthday wishes to Jackie Martin, who turned 80 on February 10. Lecturer James Mele also hosted a fun and engaging February-themed program for members.

Looking ahead, Riverton Grange will host its 47th Veteran of the Month ceremony on Sunday, March 1, at 6:00 p.m. at the Grange Hall. The Grange's next meeting will take place on Friday, March 6, beginning with a 118th Anniversary Potluck Dinner at 6:00 p.m., followed by the regular membership meeting at 7:00 p.m. Members and friends are encouraged to attend and help celebrate 118 years of service to the Riverton and Barkhamsted communities.

SIMSBURY GRANGE #197

Corr: Marguerite Smith

On February 12th - The meeting was held on Zoom and we were

delighted to see all of our new members! Discussions centered around two potential new members, community service hours, our St. Pauly Shed, looking into a sound system for the hall, events and rentals coming up and our fair publicity.

February 23rd - Simsbury Grange sponsored another film at Simsbury library entitled, Old Growth Forest: Nature's Biotic Water Pump by our friend and filmmaker, Ray Asselin. Many community members enjoyed learning about how these forests help maintain, regulate, and moderate our climate, bringing fresh water inland to themselves and us. Did you know they are fundamental and critical to our way of life?

March 2nd - Music Monday - featuring Melanie Champagne and Riva Jean. These two fabulous musicians are singers/songwriters from the local area. You DEFINITELY want to look them up on Facebook, Instagram, Apple music or Spotify. Their music is a blend of thoughtful lyrics, personal storytelling, and a warm acoustic sound. You will love their introspective, indie/folk-pop sensibility. Doors 6:30, Music at 7:00.

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 13th Agricultural fair for a cash prize. Additional parking is available behind the shops in the Farms Village Plaza. See you there!

April 6th - Music Monday - Gracin Dorsey and Joel Weik are back! Our local community LOVES these two musicians. Gracin is an accomplished guitarist, singer and songwriter. You will love his deep voice! Joel is a FABULOUS Fingerstyle guitarist and 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 welcome spring!

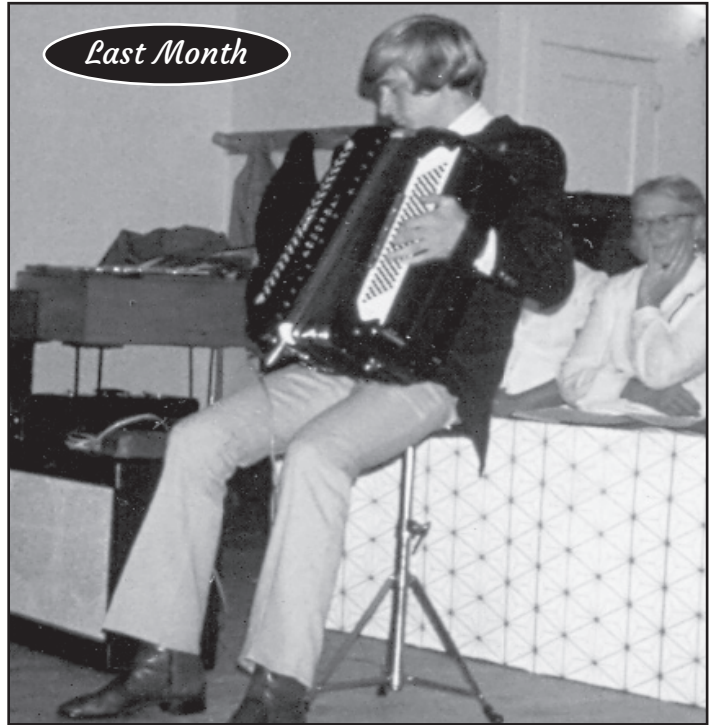
WINDOW TO THE PAST

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.

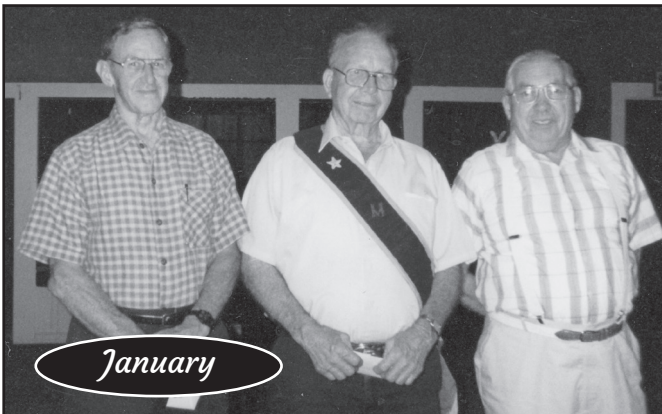
This Month



Last Month



January



We heard from Philip Birkett from Morris. He called about the January 2026 picture, with three men standing in the photo. "The little man was Frank Albert Birkett who was Master of Litchfield Grange many times. (I'm his son.) The next month someone wrote in but had it wrong. I don't know who the other 2 men are but I recognize my Dad."

We did not receive answers for the February picture. From the picture we can tell it was taken at a concert of the Mountain County Choristers at Winchester Grange Hall. Any ideas?

Ag. Comm. Appointment

Kristina Donihee, Ag. Director

The Agriculture Committee would like to welcome Debbie Hanlon of Taghannuck Grange No. 100 as a new member of the committee. At this time of year we cannot wait for spring to begin planting but remember, snow is the poor man's fertilizer. Be thinking about your nominees for the Agricultural Awards this year and fill out the nomination forms. While you are at it, don't forget about the other state contests.

IN KIND WORDS AND
DEEDS DISPENSE
CHARITY, AS FREELY
AS FLOWERS DO
THEIR PERFUME.

Flora, Fourth Degree





NUTMEG POMONA #16

Corr: Joanne Cipriano

The next meeting of Nutmeg Pomona will be held at Cheshire Grange on Sunday, March 21st. The Fifth Degree will be conferred and it will be our annual inspection. Rehearsal will be held on Sunday, March 14 at Cheshire Grange starting at 2 PM. Let's hope we have another good class of candidates.

Members are reminded to bring a can of soup for our community service project. Masters are reminded to have a written report of the activities of their Granges. Secretaries are reminded that Quarterly Reports to the State and Pomona Secretaries are due at the end of the month.

CHESHIRE GRANGE #23

Corr: Ruel Miller

March 4: The Poetry In Our Lives
March 18: Youth Night-I Remember when I was Young

We are preparing for a busy few months. We will continue to meet downstairs until our first meeting in March to conserve our heating oil. We have five applications for membership with three more in the wings. A good start for our new year. Two fund raising dinners loom for March and April. We will have a planning meeting in early March for our 2026 Cheshire Grange Community Fair. Our lecturer, Diane Calabro, continues to provide excellent and informative programs in store for us. We welcome visitors our way. We meet the first and third

Wednesdays of the month at our hall on Wallingford Road.

BEACON VALLEY GRANGE #103

Corr: Joanne Cipriano

To save on heating fuel our January and February meetings were held at the home of Master Joanne Cipriano. January went as scheduled, February was postponed to February 27 because of an "iffy" weather report.

Luckily for us the Boy Scouts met during these months on Feb. 4th when they entered the hall the furnace had malfunctioned and the temperature was 29 degrees causing the pipes to freeze. Thanks to the Scout Leader Charles Alegi and assistants, they got the furnace running. Charles and Frank Behlman returned on Thursday to check the damages. A plumber had to be called. Things are now back in order.

Our next meeting is March 13th and we will be back meeting at the hall. The program (Letter "B") and refreshments are in the charge of the Family Activities Committee (Marianne Nielsen, Ron Gunther, John Taylor and Pat Fischer).

Members are reminded that dues are now payable. Please send your \$35.00 to Treasurer Ronald Fischer-117 Walnut St., Naugatuck, CT 06770 and save us the postage. Sorry to report that starting on October 2026 our dues will be raised to \$50.00 per year. This increase is necessary as National Grange has increased dues, requiring the State Grange to \$9.00 per member, per quarter to \$36.00 per year. Our present dues doesn't cover that amount our leave us any to pay our bills.

Our Tag Sales (9 to 2) and Open Mic (2 to 5) will be back on schedule starting Saturday, March 21. These activities are held the third Saturday of each month.

Come and check our treasures and hear some great music.

GREENFIELD HILL GRANGE #133

Corr: Jim & Lori Golias

Well, it seems the Farmers' Almanac had it correct when they predicted the weather for this season. "Chill, snow, repeat," was the forecast and winter did deliver. The "chill, snow, repeat" caused us to cancel our December and January meetings, so needless to say, we are eager for spring.

Despite the January meeting being cancelled, with the help of a few eager volunteers we were still able to make about 100 Valentines to send to our Veteran friends at the VA in West Haven. Thank you to our crafty creators! They have all been delivered!

Please save the date - April 3- for our annual Good Friday Fish Fry. Fish or shrimp, fries, cole slaw, tarter...

Eat in or take out. Reservations a must - please call Jim: 203.259.8023.

Save the date for our Annual Agricultural Fair. August 22, 2026.

NORFIELD GRANGE #146

Corr: Steve Porter

March 5: "Beware the Ides of March" + Monthly Business Meeting at 7:30 pm.

March 12: Trivia Night: Doors Open at 6:30 pm. Games Begin at 7:00 pm.
April 2: "No April Fools" + Monthly Business Meeting at 7:30 pm.

Apr. 30: Trivia Night: Doors Open at 6:30 pm. Games Begin at 7:00 pm.

There's always something happening at the Norfield Grange in Weston. In late November Wreath Decorating, our ever popular annual event, brought out 30 members, friends & neighbors to decorate live wreaths to adorn their homes/doors and make great holiday gifts. December we hosted a Holiday Party and collected unwrapped gifts for Toys for Tots hosted by our local WPD and generous non-perishable donations to help stock the shelves at our Weston Food Pantry. January was a Field Trip to a Trivia Night at a Church and a great time was had by all. This spurred the idea to launch Trivia Nights at our Grange!

At February's meeting we planned the upcoming event which we're optimistic will be successful and hope to host one Trivia Night per quarter during the remainder of 2026. As with all of our events we now take reservations and members/guests/neighbors pre-pay which makes for better planning and more successful community events and fundraising for our Grange with some of our net proceeds going towards our buildings & grounds and the remainder to our high school scholarship fund.

HEMLOCK GRANGE #182

Corr: Maureen Sanborn

March 13: Irish Lucky Charms

March 27: Omitted, unless regular meeting is cancelled.

Apr. 10: Putting on Your Old Grey Bonnet

Apr. 24: Omitted, unless regular meeting is cancelled.

Coffee and refreshments will be served following the meeting.

STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITIES

A National Grange Webinar Series



ENGAGING NEW ENERGY

MARCH

10

60 MINUTES

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

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

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

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

Join us for

Trivia Night

at the

Norfield Grange

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 2026
DOORS OPEN AT 6:30 PM
GAMES BEGIN AT
7:00 PM
12 Good Hill Road, Weston

 **venmo**

Tables \$90 for up to 6 players (\$15/pp)
Prepay via venmo to reserve your table
← Venmo @LynKimberly
Bring your own beverages and snacks
Reserve your table today!
FMI: norfieldgrange@gmail.com



TAGHHANNUCK GRANGE NO. 100

The Grange Farm School Committee of Taghannuck Grange #100 has adopted the following Mission Statement:

- Help create a vibrant agricultural community with learning and awareness of ecosystem principles.
- Bring into current awareness and thinking the ancient mythological thoughts and words that are the foundation of the Grange.

As part of that, we are planning 4 seasonal workshops for 2026, to be held at our Grange Hall:

SPRING: Seed Swap & Starting
Wed. March 4 4:30-6:00

SUMMER: Cultivation
Wed., June 3 4:30-6:00

AUTUMN: Harvest & Storage
Wed., Sept. 2 4:30-6:00

WINTER: Rest & Plan for Spring
Wed., Dec. 2 4:30-6:00

CONNECTICUT STATE GRANGE

Virtual **SOCIAL HOUR** **2026 SCHEDULE**

**MAY
21**

**THURSDAY, MAY 21
7:00 PM EST**

TOPIC: CT STATE GRANGE HISTORY
BOOK PROJECT - VOLUME 2 UPDATE

**THURSDAY, AUG. 27
7:00 PM EST**

TOPIC: GRANGE HOLIDAY PLANNING
SHOULD START IN THE SUMMER

**AUG
27**

**DEC
17**

**THURSDAY, SEPT. 17
7:00 PM EST**

TOPIC: 2026 CONNECTICUT STATE
GRANGE VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY



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



Greenfield Hill Grange #133
1873 Hillside Road
Fairfield, CT



ST. PATRICK'S DAY CORNEB 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.Grange



Granby Grange

JOIN US FOR A FUN COMMUNITY CHILI CONTEST!
TASTE, VOTE, AND ENJOY SOME "SERIOUS" CHILI BRAGGING RIGHTS!
\$10.00 FEE TO TASTE AND JUDGE

CHILI CONTEST

**SATURDAY
MARCH 28, 2026**

**11:00 AM
to
1:00 PM**

**GRANBY GRANGE
212 N GRANBY RD**

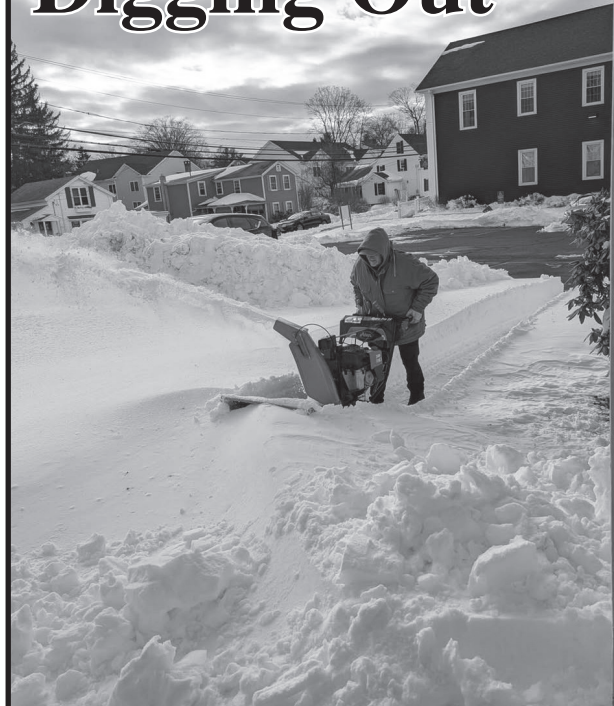
Judging will be done by People's Choice!
All ticket holders get one vote
Most votes wins "Best in Show"



TO ENTER CALL JUDY @ 503-320-7274



Digging Out



One of Cheshire Grange's intrepid members braving the post-blizzard weather snow blowing our Grange walkways. Some of the snowdrifts were as much as three feet in height! Brrr!!



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

What does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? *Micah 6:8*

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. *James 4:12*

In a previous column I talked about pride. This month I look at the opposite attitude, humility. I am referring to true humility, not the false humility sometimes affected by people as a way of making other people think well of them. True humility means recognizing our dependence upon God for not only our welfare but also our entire being. "In Him we live and move and have our being", as St. Paul says. As a corollary, we recognize that we also rely upon our fellow human beings and are interdependent on others for support, survival, and well-being.

What are the marks of humble people? According to Marci Ferrell (online blog: Ten characteristics of Humility): They trust in the sovereignty of God; they are thankful people; they are in awe of God's goodness and grace towards them; they can rejoice with others; they practice unity with others;

Walk humbly with your God



they are not wise in their own eyes; they forgive quickly because they have been forgiven much; they have a teachable spirit [they understand that they do not know everything and can learn much from others by listening]; they build others up; and they have servant's hearts.

Do I just decide to be humble and therefore become humble? It doesn't quite work that way. Instead it is usually a response to external circumstances that allows true humility to appear. It is when

faced by trials that we learn that humility is perhaps the first step necessary to dealing with the crisis. Those of you familiar with the Twelve Steps program of Alcoholics Anonymous will remember that the first two steps for recovery from addiction were to admit to being powerless and turning to a power greater than ourselves to restore us. The same process applies to any crisis. Admit that we cannot handle all outside problems by ourselves but that we need to rely on God to help us, that God is the one in charge, not we ourselves.

Once we recognize God's sovereignty, then it becomes easier for us to work on the other characteristics of humility, especially those involving our interactions with the rest of humanity.

November 10-14, 2026
Broken Arrow, OK



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