



the CONNECTICUT GRANGER

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The Official News Magazine of the Connecticut State Grange

May 2026

From the President's Desk



Robert Buck
State President

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As I write this, I have just attended the Bridgewater Grange Easter Egg Hunt. Thought I heard someone say this tradition is about 70 years old. While a bit windy, it was sunny and fairly warm for early April. Not sure of exact numbers, and while some thought there were a few more attendees last year, I felt it was a very good crowd of parents and kids of varying ages. Between Grange members and friends of the Grange, there were about 10 people working the event. Renee Siana goes all out to make sure there are nice prizes for the egg hunters and donates many of them. She introduced the event with opening comments to which I added by introducing myself on behalf of the State Grange, as well as complementing Bridgewater Grange for their work and inviting folks to join. It is a fun event. Afterwards, several of us enjoyed breakfast and good conversation at the Bistro in the town center. This is a good time of the year for your Grange to hold an event of your own Grange's choice to get the public out and tell them what you do for your community. After winter, people are looking to get out and do things. Oblige them with fun events.

Membership development how-

to is the \$65,000 question of our (Grange) age. People ask me about attracting members. I go to events and see the baskets of applications put out on a table.

Sometimes I hear that no one or only one or two people picked one up. It's because attracting members is an active process of you selling a product, the Grange, and inviting people in by ASKING them to JOIN, not just take the application.

I hear of times where completed applications or even just questions about membership from interested parties are shuffled about to a "higher authority." Some express the idea that these things need to go through the "proper Grange

channels" while potential members get lost in the shuffle or forgotten. Rare it is that those folk are so persistent as to hunt a Granger down and beg to be admitted. There is no "high, higher, or highest authority" on membership.

We, as individual Grangers, are all responsible for membership development. Don't be one to "pass the buck" as the old saying goes (I love that expression, by the way). Be the ACTIVE recruiter for your Grange.

If someone expresses interest and you don't have an application, make your own on a piece of paper. Think about inviting that person to your next meeting. With that self-made application, you have all the contact information needed

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Family Activities Committee



Dawn Percoski
Family Activities Dir.

Vernon Grange No. 52
CWA@ctstateGrange.org

Happy Spring at last! I am sure you have all worked diligently on your projects. I wanted to remind you that it is really important that you fill out your report for Family Activities. At this point in the year, you should be able to start filling in some of the blanks. If anyone still needs to get the form for Subordinate or Pomona Granges, you can always download it from the CT state Grange Website at <http://www.ct-stategrange.org/CWACorner.asp>

This is for the last year that we are doing the Gnome Theme. I hope you have all had a chance to make something for the craft and needlework contests. The Fair this year will be held on July 31st – August 2nd at Hillstown Grange. Friday you can drop off your entries from 3-7 pm or Saturday morning from 8 to 10 am before judging starts. Hillstown Grange will be doing a pancake breakfast on Sunday. We will have our teacup auction as well. Be sure to come down and support everyone who made entries in both the Needlework and Lecturer's photo contests. Come sit

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Connecticut State Grange
A part of the National Grange



NEXT ISSUE:
Articles Due May 15

From the President's Desk

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to follow up yourself and call that person without pushing it off to the higher authority. After all, you may be the first contact and the better choice to call that person and remind them of your meeting. Remember, you **MUST** ask. Remember too, if you may have to ask 100 people to get two. These are the statistics on recruitment so don't be discouraged. **PERSEVERANCE** is the key (where have we heard that before?). I don't mean to co-opt or replace the efforts of our Membership Co-

Directors, Jody and Jodi-Ann, but with recruitment being essential to our survival, this subject needs all the attention we can give to it, and I wanted to share these ideas I have based on what I hear in the fields of our Grange. Remember also to consider different levels of commitment to Grange membership. Not everyone will commit as some did in the days of yore where it was their entire life. Some may attend meetings and some less so. Some may help with events and projects. Accept people for what they are willing to commit to in terms of time. The world is changing and we must adapt as a fraternal order if we are to survive.

As I write this in early April, I anticipate Ted and I attending the National Leaders' Conference in Sparks, Nevada. We leave on the 30th and the conference is that first weekend in May. This is where we will be presented with the roll-out of the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) to strengthen and grow the Grange. You will have to wait for the June Granger for more feedback on that. Ten hours travel time going to and coming from this conference make me think of another old expression: "You can't get there from here."

From National Grange President

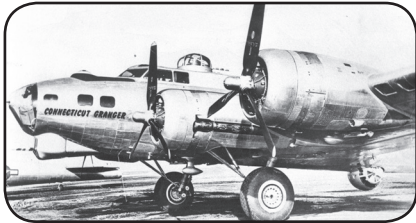
Hamp's "Speak Like a CHAMP" series, the phrase of the month is "Leadership Multiplier." Think of this as a person whose influence increases the leadership capacity of someone else. A coach or mentor who pushes others to greater capabilities to move things forward. I know who these are in our various Granges, but if you are not yet one, won't you step up to be one of your Grange's Leadership Multipliers?

The Rural Life Initiative (RLI) program awards were announced on Grange Today 3.27.25 vol.3, issue 6. Forty thousand dollars was awarded in 40 grants of \$1000.00. These fund worthy community service projects in rural communities. More than 80 Applications from Community and Pomona Granges in 21 states were received. I know of at least two Granges in our state that applied but were not accepted, and there may have been others. None of the grants came to our state. This was the third round for this program and I hope it will continue and would encourage Granges to keep applying in the future.

Congratulations to Carol Swanson for winning \$250 in a drawing for her Grange for completing the Grange Member Perspectives survey from National Grange. There were two monetary awards and 10 subscriptions to Good Day Magazine given out as prizes.

the Connecticut Granger

Published Monthly



WW II Flying Fortress "Connecticut Granger"

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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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Family Activities Committee

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a spell and see friends you may not have seen in a while and enjoy breakfast!

We are looking for judges for different contests. Absolutely anyone can judge the craft, baking or Gnome themed entries and we would encourage you to give it a try. As always, we need judges for the needlework - a knowledge of crochet/knit and or sewing is required. We will be Judging on Saturday, August 1st starting at 11:00 am. Once we have finished all the judging, we will be serving a nice lunch as a thank you for your assistance. So please contact me or let your Pomona Family Activities chairperson know as soon as possible. I look forward to working with you and having some fun and a great Fair!



Rob and I went to Bridgewater Grange's 70th Easter Egg Hunt. What a great time. I had my picture taken with the Easter Bunny. There's a rumor around that it's really Aaron in that cool getup. Lots of little ones getting their eggs. Renee was great; she went out and got really cool prizes. Then we all went to the Bistro at the Bridgewater Village Store for Breakfast. Rob got the coolest Bridgewater Chocolate white chocolate Easter bunny. They have the BEST chocolate around!



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

No answers were received for last month's Window to the Past picture. As always, we remind you to submit any information you might have even if it is just one person in the picture.

You can let us know by email or by calling the phone number listed above. We would love to hear from you!



Eye on Communications

GLEANINGS FROM YOUR STATE PUBLIC RELATIONS TEAM

Your Grange's Best Marketing Tool? Good Housekeeping

Picture this: A young family drives past your Grange hall. They've been looking for ways to get more involved in the community, and they've heard good things about the Grange. As they slow down to take a look, what do they see? A neatly trimmed lawn and freshly painted sign? Or peeling paint, overgrown weeds, and a general sense that nobody's been paying attention?

That thirty-second drive-by might be the difference between gaining enthusiastic new members and losing them before they ever walk through the door.

The truth is that good housekeeping isn't just about keeping things tidy for ourselves, it's one of the most powerful marketing tools we have. When our Grange halls look sharp and our operations run smoothly, we're sending a clear message to our communities: "We're organized, we're professional, and we care about what we do."

First Impressions Are Everything

We've all heard the saying, "You never get a second chance to make a first impression." When someone visits your Grange hall for the first time, whether for a public supper, a community meeting, or just out of curiosity, they're forming opinions within seconds. A clean, well-maintained building tells visitors that this is an organization that has its act together. It signals stability, pride, and attention to detail.

The physical appearance of our Grange halls is essentially our storefront. Fresh paint, clean floors, working lights, tidy landscaping, and clear signage

aren't luxuries, they're investments in our public image and future membership. And here's the best part: good housekeeping doesn't require a big budget. It just takes commitment, a little elbow grease, and the understanding that every time we sweep the floor, fix that squeaky door, or trim the hedges, we're doing public relations work. We're showing our community that the Grange is alive, active, and worth paying attention to.

The Books Tell a Story Too

Now, you might be thinking, "Sure, the building matters, but nobody sees our financial records." And you'd be partially right — until they do. When prospective members start getting serious about joining, when other community organizations consider collaborating with us, or when we apply for grants or seek donations, those books become very visible indeed.

Organized, transparent financial records send a powerful message of trustworthiness. They show that we're responsible stewards of our resources, that we take our obligations seriously, and that we operate with integrity. Good bookkeeping also protects our reputation. Nothing damages public trust faster than financial confusion or the appearance of impropriety. The same principle applies to all our administrative housekeeping: meeting minutes, membership records, correspondence, community service projects, and event planning. When everything is organized and accessible, we project competence and professionalism and that reassures potential

members that their time and resources will be well-managed. We show that we're not just a social club stumbling along, but a professional organization with systems and standards.

The Ripple Effect on Recruitment

Here's where good housekeeping really shows its value: in attracting and retaining members. People want to be part of something they can be proud of, something that reflects well on them.

When your Grange hall looks great and your operations run smoothly, current members become natural ambassadors. They're proud to bring guests, to talk up the Grange in their communities, and will post photos on social media that show your Grange in the best light. Good housekeeping turns every member into a marketing team.

Good housekeeping — from mowing the lawn to balancing the books — is really about respect. Respect for our heritage, our current members, our communities, and the potential members we hope to welcome. It says, "The Grange matters. What we do here is important. And we care enough to do it right."

So the next time you're sweeping the hall, organizing files, or updating the financial records, remember: you're not just doing chores. You're doing marketing. You're building your Grange's brand. You're creating the conditions that will help your Grange thrive for another generation. Let's take pride in our Grange halls and our operations, and make sure that when our communities look at us, they see Granges worth joining, worth supporting, and worth celebrating. Because when our houses are in order, everything else falls into place.

Here's to good housekeeping, and to the bright future it helps us build!

Exciting events are ahead



Dave Roberts
State Lecturer

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By the time you read this column, the North East Lecturers Association Conference in Cortland, New York, will already be behind us. Ten Connecticut State Grange members made the journey to Cortland, and we look forward to sharing highlights with you soon.

Back home in Connecticut, we have some exciting events ahead!

State Grange Family Festival August 3 at Hillstown Grange

Mark your calendars now for the Connecticut State Grange Family Festival, taking place on Sunday, August 3, at Hillstown Grange. Sponsored jointly by the Family Activities and Lecturer's Departments, this event promises a day full of fellowship, fun, and activities for members of all ages.

One of the highlights of the Lecturer's Department is our annual Photo Contest, which continues to attract creative entries from Grangers across the state.

All photo entries must be ready for judging by 9:00 AM on Sunday, August 3. The hall will be open on Friday and Saturday prior to the event for members to drop off their entries.

Winning photos will be displayed in the State Grange Convention Hospitality Room before being returned to their owners.

Photo Contest Categories

Adult Categories

- America the Beautiful
- Agriculture/Farming
- Say it with Flowers
- Bridges

Junior, Youth, and 1+ Categories

- America the Beautiful
- Agriculture/Farming
- Animals/Pets
- Water

Contest Rules

1. Only prints will be accepted.
2. Participants may enter all four categories but are limited to one entry per category.
3. Photos must have been taken between October 1, 2025, and the State Grange Family Festival.
4. No glass or frames are allowed.
5. Photos may be commercially processed, but the entrant must have taken the photograph.
6. Photo size (including backing, if used) must be no smaller than 4"x6" and no larger than 11"x14".
7. Each entry must include the entrant's name, contest category, Grange and number, and phone number on the back. Please also indicate if the entry is for the

Junior, Youth, or 1+ contest.

Prizes

Prizes will be awarded in both the Adult and Junior/Youth/1+ divisions for each category:

- First Place – \$6
- Second Place – \$4
- Third Place – \$2

I encourage everyone, whether you are an experienced photographer or simply enjoy capturing special moments, to participate. This contest is a wonderful opportunity to share your creativity and showcase the beauty of our communities, farms, and landscapes.

I hope to see many Connecticut Grangers at upcoming events as we continue to celebrate learning, creativity, and fellowship through the Lecturer's program.

Connecticut delegation



The North East Lecturers Conference was held in April at the New York State Grange Headquarters in Cortland. Connecticut had 12 in attendance. Back row: L to R: James Mele (Whigville), Brenna Maine (Stonington), Desiree Richard (Stonington), Sue Pianka ((N. Stonington), Ted Beebe (Coventry), Anne Marie Knochenhauer (Stonington), Cherie Robinson (Vernon); Front row seated L to R: Donald Taylor (Beacon Valley), Denise Barbieri (Beacon Valley), Noel Miller (Coventry), Marcia Miller (Coventry) and CT State Grange Lecturer Dave Roberts (Riverton)

Rural America is paying the price for Medicare Loophole

The following article was written for RuralClear Health.com by Christine Hamp, President of the National Grange

For generations, rural hospitals have been more than just places to receive medical care. They are community lifelines that provide jobs and make the difference between life and death when emergencies strike miles from the nearest city. Yet today, these essential institutions are being quietly undercut by a Medicare loophole that diverts resources meant for rural communities to large urban hospitals.

At the National Grange, we advocate for the people who feed, fuel, and sustain this country. That means speaking out when policies meant to protect rural America are instead being used to weaken it.

The issue is hospital reclassification, and its consequences are painfully real for rural patients.

Under current Medicare rules, hospitals are classified as either geographically rural or urban. Rural

hospitals receive special payment protections because they serve smaller, older, and often poorer populations, and because operating in rural areas is more expensive and less efficient by nature. These protections exist to preserve access to care where market forces alone cannot.

But over time, regulatory changes and court decisions have opened the door for geographically urban hospitals to reclassify themselves as “administratively rural.” For example, any big-city hospital with more than 275 beds can become administratively rural and then be designated a Rural Referral Center – even if not a single rural patient is referred to them! Once they do that, they gain access to rural-only Medicare benefits. Then, in a second step, those same hospitals are allowed to reclassify to urban status for wage calculations, securing higher payments typically reserved for metropolitan facilities. This two-step maneuver is known as “dual



classification.”

In plain terms, some of the nation’s largest, wealthiest hospitals are claiming the benefits of being both rural and urban even when the communities they serve don’t match that description.

The growth of this practice has been dramatic. A new analysis from Magnolia Market Access shows that in just five years, the number of hospitals using dual classification ballooned from 168 in 2018 to 593 in 2023.

These are not small-town hospitals struggling to keep their doors open. The median dual-classified hospital has nearly six times as many beds as a true rural hospital and dual classified hospitals have far stronger balance sheets. In fact, these hospitals hold significantly more financial reserves per bed than either rural or standard urban hospitals. Yet they are drawing from the same pool of Medicare dollars that Congress intended to support rural care. Reclassification to rural status allows hospitals to reap benefits such as additional graduate medical education slots and more generous Medicare funding.

Meanwhile, real rural hospitals are disappearing. More than 130 rural hospitals closed between 2010 and 2021. When a rural hospital shuts down, the damage ripples outward: clinics close, mental health services

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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.



LEADERSHIP MULTIPLIER

A **Leadership Multiplier** is someone whose influence expands the leadership capacity of others. They coach, mentor, and equip emerging leaders, ensuring the organization grows stronger over time. **Leadership multipliers** empower others to step into roles, develop skills, and take on responsibility. They help build a deep and sustainable bench of future leaders – ensuring continuity and momentum.

Loophole

Continued from previous page...

disappear, jobs vanish, and patients are forced to travel farther for care. Rural Americans already face higher rates of chronic disease and lower access to providers. Losing local care only deepens those disparities.

Every dollar redirected to a dual-classified urban hospital is a dollar not available to prevent the next rural closure.

This is not about punishing urban hospitals or denying fair reimbursement. But as it stands, bad actors are eroding the rural safety net. We must align Medicare policy with reality and ensure that rural benefits go to hospitals that are truly rural in all ways.

Policymakers can make this happen. First, Medicare should tie rural payment enhancements to geographic rurality, ensuring that hospitals located in metropolitan areas cannot access rural-only benefits simply through administrative maneuvers. Second, Congress and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) should close the dual-classification loophole, restoring the original intent of rural protections. Finally, any savings from these reforms should be reinvested directly into truly rural providers to strengthen workforce recruitment, emergency services, and long-term sustainability.

Rural Americans cannot reclassify their communities when it becomes convenient. Farmers cannot move their fields closer to hospitals. Families cannot relocate overnight when care disappears. Public policy should reflect that reality.

The National Grange believes in fairness, stewardship, and strong rural communities. Protecting rural hospitals is not a partisan issue — it is a promise to the people of rural America. It is time to keep that promise and ensure Medicare dollars support the hospitals and patients they were meant to serve.



Grange Declaration of Purposes

OUR FRATERNITY, BEING AGRICULTURALLY BASED, FAMILY ORIENTED AND DEDICATED TO THE PURE PRINCIPLES OF EQUALITY UNDER CONSTITUTIONAL LAW, WE APPEAL TO ALL GOOD CITIZENS FOR MUTUAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE TOWARD REFORM THAT WE MAY REMOVE FROM OUR MIDST THE LAST VESTIGE OF INEQUITY AND CORRUPTION. WE BELIEVE THAT HARMONY, EQUITABLE COMPROMISE AND EARNEST COOPERATION ARE ESSENTIAL TO FUTURE SUCCESS.



WOODSTOCK, CT EMS FIRST RESPONDER SAFETY VESTS FUNDRAISER

May 15
4:30-6 pm




DINE FOR A GREAT CAUSE-

All proceeds go to the
Woodstock, CT EMS to
purchase safety vests
for our first responders



PASTA DINNER AT SENEXET GRANGE

- ✓ Hearty Serving of Pasta
- ✓ Salad & Italian Bread
- ✓ Chocolate Chip Cookies
- ✓ Choice of beverages and/or coffee



\$15 per person



**Killingly Grange
Roast Pork
Dinner**

Saturday, May 16, 2026

4:30-6:30 PM
801 Hartford Tpke., Dayville
Dine-in or Take-out

**Dinner includes Roast Pork, Green Beans,
Carrots, Mashed Potatoes, Apple Sauce and
Dessert**

**To reserve dinner
call or text Terry @ (860) 884-1813
or use the Ticket link on our Facebook page
to order a dinner online.**

**At the door, pay by cash, credit card, or
check made payable to Killingly Grange.**



**GRANGE CELEBRATES
AMERICA'S 250TH**

**PART OF THE GRANGE CELEBRATES
AMERICA'S 250th OBSERVANCE**



WINCHESTER GRANGE PRESENTS

America's 250 Years of Freedom

DANCE

Saturday, July 11, 2026

6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Winchester Grange Hall

100 Newfield Road
Winchester Center, CT

PRICE: \$10.00/person
Children 12 & Under - \$5.00

• Price includes Ice Cream and Punch •

Call (203) 465-2787 for Tickets and Info



**Featuring the band
Mad River Music**



www.WinchesterGrange.org • www.Facebook.com/WinchesterGrange



E. CONNECTICUT POMONA #14

Corr: Carol Hnath

May 2: Meeting canceled

June 6: regular meeting at Killingly Grange Hall (change of location) with Fifth Degree, 7 pm

Our March program, "Dandelions", provided us with lots of information on the common plant. Due to the conflict with the National Grange meeting of State Presidents we would be missing crucial officers for the Fifth Degree scheduled in May. With other conflicts during the following weeks it was finally decided that we would move the Fifth Degree to the June meeting. The location of that June meeting has now been changed to Killingly Grange Hall at 7 pm. We will be assisting Habitat for Humanity on April 25th. For more information, please contact Cherie Robinson, Lecturer.

SENEXET GRANGE #40

Corr: Diane Miller

May 27: Business meeting and health month discussion

Another busy month for our Grange. We had our regular meeting and discussed what we could do to let the community know what the Grange is and how we can help the community. We held a very successful community breakfast session on Sat. April 11 as a social event to connect residents with information on local issues and

happenings.

We would like to hold these Saturday breakfasts on a monthly schedule for the next 3 months. It is so important to keep our residents informed of the local happenings. Another event will be a spaghetti and meatball dinner in May to raise funds for protective vests for the local fire department.

We will have regular monthly fundraising dinners to encourage the locals to visit and support our Grange. The applications for the memorial scholarships for Woodstock students were distributed to the schools. Due date is May 15.

We welcome members and visitors to our events.

VERNON GRANGE #52

Corr: Cherie Robinson

May 1: In Memoriam, Election of Officers

June 5: Neighbors Night

July 10: Mystery Program: Mystery Ride

April found us back meeting in-person. It was grand to be with everyone! We gained new appreciation for dandelions and made greeting cards to send to absent members. Zooming will continue to be an option for those who cannot attend in person. We welcome all visitors. Please check with President Nancy Strong for Zoom info.

HILLSTOWN GRANGE #87

Corr: June Conrad

Hillstown Grange #87 is busy with events of something old and something NEW! Before this publication we will have experienced our annual Music Night featuring the

YANKEE BLUEGRASS JAMMERS!
Hosted on April 23rd this has been an enriching assembly of blended musicians and high quality bluegrass music.

New for this month we are wrapping up our spring monthly breakfast with **FRENCH TOAST!** Last month was S'mores. We are always into trying new flavors.

NORTH STONINGTON COMM. GRANGE #138

Corr: Nancy R. Weissmuller

May 8: Program hosted by Cheree Miner

May 22: "Memorial Program"

We were honored to be visited by Past Voting Delegate Noel Miller and State Overseer Ted Powell at our March 13 meeting. It was "Ritual Night" and everyone enjoyed a rousing game of "Grangeopoly", a game invented by our Lecturer, Sue Pianka. We also initiated Susan Grufsted that evening. Susan has been attending meetings and helping us with decorating the hall for special occasions for quite some time and we are happy to welcome her to our family.

Members have been helping Sue out with programs this year due to Sue's need to spend more time with family. The programs Cheree presents are always interesting and enjoyable (as are Sue's). On the 22 we will remember veterans and Grangers who have joined the Great Grange Above. And if the bouquet of daffy buds I brought in from the garden will just pop open so we can believe spring is really here next time we will tell you all about awesome April.

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

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



MOUNTAIN LAUREL POMONA #15

Corr: David Roberts

Mountain Laurel Pomona Grange No. 15 will hold its third meeting of the year on May 9, 2026, at 2:00 PM at Whigville Grange Hall, 153 South Main Street, Whigville, Connecticut.

This marks the first time in recent memory that Whigville Grange has hosted a Pomona meeting, making this a special occasion for our members.

We are especially pleased to share that Whigville Grange Hall is now handicapped accessible, including an accessible restroom. One of Pomona's ongoing goals is to ensure that all members can attend meetings at every venue, and accessibility is a key part of that commitment. Members and guests are warmly welcome to attend.

During this meeting, we will consider resolutions submitted by community Granges. I have already heard from both Riverton and Granby Granges regarding proposed resolutions, and we encourage all Granges to take part.

We hope your Grange will submit a resolution and join us for what promises to be a meaningful and inclusive meeting.

GRANBY GRANGE #5

Corr: David Roberts

May 2: 4th Annual Granby Grange Rubber Duck Race, Noon-2,

May 10: Meeting, 4 PM (diff. time due to Mother's Day)

Linen Culture



Kara Marshall presents a program on New England Linen Culture at the April meeting of Granby Grange.

Granby Grange met on April 12 at the Grange Hall. Members reviewed ongoing improvements to the hall, including the installation of new basement windows and completion of electrical work, which has been approved by the town. Additional renovations are supported, in part, by a recent \$20,000 donation.

The Grange reported a successful Chili Cook-Off held on March 28, which drew more than 40 attendees and raised \$499. Planning is also underway for the annual Granby Agricultural Fair, scheduled for September 12.

Looking ahead, members are preparing for several upcoming events, including the Salmon Brook Historical Society Flea Market on May 16 and a pre-Mother's Day plant sale. The Grange will also host the Association of CT Fairs meeting on May 3.

The 4th Annual Granby Grange Rubber Duck Race was held on Saturday, May 2, from Noon to 2:00

PM at Salmon Brook Park.

The Grange unanimously approved a resolution from Riverton Grange supporting the creation of an agricultural committee in the Connecticut General Assembly. members also voted to participate in an historic property signage program offered by Salmon Brook Historical Society and to pursue a grant for additional building improvements.

A highlight of the meeting was the Lecturer's program presented by Kara Marshall on linen culture in New England, which included a display of historical items.

Our next meeting will be on May 10 at 4 PM at the hall.

WINCHESTER GRANGE #74

Corr: Todd A. Gelineau

May 12: Meeting "To all the Moms Out There", Ref. Potluck, 6 PM

May 26: Memorial Day Program (Chaplain), Ref. Pam Wright

June 9: Election of Officers, Ref. Ramona Fassio

Winchester Grange held a very successful Tag Sale on April 25. Thank you to all of the members and friends of the Grange who donated items and worked the event.

Working in cooperation with the Town of Winchester, Winchester Grange will hold "America's 250 Years of Freedom Dance" on Saturday, July 11. We were approached by the Historical Society to think about holding an event that would contribute to the town's list of events celebrating the 250th anniversary of America's founding.

The dance will be held from 6-9 PM at the Grange Hall with music by the Mad River Music band. Admission is \$10 per person and children are \$5. The price will include refreshments. We recommend purchasing tickets in advance but any remaining tickets will be available for sale at the door. For more info on reserving tickets, please call 203-465-2787.

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TAGHHANNUCK GRANGE #100

Corr: Barbara Prindle

May 14: Bring your favorite picture by Barbara Prindle Ref: Lynn Cline

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

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

June 11: A Collaborative Effort by Lynn Kearcher Ref: Barbara Prindle

July 9: Travel by John Brett Ref: Lynn Cline

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

Thank you to all our Grange members who are collecting G-Notes. We added 9 more at our April meeting. We will be replacing the curtain rods on the east side of our Grange Hall since they are not working properly. Debbie Hanlon will research and order them with the Building Committee installing them.

As I write this, we are looking forward to our Open House on June 3rd presented by our Grange Farm School Committee. This time the presentation is Signifying Summer: Cultivation (the 2nd degree). This ties together farming and our degrees. We hope to have as big a turnout as we did for our first presentation Signifying Spring: Seed Swap and starting (1st degree).

We are collecting boxes for our Plant & Rummage Sale that takes place June 6th & 7th, from 9am-3pm. Donations for the Rummage part can be brought to our Grange Hall on May 16th and 17th from Noon to 3PM. Please have everything clean and in good condition. We do not take/sell furniture. Thank you in advance to everyone who will be working or donating to our Sale.

Since the Grange has a history of political advocacy and after speaking with the Sharon Republican Town Committee Chairwoman, we voted to allow the Sharon Democratic Town Committee the use of our Grange Hall twice a month for post carding. This will bring new local people into

our Hall who will then ask about the Grange

BETHLEHEM GRANGE #121

Corr: Dorothy Fairchild

Meetings are held at Memorial Hall on the Green. The next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, May 17 at 2pm. A Memorial Service will be conducted. Also, the Grange cake baking contest is scheduled. Visitors are always welcomed.

The April lecturer's program, Scotland, was conducted by Barbara R. whose grandfather fought in WW1 as a member of the Scottish Royal Highlanders. Barbara displayed his kit bag of real leather and medals that his Scottish Brigade were awarded.

Reminding all members to turn in the Naugatuck Duck Race tickets with checks at this meeting. Thank you and good luck to all who sold and contributed to this our largest fundraiser.

RIVERTON GRANGE #169

Corr: Dave Roberts

We held our monthly membership meeting on May 1.

May 3 — At 6:00 PM, Riverton Grange will host its 49th Veteran of the Month Ceremony at Riverton Grange Hall. The public is invited to attend, and refreshments will be served.

Members and guests gathered at Riverton Grange Hall (and via Zoom) on April 10 for a special meeting. The meeting began with President Dave Roberts offering condolences to Secretary Judy Doyle on the recent passing of her brother, Sean Doyle. Grange members had presented a sympathy card and a basket with a live plant for Judy and her family to plant in their yard and watch it flower every year.

During the business meeting, co-chairs Dawn Anstett, Raine Pedersen, and Tim Sweeney provided an update on the Grange's America 250 community series, which will take place between Memorial Day

and late summer. The series will end in August with a catered dinner and a Voices of Riverton Memories program. Members showed strong support for this initiative, raising \$1,000 to help fund the program.

Judy Doyle reported on the progress of the Kitchen Renovation Project. All required permits have now been secured, and the Grange Building Committee recommended three contractors to complete the majority of the \$137,000 project. The membership unanimously approved the Committee's recommendations. During the anticipated two- to three-month renovation period, membership meetings will be conducted via Zoom.

The Grange also adopted three resolutions: (1) Supporting the establishment of dedicated agricultural committees in the Connecticut General Assembly. (2) Supporting Connecticut Public Act 490 (1963). (3) Supporting Connecticut dairy farmers and the creation of a dairy sustainability tax credit

All three resolutions will be forwarded to Mountain Laurel Pomona Grange No. 15 for consideration at its upcoming May 9 meeting at 2:00 PM at Whigville Grange Hall.

Lecturer James Mele introduced the Lecturer's Program, which was presented by Legislative Committee Chair Phil Prelli, with special guest Connecticut State Representative Mark Anderson. The Legislative program is always a member favorite, with Executive Committee member Denny Jasmine usually winning the legislative quiz.

Refreshments were served prior to the meeting by Assistant Steward Tim and Lady Assistant Steward Melissa Sweeney and were highly praised by those in attendance.

SIMSBURY GRANGE #197

Corr: Marguerite Smith

On March 29th our 4th annual
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Seed Giveaway upstairs and Lego Build downstairs were a success once again! Community members came to the Grange to choose free seed packets to use in their home gardens. We welcomed local farmer, Kris McCue and Caitlin Spatcher, leader of the Hartford chapter of the Bionutrient Food Association. Both brought seeds to share. We secured seed donations from Hudson Valley Seeds in NY and Pinetree Garden Seeds in ME. We also welcomed local children who built LEGO creations ready for our June 13th fair.

April 6th was Music Monday - Gracin Dorsey and Joel Weik graced our Grange stage with another outstanding performance! 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.

On April 9th Simsbury Grange Meeting at 7:00 pm at the Grange. Wow! What a meeting! We are happy to report we have welcomed 6 new members and 1 new affiliate member so far this Grange year. This evening we welcomed our 7th new member!! We are SO excited to welcome all of our new members. Other business included preparations and entertainment for our June 13th agricultural fair.

May 4th - Music Monday - Don't miss Ava Grom, guitarist and singer. Ava is a music student at Trinity College and plays acoustic covers and originals in the styles of Folk, Blues, and Indie. She spends her weeknights gigging at local open mics such as the Mapletree Cafe in Simsbury, Talcott Mountain Collective and Almost Famous Brewing as well as private parties. She started a band called The Lady Fingers at Trinity and loves to attend Jam nights where she can rock out on the electric guitar with fellow musicians. Come and relax with an hour of live music.

Simsbury's newest member



Simsbury Grange welcomed a new member in April with Cassandra Berger joining (center left). Also pictured, Marguerite Smith, Secretary of Simsbury, Cassandra's son Julius and Susan Masino, Grange President.

Let's give Ava a warm Simsbury Grange welcome. Parking available in Farms Village Plaza. You can see videos of Ava's live performances below, and find more videos on her YouTube, @AvaGromGuitar <https://www.avagrom.com/about-ava> See

you there!

June 13th - Saturday - Save the date and join us as we host another wonderful fair for our local community from 10:00-3:00. More details will be forthcoming in the June issue of The Granger.



When referring to our organization - in every instance - the first "G" in Grange is always capitalized because Grange is a proper noun. This includes "Grange hall," "Granger," and "Grangeing."

It's important to make sure that in all of your promotional materials, Grange is capitalized and that you tell reporters or news outlets you encounter that Grange is a proper noun.



NUTMEG POMONA #16

Corr: Joanne Cipriano

Ted Powell was present at our March 22 meeting for our annual inspection. We thank him for coming. We thank everyone who filled in for our officers unable to attend.

Receiving the Fifth Degree were Deborah Heim from Harmony Grange, Jason Zandri from Wallingford Grange and Lori Lanoue and David and Diane Calabro from Cheshire Grange.

Wallingford Grange was the winner of the Community Service soup basket.

Our sympathies are extended to the family and Cheshire Grange on the passing of Chaplain Cindy Hupper who now resides in the Grange above. Cindy never missed remembering the members with a card and always enclosed a poem, joke or short story. She is missed.

Next Pomona meeting is June 28.

Letters will be sent out in the near future requesting your information for the new handbook. Start getting it ready.

WALLINGFORD GRANGE #33

Corr: Stephen Fengler

Several events have been going on this spring here at Wallingford Grange. First, local author Tarn Granucci presented the History of Farming in Wallingford as part of our community education series. He shared stories, photos and artifacts, and connections of Wallingford's

Homemade Sauerkraut



Wallingford Grange member Pam Cremo led a class on "Making Your Own Sauerkraut" as part of the Community Education Series.

agricultural past to the food on our table now. Thank you to Tarn Granucci for leading this event! Tarn will be at the Grange Fair on September 12th, too!

Second, Wallingford Granger Pam Cremo led a class as part of our community education series on Making your own Sauerkraut. Attendees were able to slice, salt, and pack their own jar to take home, while learning safe, simple methods one can use again with craftsman Pam Cremo. Thanks to Pam and all our attendees.

Finally, it was a fun great day of music for the Wallingford in Tunes Concert we hosted at Wallingford Grange. This concert series had ten different local bands perform. Thank you to all who came!

Some special events Wallingford Grange is looking forward to hosting this spring include the Battle of the Best Pizza in Wallingford (May 2nd 11am-1pm), Family Planetarium Night at Sheehan High School (May 7th 6pm-7pm), Bird Watching Hike (May 9th 10am-12pm), Weave a Colonial Rug Youth Event (May 16th: 10am-11pm), an event led

by Quinnipiac Alpaca Farmers on Alpaca Farming where you can meet Alpacas too (June 3rd 6pm-8pm), Salads that aren't Salads Hands on Event (June 10th), Youth Event for making recipes from our past (June 19th), a Metal Detecting Lecture (June 23rd), a Floral Arranging Class (July 15th 6pm-8pm), and an event at Guveia Vineyard in Wallingford (July 22nd 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!

BEACON VALLEY GRANGE #103

Corr: Joanne Cipriano

Thank goodness Nervous Night is behind us. I really mean Inspection Night. Patrick O'Brien was our Inspecting Deputy. None of us had met him before, but we found him very personable and everyone was at ease.

Jean Meehan was in charge of the program. Theme was the letter "A" featuring agriculture. Her

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refreshments highlighted apple pie.

Our next meeting is May 8th with the theme, the letter "F" in charge of Marie Sousa.

Plans for the Celebration of our 137th Anniversary are progressing nicely. Theme the letter "C". We will have the drawing of our semi-annual raffle that night.

Continuous membership certificates will be presented to: Barbara Kirk (70 years), Pat Jacox (60 years), Robert Brush (50 years), Victor Godin (50 years), Terri Tully

(50 years), Kimberly Tompkins (45 years) and Ronald Gunther (45 years).

Tag Sale and Open Mic are back on schedule- May date Saturday, May 16th. Come and check out our treasures and enjoy some good music.

Get well wishes to Sandy Fitzner, a member of our Executive Committee who has had a stay in a convalescent home and we hope home by now. We wish her a speedy recovery.

HEMLOCK GRANGE #182

Corr: Maureen Sanborn

May 8: Election of Officers

May 9: Hemlock joins Portland Town-Wide Tag Sale

May 22: Omitted, unless regular meeting is canceled.

June 12: Memorial

June 26: Omitted, unless regular meeting is canceled.

Coffee and refreshments will be served following the meeting.

Cheshire Community Citizen Award

Cheshire Grange was once again proud to host our annual Cheshire Grange Community Citizen Award. Ronald Kochman received this honor based on his exceptional initiative to create an online community news source, the newly issued Cheshire Today, to fill the gap left by the loss of our hometown weekly newspaper. President Ruel Miller congratulated Ron on the fine quality of Cheshire Today, remarking that it is a high quality website that encompasses everything that our local community needs. Ron said that when he was first contacted about being nominated as the Community Citizen for 2026, he was a little taken aback. When he was told that the award would be given on April 1st, he thought he had put two and two together. "Is this some kind of April Fools joke?" Ruel Miller assured him that it was not. Ron shared information about his family: his parents that escaped from Germany at the start of World War II, their journey from Shanghai to San Francisco and then to New York. His professional career, his love of photography, and his greater love for his wife Cathy, his three children and his seven grandchildren. Ron stressed the importance of engaging with the community you live in. He said, "My parents taught me the importance of giving back."

Following the award ceremony, new Cheshire Grange member, Chris Aliano, performed a medley of songs on accordion. Many people sang along. Chris has been playing accordion since she was a child. She gave a lovely performance.

Diane Calabro, Cheshire Grange Lecturer, then gave a brief talk about the coming events for the 250th. Diane talked about Cheshire Grange participating in the Cheshire Memorial Day Parade on a patriotic themed float - something our Grange has not done for a few years. Diane is part of the Town of Cheshire 250th Steering Committee. As the entire committee was attending this award night, Diane in-



Ronald Kochman receives the award from Cheshire President Ruel Miller.

vited Ray Bennett and Ron Gagliardi to share more information about the event, now only 93 days away!

A special dinner was prepared for the evening's repast. To acknowledge our nominee's heritage, and because this night was the first night of Pass-over, foods were made that respected this. We had Matzah: unleavened flatbread symbolizing the hasty escape from Egypt. Also Maror & Chazeret: horse-radish, representing the bitterness of slavery. Charoset: A sweet mixture of apples, nuts, spices, and wine symbolizing the mortar used by slaves. We also had Beitzah: hard-boiled egg representing the festival sacrifice and the circle of life. Matzah Ball Soup was served, as well as a flourless chocolate cake and coconut macaroons. Many people had never had these kinds of foods and it was a nice way to share important traditions.



Treasures

**FLEA
MARKET**

from the Attic
**Spring Tag Sale &
Flea Market**
May 16, 2026

10:00 am to 3:00pm



For Vendor info or general info
Call Steve 203-367-4373

Greenfield Hill Grange
1873 Hillside Rd.
Fairfield, CT 06824



www.facebook.com/Greenfield.Hill.Granger



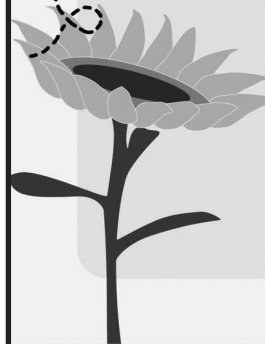
Harmony Grange
Presents
Backyard Beekeeping

Please join us for a presentation on
the lifecycle of bees, the threats they face,
their effects on our ecosystem and the
products they make!

Presented by Charles O'Donnell and Dr.
Carol Gabrielle from The Backyard
Beekeepers Association



**Come and see an Observation Hive
and taste some local honey!**
Honey also available for purchase!



Saturday 6/6/26
11:00am
103 Hurd Ave, Monroe, CT
Fee \$5.00 per person
Fee includes chance to win
door prize, light
refreshments, giveaways
Reserve your spot today!



HARMONY GRANGE PRESENTS

THE MINDFUL HERBALIST

Herbal Infused Oils Workshop

TAKE HOME YOUR OWN HERB INFUSED OIL!

MAY 16., 2026 4PM-6PM
HARMONY GRANGE 103 HURD AVE, MONROE
PLEASE REGISTER BY 5/8/26
\$45.00 per person



**Northeast Chaplains Worship
Service**

SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, July 25, 2026
4:00pm

Stockbridge Grange Hall,
Stockbridge, MA

**Supper available following the
service (prepared by Stockbridge Grange)**

****Join us for a visit to the Norman
Rockwell Museum at 1:00pm, just a few
minutes from the Grange hall****



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

Breaking Bad Habits

For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. [St. Paul's Letter to the Romans, Chapter 7]

We all have bad habits, even the best among us. And we struggle with trying to change them, a good example being the excerpt from St. Paul which begins this month's message. The struggle is an internal one: part of us wants to change, but there is another part of us that is reluctant to give up what we have been doing for so long. Classical struggles include: going on and sticking to a diet, giving up smoking, giving up drinking, getting more exercise. You can probably think of many more.

I sometimes hear "Why should I break a bad habit? I enjoy them so much. What harm is it doing?" Good reasons for breaking bad habits include: breaking a bad habit improves your physical



health, mental well-being, and relationships, while freeing up time and financial resources. The first three of these reasons also have religious connotations. Remember the second of the Great Commandments "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Look at the reflexive in that commandment: we are charged to love both our neighbors and ourselves in equal measure. Loving yourself includes, among other things, keeping good care of both your mind and your body. Bad habits do neither. Also, if you do not take good care of yourself you may well become a burden on your family, your neighbors, and society in general, thus not loving your "neighbor". And then consider that some of your bad habits may adversely affect your neighbors directly. Consider the effects of secondhand smoke and danger from drunken drivers. And uncontrolled emotional outbursts,

public shouting and swearing, ruin the atmosphere for others.

Bad habits can be very difficult to break, but we can get help in doing so. Not only are there support groups available, such as AA, but there are a number of good self-help books and guides. And don't forget asking God for help. In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians we are told that "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful." God gives you strength to overcome temptation. Pray to God for that strength.

In Memoriam

Cindy Hupper
Cheshire Grange #23

Verna Cole
Robert Kinne
Ekonk Comm. Grange #89

Marjorie Misovich
North Stonington #138

"Well done, good and faithful servants."