



# the CONNECTICUT GRANGER

Published Monthly

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The Official News Magazine of the Connecticut State Grange

February 2021

## Financial help is available



**George Russell**  
State President

Riverton Grange No. 169  
president@ctstategrange.org

To start off this February article I was saddened to hear the passing of Connecticut State Grange Past Master Russell M. Gray. Brother Gray was Master and Past Voting Delegate to the National Grange from 1998 to 2002. He was a member of Ekonk Community Grange #89 in which he has held many offices including Master. I had the honor to serve as Pomona Deputy for Mountain County Pomona during his term as State Master. Brother Gray will surely be missed.

As I am writing this report in the middle of January, it seems like the COVID-19 infection numbers continue to rise. It seems like this pandemic will be with us for a while longer. Some of the other Granges that were meeting in person have gone back to virtual meetings and some of our smaller Granges are meeting in small groups, practicing social distancing and wearing their face masks. So, if you were still meeting in person, be careful and don't let your guard down. I encourage the three Pomonas to plan on meeting virtually in March as we should try to keep our Pomona Grange active.

As this pandemic continues to keep our Grangers from holding fundraisers and the bills keep coming

in, the Executive Committee held a special meeting to devise a plan to help Granges that are in need. The State Grange is offering a 12 month, 0% interest loan/grant program of \$1,000 to Granges that own halls. If the State of Connecticut has not eased the COVID-19 restrictions by July 1, the State Board of Directors will look into changing it from a loan to a grant. A certified letter has been sent out to all the Granges who own halls. If you need help, please apply.

The Northeast Connection met in the middle of January and decided to cancel the 2021 Northeast Leaders' Conference. The committee will try to schedule one for next year, 2022. The National Masters' Conference, which was scheduled for February 12 through the 14th, was also canceled. No decision has been made as to whether or not it will be a Zoom Conference or rescheduled to a later date.

As we are coming up on a full year of this pandemic let's all try to be safe, healthy and remember to wear your mask and wash your hands.

## Remembering Russell M. Gray



*The Connecticut State Grange mourns the passing of Past State Master Russell M. Gray in mid-January. National Overseer and Past State Master Phil Prelli has written a letter to his dear friend that we now share with all of you...*

It is with true sadness that I say goodbye to a true friend, Russell Gray. Russ was not only a friend for over 50 years but was also a mentor to me. One of the many nicknames for January is Mentor's Month. That just adds to the feelings.

I met a very shy and quiet Russ when we were both part of the Youth Program at State Grange Session through his wife, Sue, and that started a friendship with our families and an over 40 year working relationship. I was lucky to not only witness but work with him in his growth in the Connecticut State Grange from Deputy to a strong, successful and respected State Grange Master/President. I was also proud to observe his next steps in his political career as First Selectman of Sterling. As we worked together in Grange, we were lucky to share some mentors in previous State Masters. I believe if we had asked him, he would agree with me that both Frank Warner and my father, Frank Prelli, served as mentors to us and helped us grow in our Grange path. As I stated above,

*...Continued on page 2*

Connecticut State Grange  
A part of the National Grange  
*American Values. Hometown Roots*



**NEXT ISSUE . . . Articles Due February 15**

# Russell M. Gray

I also consider Russ a mentor to me. Those that know us are aware that our management and leadership styles are different, but I was lucky to learn from Russ. Watching and working with him I learned to listen to all sides before forming an opinion and once the decision was made to not only implement it but work along with everyone to accomplish it. He never expected someone to do something he wouldn't do himself. To be a good mentor you also have to

be a mentee and I hope that you also felt that I filled that role with you. Hardworking; dedicated to family, work and friends; strong willed and friendly are traits we will remember when we think and remember you.

You would not want us to dwell on being sad at your passing but instead to celebrate your life. We will do our best. So, goodbye my friend and rest in peace, you will truly be missed.

*Phil Prelli*



Russ & Sue Gray, State Session 1999



1999 Grange Sunday at Cheshire.



A Pat Deputies Skit at Hemlock Grange in 1999. L to R: Russell, Sue and David Seelye.



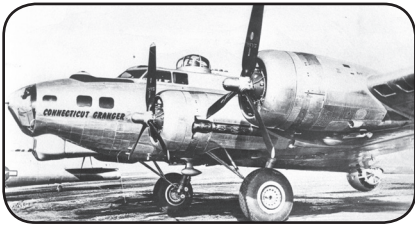
State Session 2001.



Past Voting Delegates recognized at State Session 2010. L to R: Mildred Bell, Sue Gray, Russell Gray, Phil Prelli, Maureen Prelli, Bud Beecher, State Master Robert Sendewicz and Marge Sendewicz.

## the Connecticut Granger

Published Monthly



WW II Flying Fortress "Connecticut Granger"

### STAFF

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

### DEADLINE/CORRECTIONS

News is due on the  
**15th Day** of each month  
and should be sent to:  
Connecticut State Grange  
100 Newfield Road  
P.O. Box 3

Winchester Center, CT 06094  
or Todd Gelineau, Editor  
P.O. Box 1134, Sharon, CT 06069  
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2008 - Russell presents a membership award to his mother-in-law Marion Emmons.



Sue escorts Russell during the 1999 Installation of Officers.



Escorting daughter Deborah Sharpe in the Court of Flora.



2006 - Ekonk Community Grange Picnic



2015 Past Deputies Raffle at State Session. L to R: Phil Prelli, Noel Miller, George Russell, Russell Gray and Jim Tetreault of NH.

# Where is my Granger?

By Todd A. Gelineau, Editor

This seems to be the question I hear most about the Connecticut Granger lately. Unfortunately, I do not know where or what happens to copies of the Granger after they have left the Winsted Post Office. Horrendous delays in mail delivery are not just limited to the Granger,

they are impacting all postal customers nationwide. In fact, National Grange is having trouble getting "Good Day!" to members across the country. I am hearing

of similar difficulties and delays at other State Granges as well.

Some members have suggested ways to combat this problem. I have chosen to keep our deadlines the same, BUT please include calendar

*Continued next page...*

The information contained in each issue of The Connecticut Granger is for informational purposes only. The Connecticut Granger assumes no liability or responsibility for any inaccurate, delayed or incomplete information, nor for any actions taken in reliance thereon. The information contained about each individual, event or organization has been provided by such individual, event organizers or organization without verification by us. The opinion expressed in each article is the opinion of its author and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Connecticut Granger. Therefore, The Connecticut Granger carries no responsibility for the opinion expressed herein.

# Notes from the State Grange Office



**Todd A. Gelineau**  
State Secretary  
Winchester Grange #74  
Secretary@ctstategrange.org

It seems that I'm on a bit of a Postal Service "tirade" this month. I apologize, but my frustrations with the USPS mount by the day. In early January I mailed certified letters to all Granges who currently own Grange halls. The Board of Directors initiated a loan/grant program of \$1,000 to any Grange requesting the money from the State Grange. It was determined to be a better way of getting money to those Granges that actually need it. If COVID restrictions in the state remain in place beyond July 1, the Board may reclassify these loans as Grants. These notices were sent certified so we could be assured that all Granges received the information. We did not want to risk missing a Grange that may be in dire need of assistance.

Unfortunately, I am now receiving calls from Granges who have received their letters in their mailboxes with the certified postcards still attached. As a result, we are not receiving the notification of receipt for which we have paid a hefty price to the USPS. I will attempt to file complaints with the Postmasters in towns where I know this has occurred.

## Granger Delivery

*Continued from previous page...*

dates and information for meetings and activities going TWO MONTHS forward. This means submissions for March should include information for March and April activities. When reporting the following month, include information for April and May. By creating this overlap in information, we ensure members will have ample opportunity to see your notices. I have been told by Postal Service employees that their

Policy Book has been completed. The Blue Book for this year is nearing completion and all will be sent out to Granges in one packet very soon. The Blue Book will return to book form as we found the packet form used in the previous two years did not work well as the information wasn't well distributed to the committees needing it.

It would be greatly appreciated if any Granges who have received these letters in their mailboxes without having to sign for them and with the green return postcards still attached to contact me. First, I would like to know that you received this information from us. Second, I need to know how many were delivered this way. End of rant! (Well, in this article.... more on the Postal Service below!!)

Many thanks to all of the Granges who have returned their Bonding payments. There are still a few outstanding and I would appreciate being able to wrap this up and send it off to National Grange soon.

The grace period for the fourth quarter of 2020 has now passed and there are a number of Granges who have not submitted their reports. Please get them in to me as soon as possible. Once receive, you will receive the annual word for 2021, which should be communicated to your members beginning in February.

While many of us may not be seeing each other in person, members are still achieving membership milestones. Secretaries, please check your records and order the certificates, seals and certificates your members have earned. Fresh batches of forms will be sent to all Granges soon.

The 2021 State Directory has been completed. The 2021 Legislative

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backlog on deliveries is beginning to ease. I sure hope it is.

There is little rhyme or reason to delivery patterns as I have received my copy in Sharon two days after mailing out of the Winsted Post Office while other members on the eastern side of the state can take up to three weeks to receive their copies. It's not fair to all of you and it's certainly not right to charge as much as they do for such poor service.

Please contact me if you have any questions or comments.

Policy Book has been completed. The Blue Book for this year is nearing completion and all will be sent out to Granges in one packet very soon. The Blue Book will return to book form as we found the packet form used in the previous two years did not work well as the information wasn't well distributed to the committees needing it.

With February comes 990N e-Postcard season. As has been the practice for the last several years, I will be filing e-postcards on behalf of all Granges in Connecticut. Receipt of the filing will be sent to each Grange when completed. PLEASE save that receipt for your records. Frequently Granges contact me to find out what their EIN # is. While I don't mind providing the information, it is listed on the e-postcard receipt as well.

With the new year also comes time to renew our incorporations with the Connecticut Secretary of State. A new "feature" to the annual filing is a classification pull down menu referred to as a "NAICS Code". When you see them on the page there will be a pull down on the left and one on the right. Granges should select "Other Services (except Public Administration (81))" on the left and then select "Civic & Social Organizations (813410)" on the right pull down menu. This has confused some secretaries because all of the choices on the first pull down have absolutely nothing in common with the Grange. Let me know if you have any questions. Keeping your incorporation up to date on an annual basis is incredibly important so please make a note to do this.

As the vaccinations continue, I certainly hope each one brings us closer to the day when our Granges can return to some semblance of normalcy with in-person meetings and activities. It's been a long year but it seems like there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Until next time, please let me know if you need anything from the State Office and stay warm!

# Enter the Display Contest



**Dawn Anstett**  
State Youth Director  
Riverton Grange #169  
Youth@ctstategrange.org

Below are the contest rules for entry in the National Grange Display Contest. Your CT State Grange Youth Team would like to see all entries in to the State Director by September 15 for judging at the State level.

The goal of the Grange Display Contest is to create either a digital or folding display that could be utilized at a county fair, library, Grange open house or other forum to promote the Grange, Grange program or Grange issue.

#### Contest Rules:

All entrants must be youth or young adult members of a Subordinate/Community Grange.

There will be two age divisions of the Folding Display Contest: Youth – Grange members between the ages of 14-21 as of Jan. 1; Young Adult- Grange members between the ages of 22-35.

Each entry must be selected at a State Grange level contest. Each state may send up to one entry per category to the National Contest. The display theme must be Grange related. State Youth Directors must notify the National Youth Director by Oct. 1 or after the State Session, of State winners.

All entries must be exhibited at the National Grange Session; members need not attend to participate. A Grange member may enter as an individual OR as a member of a group. All group entry members must be in the same age division.

Folding display should be no

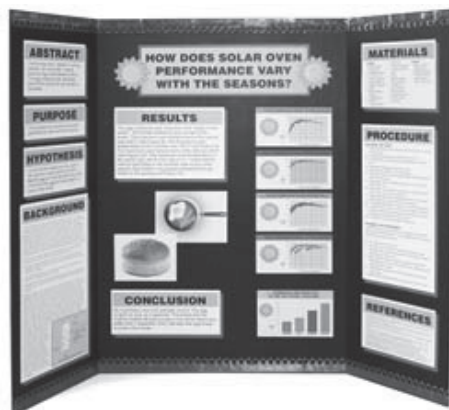


**amazon**smile  
You shop. Amazon gives.



With COVID, many of us are shopping more and more online and Amazon is one of the most popular sites for purchasing all kinds of things like food, clothing, electronics and much more. Did you know you can support the Connecticut State Grange Foundation just by shopping on Amazon? By following the steps below, a donation will be made to the Connecticut State Grange each time you shop.

1. Sign-in to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) on your computer or mobile phone browser. If you do not already have an account, follow their easy directions/prompts for creating a new account.
2. After logged in, go to Your Account and select the option to change your charity. Select "Change your charity" from the options at the bottom of the page.
3. Select a new charitable organization to support, i.e. Connecticut State Grange Foundation.
4. Each time you shop on Amazon, you must go to Smile. Amazon for the Foundation to receive a donation as a result of your purchase(s).



larger than 3' by 4' and should be able to stand by itself. Digital displays must be on a flash drive and in .MP4, .MPG, WMA format.

Displays will be judged on content, organization, originality, and neatness.

There are many opportunities for Youth to participate in the following contest. Please check out the link on our web page to download the National Grange Youth

Program Guide for more information and contact the CT State Grange Youth Director to help you explore these programs:

Grange Inter-State Youth Exchange (GISYE), Washington, D.C. Experience, Grange Grassroots Activism Scholarship, Youth Community Service.

Award/Application, Junior Mentor Award/Application, Youth Membership Recruitment Award, and to apply to be a part of the National Grange Youth Officer Team.

The following Youth Contests are held at Regional Conferences: Grange Baseball, Regional Public Speaking Competition, Regional Sign-A-Song Competition. Contact CT State Grange Youth Director at least a month prior to the scheduled Northeast Regional Conference if you wish to participate.

# My Grange



**Marge Bernhardt**  
State Lecturer  
Cheshire Grange #23  
Lecturer@ctstategrange.org

## MY GRANGE

By Karen Macdonald  
Redding Grange

When I tell others of all that happens at my Grange, they ask “what is the Grange?” I explain about its history in agriculture, consumer issues, community service and opportunities for leadership and personal growth.

I appreciate how both men and women are welcome as members, the formal ritual and agenda for meetings, and the interesting programs offered. Grangers also enjoy fun, food and fellowship at meetings and other gatherings. We operate at the local, regional, state and national levels, and members are encouraged to become officers.

Granges are also famous for hosting Agricultural Fairs and other events that allow for contest entries of many varieties. Individual Granges are encouraged to develop their own focus to match with local needs and issues. From “good old-fashioned fun” to writing a resolution to become a State law, the Grange has something for everyone. I always end with “come and visit at a meeting!”

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Above is the Third Place Winner in the 2020 Essay Contest. It is never too early to write your entry in our 2021 contest. It just takes 150 words or less. The topic is “A Grange Memory.”

I have heard some good reports on zoom meetings and the programs that the Lecturers have provided. It does all good to meet with our members at once a month. I have also heard of Granges that are continuing their Community Service Projects with

an emphasis on the needs created by COVID-19. Let’s keep the Grange in the forefront for all to see.

If your Grange has a new Lecturer

## General Assembly Zooming forward



**Alma Graham**  
Legislative Director  
Coventry Grange #75  
Legislative@ctstategrange.org

The 2021 Connecticut General Assembly opened on January 6<sup>th</sup> with a whole new look. The Legislators assembled outside for the obligation ceremony then went back to their offices for the opening remarks and Governors address. Session rules have been adapted to allow for needed safety changes. Legislators will now be able to view the session and vote from their offices in the Legislative Office Building with only the leadership in the chambers

Bills for the 2021 session have been proposed by Legislators and have been assigned to the various committees. The committees are determining which bills will be brought forward for public hearings and hearings are being scheduled. The Capitol and Legislative Office Buildings are still closed to the public so the public hearings are being held via ZOOM and You Tube Live. Individuals who wish to testify must fill out an On-Line Testimony Registration Form which can be found from a link on the Connecticut General Assembly Bulletin web page under the committee you bill has been assigned to. Anyone can view the hearings using You Tube Live without registration.

The Budget will be the primary focus of the session. They never addressed any revisions to the last two-year budget during the 2020 session. The Governor will be presenting his FY 2021-2022 State budget to the General Assembly in February and they will begin

I would appreciate it if you could let me know so that the Lecturers’ Newsletters get to the right person.

Take care and stay safe.



State Capitol, Hartford

negotiating from there. The good news is that we are currently expected to end the fiscal year with a surplus. The bad news is there are a lot of expenses relating to the pandemic that still need to be addressed. One thing to note is with the increased revenue the state can now borrow more money under the revenue and bonding law.

The current pandemic will be a big influence in the budget and in many bills that will be proposed this year. I have seen a bill already asking for personal protective equipment be tax exempt. There are also a couple bills addressing the use of the Declaration of Emergency which is allowing the Governor to issue Executive Orders during the emergency. The bills would require Legislative approval on the continuance of emergency declarations and for any continuations of executive orders.



**SENEXET GRANGE #40**

*Corr: Diane Miller*

**Feb. 17:** American Heart Health

We have not held any meetings since November. Our December meeting was canceled because of a snow storm. Several other projects that were to be held in our hall for the community were canceled because of the weather. We did have a very successful Dinner with Santa with curbside delivery of Shepherd's Pie and Macaroni & Cheese. This took place safely under a canopy. Santa was very popular. We did have a successful pie fundraiser for Christmas. These included apple, pumpkin and pork. We want to thank those members who helped with these. We have renewed our food service permit. This will allow us to continue to use the kitchen for fundraisers and other events. We want to have small groups of all ages join us in using the hall. We are still able to rent the hall to various groups including the 4H, various yoga exercise groups and the Woodstock Safety patrol monthly meeting. The downstairs has 7 separate tables and the upstairs is one big open space. We hope that all stay safe this winter.

**N. STONINGTON COMM. GRANGE #138**

*Corr: Nancy Weissmuller*

**Feb. 12:** Hold Hands Firmly, Hearts Gently

Our Christmas Party had to be canceled but our Lecturer, Sue Pianka, arranged for Santa to magi-

cally visit the children via Zoom. We also had to cancel our annual caroling visits but Jason and Robert Miner delivered the fruit baskets and gifts just the same. It was a different Christmas, but thanks to our Lecturer, Master and Gatekeeper, it was still a happy one.

Future meetings are still on hold at this writing, but we hold out hope, with the new vaccines now available, that we will be able to resume them before long. And if Old Man Winter will just keep those

**HILLSTOWN GRANGE No. 87**



Hillstown Grange is holding a Seed and Plant Swap on Saturday, Feb. 27 from 10 to 2 P.M. With the growing interest in gardening and the problems brought on by COVID, Hillstown Grange is trying a "Seed and Plant Swap." Bring any extra seeds you may have and if you have any plants already started, bring some extras to swap for that something extra you might want to try.

If the weather cooperates, we will set up tables in our parking lot and some inside our hall. Tables will be labeled: NEW SEEDS; OLDER SEEDS; SEED SAVED; UNKNOWN INFO; etc. Bring your own bags or we will have small

pesky snowstorms away from us, we hope to have better news next month.

**HEMLOCK GRANGE #182**

*Corr: Maureen Sanborn*

**Feb. 12:** Hearts a Flutter

**Feb. 26:** Omitted, unless a regular meeting is cancelled.

**Mar. 12:** All Things Green

**Mar. 26:** Omitted unless regular meeting is cancelled.

Coffee and refreshments will be served following the meeting.

envelopes to collect seeds with.

Hot coffee and refreshments will be available and lunch will be served from 11 to 1 featuring homemade soups and sandwiches.

There will be a garden tag sale. Have an extra hoe, rake or unneeded garden tool? Please bring to donate to our sale!

Social distancing and masks will be enforced for everyone's safety. Plan on parking on Hills Street. We will need to use our parking lot for distancing. Our Master Gardeners will be on hand to answer questions and talk about our outreach gardening programs and Mrs. Agriculture America Connecticut will be on hand to "AGvocate for Agriculture."

Hillstown Grange is located at 617 Hills St., East Hartford. For more information, please call Frank at 860-690-2845 or email: hillstowngrange@aol.com.





**WINCHESTER GRANGE #74**

*Corr: Todd A. Gelineau*

Next Zoom Meeting: Feb. 23

Winchester Grange continues to meet via Zoom while we wait and see when in-person meetings might be able to resume. Our most recent meeting was held on Tuesday, Jan. 26 with a good number of members in attendance. It was voted to accept the State Grange Executive Committee's loan/grant program offer and our Secretary will prepare a letter requesting the \$1,000 to assist with our ongoing expenses.

Winchester Grange is fortunate to have the rental income from the Post Office and the State Grange but expenses to insure, heat and maintain the Grange Hall are ever-present. Because the hall is rented and the water source for the Fire Department is in the Grange Hall, we can't just winterize the hall and close it for the winter.

We thank members who continue to make generous donations to the Grange and also to neighbors who donate despite not being members. Winchester Center is a tight-knit community that looks out for one another.

It was also decided Winchester Grange will renew its placemat ad with McGrane's on the Green Restaurant in Winsted. Instead of promoting in-person events as we have in the past, we will be promoting donations to the St. Pauly Clothing Shed and an open invitation for the community to try out a Zoom meeting with us. Even if

diners don't donate clothing or ask to visit a meeting, they are seeing that Winchester Grange is alive and well.

We are also looking into launching a new Zoom-based Bingo event. We are currently gathering information on this and will have more info as decisions and plans are made. Watch this space for more!

Winchester Grange extends deepest sympathies to the Gray family at Ekonk Community Grange on the passing of Past State Master Russell Gray. He will be greatly missed.

Until next time... stay warm!

**TAGHANNUCK GRANGE #100**

*Corr: Barbara Prindle*

Our January meeting was again held virtually on Zoom. We were happy to have State Grange Overseer Rob Buck as a visitor. One of the advantages of having meetings on Zoom, aside from not having to travel, is seeing the insides of members' homes. Ask him about the dog rug the next time you see him.

We also were happy to ballot on two new members and will install them before or at our next meeting.

To update you on the repair of our roof, and again thank you all for your donations, our contractor put a heavier tarp on the hole as the other was tearing. Also, we received the insurance money and can now get going on the repairs.

Our Gatekeeper Sharon Kroeger was installed and that completes the installation of officers. Sharon also had a very informative and timely Lecturer's program "Health: Building On Your Strengths".

Saving the best news for last, our Secretary, Debbie Hanlon (my daughter) has a donor for a new kidney and is scheduled to receive it on Jan. 20th. Thank you to everyone who helped spread the word that "Debbie Needs a New Kidney" and also for your thoughts and prayers.

Next meeting is February 11th at 7:30 P.M. Debbie Hanlon has the Lecturer's Program which ap-

propriately is LOVE! It will again be on Zoom and if you would like to join, contact me for the link.

# Enter the Ag Photo Contest



*Irene Percoski, Ag. Comm. Member*

The Agriculture Committee has a great contest for everyone this year. If you are planning a garden this year, this is the contest for you. It consists of photos of the following:

Each individual is challenged to take and enter a picture of themselves in the garden (whether yours/ your Grange's/ or other) during the following four phases of your garden. The fifth and sixth steps are not mandatory but are encouraged.

- 1) During Garden Preparation (2 Points)
- 2) Seeding (2 Points)
- 3) Cultivation (2 Points)
- 4) Harvest (2 Points)
- 5) (Not Mandatory) Extra points will be awarded for a picture of you donating a portion of the harvest (3 Points).

- 6) A program or video on your experience to your Grange (4 Points).

This could be a wonderful chance to work with friends and family to create a photographic memory.

Our Committee hopes that we will have many entries to judge. All entries must be received by September 1, 2021 by J. Allen Cameron, Director, 274 Canterbury Road, Plainfield 06374; email: jallen13@sbcglobal.net.





**NUTMEG POMONA #16**

*Corr: Joanne Cipriano*

We are thinking positive that we will be able to hold our next scheduled meeting on March 21, 2021 at 2:00 at Beacon Valley Grange. Everyone will be notified if this has to change.

For now, remember that your dues are payable and should be paid to your Grange Secretary or Pomona Secretary Joanne Cipriano. Dues are \$5.00 per year. Thank you to the Granges and members who have already paid theirs.

Stay safe, we will get through this crisis.

**CHESHIRE GRANGE #23**

*Corr: Ruel Miller*

**Feb. 3:** Meeting via Zoom

We will inaugurate our first Zoom meeting on Feb. 3. We have had some interest in meeting in person but that has declined. The local AA group continues to meet in our lower hall which provides some revenue during these down times. Everything here is on hold for now. We will continue to meet with Zoom for now. We are paying our bills and keeping an optimistic eye for better times down the road. Winning first prize in the National Grange Community Service Contest was truly uplifting to us.

**BEACON VALLEY GRANGE #103**

*Corr: Joanne Cipriano*

As Master, I would like to assure our members that even though we are not meeting formally every-

thing possible is being done to keep our Grange up-to-date and ready to go back to meeting as soon as government guidelines permit. All bills have been paid and on time by Treasurer Ron Fischer. All reports have been made and also on time. The officers have been contacted when their help is needed and the hall is checked almost daily thanks to Ron, Gary and Frank.

Medical report- As of today 12-14-21 Assistant Steward Tom Honyotski was diagnosed with COVID-19 and Secretary Cindy Legg had a second fall and is in Abbott Terrace Health Center.

Sadly, we offer our sincere sympathies to Ellen and William Brush on the passing of their daughter Beatrice.

We also offer our sympathies to Sue Gray and family on Russell's passing. Russ was a good friend to all Grangers.

Personally, I have been doing what we are told and staying home. On March 14th, on my way over to Cheshire Grange to pick-up corned beef dinners, I filled my car with gas. Since that date I have used one-half tank of gas. That cost me \$18.00. I normally use that amount in a week. My sister and I have been playing it safe and staying home.

**NORFIELD GRANGE #146**

*Corr: Kareen Kanaga*

**Feb. 9:** Valentine's Celebration

**Mar. 9:** St. Patrick's Celebration

**Apr. 13:** Grange Month & Celebrate Spring

Our beloved correspondent, Cubby Hickcox passed away in August and no one could hold a torch to her writing skills... she stopped writing our submissions a few years ago due to alzheimers... and a few members stepped into her shoes but no one did this job consistently due to work scheduling conflicts- so I as the Secretary am willing to try.

During the pandemic we have been very creative with our meetings and events strictly adhering

to the State and following the local guidelines. We became weary of Zoom meetings so by summer we started meeting outdoors in-person to plan our annual Fair. On Sunday, Sept. 22 we held our fair with contests, food provided by Tony Pizza Napolitano Truck, vendors who sold handmade/homemade items, a raffle with many themed items/baskets and added a "Mystery Raffle" to the mix with three "wrapped" to conceal the contained gifts aimed at kids, teens/families and adults. It was a great community event.

Our fall meetings continued to be held outside and we were seated safely surrounding our fire-ring for warmth. In November, we held a Black Friday Trunk Sale on a gloriously warm day after Thanksgiving and had 15 vendors who set up and sold items in our parking lot and the food again was provided by Tony's Pizza Truck.

In December we held our first meeting indoors seated in pods 12 feet apart and celebrated the holidays with a chili supper, holiday gift exchange, food pantry collection, gingerbread raffle and program: "Hemp, not your father's rope!" - a local school teacher shared his journey from the classroom to successful hemp farmer. In late December we received a gift/grant of \$1,000 from the Conn. State Grange Foundation which we immediately applied to the ongoing payments to defray the cost of \$4,750 for anew furnace that was installed Jan. 11, 2020. Our old furnace (50+ years old) stopped running in early January 2020. Due to the COVID pandemic, we were unable to host events and fundraisers so the State Grange Foundation stepped in to help us out! Thank you.

At our January meeting we shared a "comfort food feast" of stuffed hubbard squash (compliments of Gazy Brothers Farm, Oxford who hosts a CSA farm share pick up from our Grange's porch from May-November) and side

*Continued next page...*

Continued from page 9...

dishes to compliment the meal.

We "welcomed" four new members to Norfield Grange. We discussed our 2021 calendar and ideas for how to continue to safely host events during a Pandemic. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 P.M. All are welcome.

**LYME GRANGE #147**

Corr: Lois Evankow

As I'm writing this it is the first week of January 2021.

Happy New Year! Last year was hard on so many people, losing jobs, getting COVID-19, and family members passing away, getting used to wearing masks and social distancing. Christmas was especially hard with everyone staying home and no family gatherings.

I have made over 900 masks and have mailed out to everyone, even Bulgaria and Norway.

Our Grange has not met and we all miss each other.

With vaccines being administered and if people would stop large, unmasked gatherings, maybe

we will be able to control this virus in 2021.

# Norfield Grange new members



Norfield Grange welcomed four new members recently. Pictured l to r: Nicholas Nosal; Grange President Roland Poirier, Couper Duerr and Diane Benisch. Not pictured is Christina Seeber.

# Family Activities Committee



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

Well, December was full of surprises as we went from a White Christmas to a warm wet winter solstice and back to cold and wet. For January, we can be sure that our hands can be kept busy. For those who were not at the Regional meetings, I should be getting the action packets printed and mailed to me from the state secretary soon so I can mail them out to you. In the you will find the new contest featured this year for the men in our granges! It is to Create any birdhouse in any medium. The only restriction in the size. It can be no larger than 12" x 12" x 12" Judging will be on workmanship

and creativity. All bird houses will be returned. If you have any questions on this contest, you can email Ann-Marie Knochenhauer at [anneknoch@gmail.com](mailto:anneknoch@gmail.com). We will also have our regular contest which is to create a door stop using any brick or block of wood equal to the size of a brick. Judging will be on workmanship and creativity. If you have any questions, you can email Claudia Sopstyle at [sopstca15@gmail.com](mailto:sopstca15@gmail.com).

So there is plenty to keep busy with along with the theme contest of Sunflowers and all of the needlework categories. I can't wait to see all of your entries! Please don't forget that we will be raffling off our beautiful gift basket. You can get your tickets from your CWA Chairman - 2 for \$1.00. You have until February 14th to buy your tickets. Any questions, please email Pat Tarca at [pattarca@gmail.com](mailto:pattarca@gmail.com).

And finally, Please visit our new Facebook page @CSGFamilyActivities!

And as always, the State Grange Website if full of information and has been updated with the latest bluebook information for all our Family Activity contests, including the new recipes as well as the new national contest for the 2021 National Grange Quilt Block Contest. So there is plenty to keep you busy and we hope to see you at the February 28th Regional meeting for our last information session of the year!

## Thank you

My sincere thanks to all who sent cards after I had hip replacement surgery. They meant a lot and show what a great organization the Grange is.

Marge Bernhardt

# Chicken & Wild Rice Bake



February is normally blistery, but we've been lucky so far this winter in the snow department. But one way to warm up at dinner time is with a yummy casserole. This easy Chicken and Wild Rice Bake recipe from Taste of Home is a mid-west favorite - so why not give it a try to make it a New England favorite too!

## INGREDIENTS:

- |                                |                                            |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 3 cups water                   | 1 jar (2 ounces) chopped pimiento, drained |
| 1 cup uncooked wild rice       | 1/4 cup minced fresh parsley               |
| 2-1/2 teaspoons salt, divided  | 1/4 teaspoon pepper                        |
| 1/4 cup butter, cubed          | 1 cup chicken broth                        |
| 1 pound sliced fresh mushrooms | 1 cup heavy whipping cream                 |
| 1 medium onion, chopped        | 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese             |
| 3 cups diced cooked chicken    | 3/4 cup slivered almonds                   |

## INSTRUCTIONS:

In a large saucepan, bring water to a boil; stir in rice and 1 teaspoon salt. Reduce heat; simmer, covered, until kernels have puffed open, 45-50 minutes. Drain any excess water.

Preheat oven to 350°. In a 6-qt. stockpot, heat butter over medium-high heat; saute mushrooms and onion 5 minutes. Stir in rice, chicken, pimiento, parsley, pepper, broth, cream and remaining salt.

Transfer to a 3-qt. or 13x9-in. baking dish. Sprinkle with cheese and almonds. Bake, uncovered, until heated through, 50-60 minutes.

**TIPS:** You can cut corners by purchasing microwavable wild rice.

**SOURCE:** <https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/chicken-and-wild-rice-bake/>



By Hank the Burro

Hello Grange friends!

As of this writing, we are already nearing the end of January 2021, and soon will be entering the second month of the year. Time sure flies when you are Zooming into Grange meetings! Be sure to let George know when your Grange is meeting on Zoom, and perhaps we will stop by and see you online!

Please visit my Facebook page, and then click the "Like" button to follow all of my adventures. <http://www.Facebook.com/CTGrangeHanktheBurro>

# 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 solve 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](mailto:submissions@ctstategrange.org).



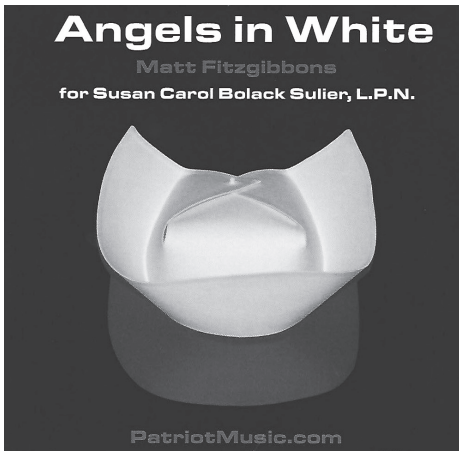
*This Month*

Ruel Miller responded to the December Window Pic saying "I see Gordon Gibson top left back and possibly Nancy Strong in the front row, far right."



*Last Month*

# An "Angel in White"



*Editor: Tom Sulier, of Harmony Grange #92 in Monroe, submitted this letter written by his late wife and Grange member Susan Sulier. Susan was a dedicated Grange member and a nurse. It is his wish to share her beautiful words with all of you at a time when these words are more important than ever given the events of the last few weeks.*

by S. Sulier

I belong to an organization, The Grange, which has created a program on the national, state and local levels called "A Word from Home." This is a letter writing campaign to show we support our soldiers, who, like you, are far away from home in the pursuit of maintaining our cherished democracy. I volunteered to participate in this very worthy endeavor because it is my small way of thanking you for helping to preserve our nation. Our Grange meetings are held in a little church-like building, called Harmony Grange, which is located in a picturesque suburban Connecticut community. What a wonderful name "Harmony." Wouldn't it be great, as written in the lyrics of an old time song (not verbatim) "What a great world it would be, if everyone could live in perfect (peace and) harmony?" If the dream of world-wide harmony could be realized, there would be no wars and no one would ever have to leave the security and sanctity of their family, friends and homes and

journey into combat in dangerous, far away, distant lands.

As I sit here wondering how to express my gratitude to you for your courage, bravery and fortitude in putting your life on the line to serve our country, I find my words seemingly shallow when I try to realize what it must be like where you are. Your loved ones must be so incredibly proud of you. I certainly am proud of you and each and every member of the U.S. Armed Forces. You are all near and dear to my heart. By you and your fellow servicemen traveling to dangerous foreign lands to protect not just your family and friends, but every American, is both mind boggling and comforting.

I have started to write this countless times and put it aside. Written words seem so inadequate considering what you are giving us in return, protecting our "American Way of Life." It is my sincere honor and privilege to be able to express my appreciation to you for granting us a sense of security, knowing our brave sons and daughters of the U.S. Military.

In closing, I thank you and your

fellow soldiers for your countless sacrifices and hardships and for your profound bravery and patriotism.

My prayers are with all of you and I wish you all a safe and speedy return back home to your loved ones.

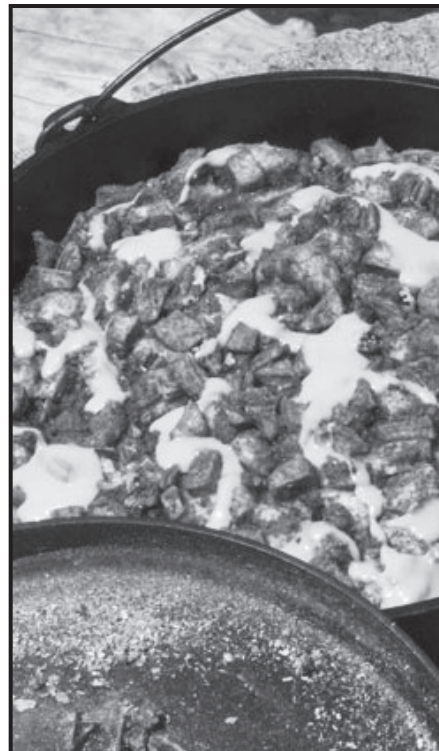
You are appreciated!!! Thank you again!!!

Respectfully,  
Susan, Stratford, CT

If you would like to hear this letter read by Della White, with music by Matt Fitzgibbons, you can go to: [www.patriotmusic.com](http://www.patriotmusic.com). Also, you can hear the song, "Angels in White", written and produced by Matt Fitzgibbons, for Susan's husband Tom, who wishes to honor Susan and all other "Angels in White."



Susan Carol Sulier



## Calling All Grangers!

Dawn Percoski, Family Act. Director

We are on a treasure hunt so pass this along! Does anyone have a 1936/37 year grange cookbook. Hopefully in the middle of it is a recipe for "Apple Cinnamon Rolls". I have someone who is trying to find this old recipe that his mother used to make. The one he is looking for is "Rolled into a log and cut into pieces and put cut side up in a Dutch Oven type of Pot and apples put over the top to turn into applesauce and baked." If anyone has it, please contact me so I can pass it along to a very grateful Granger!



## Eye on Communications

GLEANINGS FROM YOUR STATE PUBLIC RELATIONS TEAM

# The Ever Evolving Benefits Email

“Professional is not a label you give yourself - it’s a description you hope others will apply to you.” -- David Maister

It’s a new year - and a perfect time for a refresher on email usage and how it effects Granges.

Everyone is interested in ways to enhance the success of their Grange, particularly in the eyes of the public. Particularly these days, when in-person meetings and interaction is at a minimum, email becomes a very important tool for Granges. Opportunities are around every corner, so why not make sure that your Grange is utilizing the resources available.

Did you know that every Community Grange in Connecticut has their own @ctstategrange.org e-mail address? It’s true - and it’s a free service to all Community Granges! Also - every State Grange Officer and all Committees have unique email addresses as well.

Currently, nearly three-quarters of the Granges email addresses are being used in some form, either regularly or periodically. Instructions on how to access these accounts were given to all Granges in their Public Relations Packs, or were given to each person when an office turned over.

Why should Granges use their @ctstategrange.org addresses?

According to a study by the Business Alliance Council, 60% of professionals feel that using a personal e-mail address for business looks unprofessional. And - and additional 31% are actually “put off” by use of personal e-mail for professional purposes. The bottom line is this - your Grange IS a business.

- Your e-mail address tells not

only who you are and where you are from, but conveys inferred information as well. When a Grange member sends out a “Grange” e-mail, it will be taken more seriously coming from yourgrange@CTStateGrange.org than it does from hotlips@yahoo.com (I know the yahoo e-mail is an extreme example, but we actually know of some folks who have similar style e-mail addresses and use it for official Grange business.) Many of the media outlets will not give a second look to e-mails received from personal e-mail addresses. It’s best to give your Grange every chance to get the positive attention your Grange deserves, and using a professional email address is a great start.

- Ease of access -- the e-mail mailboxes are compatible with any computer and any browser, making it easy for Granges to assign multiple people to access and answer their mail. E-mails can be accessed through laptops and other mobile devices such as tablets and smart phones, regardless of whether you are at home or work, on the road visiting other Granges, or even away for the weekend.

- Privacy -- Using a Grange e-mail address looks more professional when conducting Grange business, and keeps Grange business separate from your personal e-mail account, thus protecting your personal e-mail address from junk mail and spam.

- Information sharing -- Allows Granges to stay in touch with their members quickly and easily, keeping their members up-to-date on the latest Grange happenings. Just remember, if you send an email out to more than 10-15 people, please

use the BCC function. If you put all the addresses in the “To” field, or in the “CC” field, then the email is rated as spam, and may not be delivered to everyone it is addressed to as other providers could refuse the message. When an email is sent out as a BCC message, each person gets a unique email, which are sent individually - thus it is not considered spamming. Note - this is not the rule of thumb for just the Grange email Post Office, it is best practice observed by all email services - from AOL to gMail to Hotmail to Yahoo and more.

- Marketing -- Grange e-mail addresses promote your Grange in every message you send. Every communication with your members, and potential members including the general public and the media, should project a consistent and coordinated image. The Grange is so much more than a logo!

But what if I don’t want to check two e-mail mailboxes?

Once you initially log into your Grange e-mail for the first time, you can set it to forward Grange e-mail messages to your personal (or any) e-mail address, or multiple addresses. But just know that if you answer a message forwarded to your personal email, that reply will come from your personal email, and not your Grange email address.

The more Granges, Officers and Committees that use their e-mail addresses, the more efficient we can communicate as a group. Plus, every e-mail sent and received saves printing and mailing a letter - thus saving in postage alone.

If you are ready to move forward using your Grange e-mail address, or need a refresher course on using your Grange email, contact the Public Relations department at [information@ctstategrange.org](mailto:information@ctstategrange.org) or [publicrelations@ctstategrange.org](mailto:publicrelations@ctstategrange.org), and we can get you started!



Faith Quinlan  
Membership Dir.

Winchester Grange #74  
membership@ctstategrange.org

It (2020) has been called the year the world "Hit Pause" or the year the Earth stood still. As we know the world did keep moving forward though the pace has been slow and will continue in this new year. Alas, our struggles as a society and as a Fraternal community have escalated to heights where it is time to get serious thinking about the future of our Granges!

Granges need to make money. The loan from the CT State Grange is generous but plans need to be made to pay that back and continue to pay invoices for the many months ahead when things are still restricted. Suggestions following should be planned following the CDC and CT Health & Safety Guidelines. Remember, as always, I am here to assist you in planning and implementation, you just need to reach out to me. Here are some creative ideas you can use to host fundraisers:

**Virtual Restaurant Fundraising**

- People participate via takeout or delivery. Why not have a delicious meal, support the service industry, and raise money for your Grange all at once? Simply book a date, spread the

# Fundraising During COVID

word via social media, then enjoy your feast! Also if you choose to partner with a local or family-owned restaurant, you can support a small business that is likely struggling through the pandemic, while raising money for your own cause.

**Virtual Tea & Cookies Social Hour**

- For a casual virtual event, take a social hour online! These are among the easiest virtual fundraising events to organize. All you need is a sign-up form, Zoom account with reserved time, and a loose schedule of conversation topics. Pulling together a list of fun tea drinks and snacks to suggest to attendees.

**Virtual Book Club**

- A virtual book club is a great way to engage members and build community support. Choose a book that relates to your Granges interests or maybe something mysterious and that will resonate with your donors. Then, get help creating a private Facebook group where readers can share their thoughts and use a Zoom meeting to engage with one another. Schedule weekly virtual events for participants to tune in and discuss the book together. .

**Virtual Paint, Crochet or Craft Night**

- Many people are familiar with the "paint & sip" events where you go to a painting studio and sip wine while

the instructor leads you through step-by-step instructions to paint a picture. Doing it from your kitchen isn't quite the same, but it's a great way to engage your donors, raise some money, and give people something to do from home. Consider creating a painting that somehow reflects your Grange Hall or community, so participants have a beautiful piece of art that reminds them of your organization's great work.

If you don't feel that your organization has the right skills to pull this off, reach out to find someone who can run the art instruction part of this event. Hand/ Arm Crochet Blankets are hugely popular and can also be taught virtually. Craft boxes/kits can be available for pick-up before the day of the event or lists of supplies can be sent by email ahead of time.

**Clothing Collection Drive for Granges with a St Paulie Shed**

Collection drives are a classic way for supporters to directly support your mission without making financial gifts.

**Virtual BINGO** - We recently learned about virtual Bingo done via a Zoom call. There are Connecticut laws that need to be observed but if you are interested, reach out to me and we will help you create an event that done within legal guidelines.

**CONNECTICUT STATE GRANGE**

Wearing of the Green

Virtual Social Hour

Zoom icon

Celebrating St. Patrick's Day

**Thursday, March 18th • 7:00 PM**

Wear your favorite green shirt and join us for a fun and casual social gathering. Stop by and say Hello!

Send an e-mail to [information@ctstategrange.org](mailto:information@ctstategrange.org) or [membership@ctstategrange.org](mailto:membership@ctstategrange.org) for the Zoom Meeting Access Information

**CONNECTICUT STATE GRANGE**

**FAMILY ACTIVITIES / CWA COMMITTEE**

**Winter Gift Basket Raffle Drawing**

We will be raffling off this beautiful gift basket. You can get your tickets from your CWA Chairman - 2 for \$1.00. You have until February 14th to buy your tickets.

We will hold our last special CWA/Family Activities Zoom meeting on Sunday, February 28, 2021 at 1:00 pm and at that meeting we will have the drawing for the gift basket and announce the winner.

Zoom icon

Send an e-mail to [cwa@ctstategrange.org](mailto:cwa@ctstategrange.org) for the February 28th Zoom Meeting Access Information and for more information.

## Doing One's Part



**Charles W. Dimmick**  
State Chaplain

Cheshire Grange No. 23  
chaplain@ctstategrange.org

*"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.*

*Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. (...) All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines." 1 Corinthians 12*

God has given each of us a part to play in helping to make this a better world, and sometimes it is easy to find one's part, and sometimes it is more difficult to do so. I do not want to conflate here God's chosen role for us with what we do to make a living. In some cases they may be

the same, as when one becomes a medical doctor or a nurse or a minister or a social worker. But for many others it is what one does besides (or perhaps instead of) working at a paying job.

Note also that one's role is almost certain to change through life. As children, our roles are to be helpful members of our families, doing what needs to be done to make life easier for those around us, whether it be doing chores, helping to tend siblings or sick parents, or just being obedient. As we enter young adulthood our roles may become different. We take on new responsibilities, both to our family and to our community. Even if we do not enter into a career which furthers God's work, we can and should par-

ticipate in community or church volunteer activities which further God's mission.

As we continue to grow and advance in years, we should also continue to look around us to discern where our various talents are best put to use in service towards others. Remember that these talents are gifts of the Holy Spirit and therefore should be used for God's purposes as we are able.

Even in old age, and for some of us especially in old age, there are many opportunities for service. Every non-profit organization that I know of, including churches, synagogues, and other religious organization, and local government have both room and need for anyone who can give of their time and talent, no matter what their age or physical condition.

## National Grange was prepared



Due to unrest in Washington, D.C., the Secret Service advised National Grange to board up windows and doors at its headquarters at 1616 H Street NW. The National Grange building is the only privately owned building on the Federal block opposite the White House. National Grange staff and employees of the tenants in the building worked remotely during the week of the Election Certification at the Capitol and the Inauguration a week later. Due to COVID-19, National's staff has become quite familiar with working remotely. The staff is now back working in the building which suffered no damage during those tumultuous days in January.

### In Memoriam

**Russell M. Gray**  
Ekonk Comm. Grange No. 89

**Robert Sheldon**  
Granby Grange No. 5

**Louise Salmon**  
Senexet Grange No. 40

*"Well done, good and faithful servants."*