



the CONNECTICUT GRANGER

Published Monthly

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The Official News Magazine of the Connecticut State Grange

April 2025

From the President's Desk



Robert Buck
State President

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Does your Grange have a purpose? You probably think that it does, and it may. However, does it reflect what your Grange is doing or what you want it to accomplish? After all, the Grange is America's oldest farm fraternity and supposed to support rural and agricultural interests in America. You meet, follow some sort of Order of Business, hopefully the official Grange one prescribed in the Subordinate Manual or something closely modeled on that. You do all your business, pay your bills, make some contributions, and perhaps do fundraisers or community service projects. But, have you as a Grange and within your Granges stopped recently to think about and analyze a bit what you do as a Grange (1), why you do it (2), who you do it for (3), and most importantly perhaps, do they know your Grange is doing what it does (4)?

I know some Granges are larger and have more activities going on and are able to do more within their own communities. Some are smaller and are doing all that of which they are capable and should be just as proud of what they are doing as

the larger groups. To be honest, some in both the larger and smaller categories of Granges are going through the prescribed motions (or maybe not) but have lost their way and are rudderless and doing what they do without a distinct purpose or direction in mind. I do not say this lightly or in jest as I realize we all have the best intentions in mind.

That is why I think every Grange should stop, take stock of itself with a little introspection and figure out their purpose. This process took place for one of our larger Granges before my eyes recently

Influential Connecticut Grangers

Robert K. Mitchell

by Todd A. Gelineau, Editor

Robert K. Mitchell served the Connecticut State Grange as president from 1957-1961. He was the sixth generation to operate Mitchell Farm in Southbury. He served as member and director of the Connecticut Farm Bureau and the Connecticut Milk Producers Association.

A graduate of Cornell University in 1926, Mitchell was founder and past president of the Fairfield-New Haven Artificial Breeders Association and treasurer of the New England and Connecticut Artificial Breeders Association.

He served as president of Patrons

on a visitation. They had an open forthright conversation about what they are doing currently and why to establish some goals. The group also answered the questions of whom they serve with their hard work, and asked, do those for whom their service is being done know who is actually doing these projects? In a lot of cases, the answer to this last question is "no," and this should be rectified by better publicity. We need to toot our own horn, so to speak and get the recognition we deserve.

The overall problem of lacking a defined sense of purpose is not just with some of the Community

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Mutual Insurance Company (founded by the Connecticut State Grange) and was former Republican town chairman of Southbury. He was a member and deacon emeritus of

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Connecticut State Grange
A part of the National Grange



NEXT ISSUE:
Articles Due April 15

From the President's Desk

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Granges. The Connecticut State Grange is going to be discussing this topic and rewriting its Statement of Purpose very soon.

I'm sure we all know that on the local level, we provide community service and advocate for agriculture. Why? Obviously we want to serve and strengthen our communities while providing a fraternal community in which we gain fellowship opportunities to strengthen existing friendships and maybe even make new ones. If we

publicized our activities better, we might attract more of a following and gain new members as well.

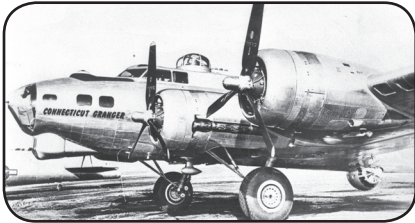
Having seen one Grange go through this process, I challenge every Grange to spend a Lecturer's program and write out some notes answering the four questions outlined in my first paragraph of this column. Condense that information into a Statement of Purpose specific to your Grange. I further would ask your secretary to send the results of your discussions (summary answers in bullet point format to the four questions) and Purpose Statements to me in the next few months. Every Grange is different, so there are no

correct or incorrect answers to this exercise.

If you continue this process, you can formulate Mission and Vision Statements for your Grange. The Mission Statement is a short 10-20 word statement of why you exist while the Vision Statement is a longer composition indicating where an organization is headed. Think of Mission Statements as documents pertaining to the short term, while the Vision Statement is for the longer haul. These are both fluid and not set in stone. They can and should change over time. I encourage you all to stop, take stock of where you are now, and where you want to go. Keep me updated with questions and how your discussions turn out.

the Connecticut Granger

Published Monthly



WW II Flying Fortress "Connecticut Granger"

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DEADLINE/CORRECTIONS

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THERE'S STILL TIME TO...

GET ON BOARD
for a Grange convention unlike any other!

SET SAIL FOR THE 2025 NATIONAL GRANGE CONVENTION ~ AT SEA!
Learn more: www.nationalgrange.org/159ngconvention

Convention at Sea
159th Annual
National Grange
Convention
November 8-16
2025
MIAMI ARUBA
BONAIRE CURACAO

There's still time to...Get On Board for a convention unlike any other! You (and your family and friends!) are invited to join us for the 159th Annual National Grange Convention - aboard the Carnival horizon. We will be cruising from Miami to the Caribbean islands of Aruba, Bonaire, and Curacao on this 8-day event, full of Grange activities, Grange friends, and exploring and having fun! Who says a convention can't be FUN, too? Learn more and book your cabin today at <http://www.nationalgrange.org/159ngconvention>

#GrangeStrong #ng159



GRANGE PROJECT SUSTENANCE

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

Last month we introduced “Project Sustenance” with a promise to highlight more suggestions on how your Grange can participate.

You, of course, are not limited to the suggestions. Let these suggestions serve as a launching pad for your creativity. In the end, it's all about serving your community and helping those that need our help.

Seed Library



A seed library allows community members to borrow seeds for gardening, encouraging self-sufficiency and biodiversity. Participants grow their own food, save seeds from their harvest, and return them to the library for others to use. This initiative supports local food security by fostering sustainable gardening practices, especially in communities where access to quality seeds might be limited.

Resources Required: Granges will need a dedicated storage space for seeds, such as cabinets or containers for organization. Volunteers with gardening experience can assist with seed collection, sorting, and organizing. Granges can partner with local garden clubs, seed companies, or farmers to acquire seeds. Additionally, educational materials about seed saving and gardening techniques can be provided. If the Grange does not have a physical hall, collaborating with libraries or community centers to house the seed library is an option.

Food Waste Reduction Program



Food waste reduction programs promote the responsible use of food by educating individuals and families on how to minimize waste in the kitchen. These programs might include composting, proper food storage, and creative ways to repurpose leftovers. The goal is to reduce food waste, improve sustainability, and make food more accessible for those in need.

Resources Required: Granges will need educational materials on food waste reduction and composting techniques, which can be sourced from environmental agencies or local experts. Workshops can be held in Grange halls with the necessary equipment for food storage demonstrations and composting setups. Volunteers are needed to manage the program, help distribute educational materials, and lead workshops. Collaborating with local environmental groups or community gardens can help provide expertise.

Low-Cost Community Dinners



Low-cost community dinners are a great way to bring people together while addressing food insecurity. These events provide affordable meals, often focusing on healthy options that meet the dietary needs of a diverse community. These dinners are especially useful for low-income or senior members who may struggle to cook for themselves or find affordable meal options.

Resources Required: To organize these events, Granges will need a kitchen, dining space, and volunteers to prepare and serve the food. If a Grange does not have a kitchen, local community centers, churches, or schools may offer their facilities. Donations from local grocery stores, farmers, and food suppliers can help cover the costs. Volunteers can assist with cooking, serving, and cleaning up after the events. A strong community outreach effort, such as flyers, social media posts, or word of mouth, is essential to ensure attendance, especially in rural areas where reaching members can be a challenge.

Need help or mentorship for a project/program like these at your Grange? Contact membership@nationalgrange.org to be connected to a Grange who has successfully held a similar event.



**Jody & Jodi Ann
Cameron**
Membership Co-Dir.
Ekonk Comm. Grange No. 89
membership@ctstategrange.org

Grange Month Challenge

17 Granges have 21 to 49 members, and 7 Granges have 50 and more members.

Recently, Christine Hamp, President of the National Grange held a ZOOM gearing up to Grange Month. During this ZOOM she issued the following challenge:

Grange Month Challenge:

- Bring a friend to the Grange – introduce them to your Grange’s mission and family.
- Start a community project and share it on social media with #GrangeMonth.
- Attend a local government meeting and speak up on an issue that matters to your community.
- Connect your Grange to Project Sustenance to battle food insecurity and build community- and self-resilience

Every one of these challenges is easy to accomplish and don’t think you need to do them all in April. We hope your Grange discusses these or sets your own challenges for this

year and make a commitment to growing your grange in membership and community presence.

Jodi Ann, Jeff, Debbie, Elizabeth and I also want to challenge you. We are challenging each of you, every one of us, to recruit one new member by the end of this calendar year. Let’s assume the average attendance is 12.5 members at our meetings, if those 12.5 active members secures 1 new member that will increase membership by 375 new members, or roughly 25% increase in membership. We can do this; we need to do this. Please accept this challenge.

Your State Grange Membership Development Team is here to aid and support your Grange and members with Growth and Development, all you need to do is ask.

As always, we encourage you to be Grange Strong and Live a Connected Life.

April is designated as Grange Month and is an opportunity for all Granges and Grangers to show pride in our organization. We have much to be proud of, almost all our Granges are doing great things in their communities, attracting people to their halls. These are all important factors in exhibiting that your Grange is Living a Connected life.

We wanted to step back a little and give you some facts and figures on “the state of Grange membership” at the end of the calendar year 2024. The total membership of the Connecticut State Grange as of 12/31/2024 was 1,370 members in 31 Granges. We saw a loss of 30 members and 2 Granges during the 2024 calendar year. Membership numbers range from 12 to 123 in those 31 Granges. 7 Granges have 20 or less members,

Update on Grange Benefit Request

Jody Cameron, State Treasurer

All Granges are faced with rising costs, especially if you own your buildings. Everything is on the rise, heat, electrical and Insurance most specifically. In some of our recent visitations we have been asked if the State Grange could look into a “Blanket” Liability Policy that all Granges could buy into. First off let me be clear, ALL Granges should have liability policies regardless if you own your building or not, these policies cover you, your members and guests whenever attending a Grange event.

The State Grange Board has discussed this and we have made some contact inquiries and the short answer to this is it is not an attractive option for underwriters as there are numerous factors that go into developing the individual policies specifically for the exact needs of each Grange.

Even though this isn’t something we could develop into a benefit for our Granges, please keep thinking and making these suggestions, because together we make a great team.



Hank made a visit to Higganum Grange #124. Howard Burr, President, looks on.

Influential Connecticut Grangers

Robert K. Mitchell

Continued from page one...

South Britain Congregational Church.

Mitchell served Southbury in the Connecticut General Assembly and was also Southbury's first judge of probate.

He was married to May (Platt) Mitchell, who served at National Grange Flora during his term as State President.

He is one of a small number of Past State Presidents with a limited amount of information available about them. In researching for this biography, we uncovered a letter written to National President Herschel Newsom by immediate past State Grange president Donald K. Peck of Litchfield. In that letter, Peck is responding to a request from the National Grange for a questionnaire to be filled out by the State Overseer (Robert Mitchell) as he was apparently being considered for a National appointment. Peck says, "It is rather hard for me [to] give you a true picture of the qualifications of our Overseer. Brother Mitchell has never assumed any responsibility in the many years he has been working up through the chairs of the State Grange." He goes on to say, "Brother and Sister Mitchell have been friends of ours for many years, but it appears that he has no intention of taking any active interest in the Grange until he becomes State [President]."

Donald Peck earned the nickname "Mr. Grange" as he was a dedicated Patron whose mastery of the ritual and degree work was impeccable. His first wife, Alta, served as National Grange Home Economics Director and has been featured in the *Connecticut Granger* for the many contributions she has made to the Grange.

There was hesitation in repeating the Peck assessment in this article, but without it, the story would only be a thin telling of basic facts and information. Here are some of those bits and pieces:

"National Flora, May Mitchell and State [President] Robert K. Mitchell recently attended the first meeting of Konomoc Grange No. 41 in their new Grange hall, located at Vauxhall St. Ext. and Douglas Lane in Waterford, Conn. The hall has been in construction for nine years, by a building committee of seven members, since the acquisition of a 100 by 275 foot lot, donated by two members, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Morgan. Konomoc Grange has a membership of 351 and for 73 years has met in various halls around Waterford." - *Hartford Courant*, Jan. 3, 1960.

"State [President] Robert K. Mitchell and Mrs. Mitchell, who is National Flora, were seated on the



May and Robert Mitchell (center) receive their Golden Sheaf Certificates (50 years of membership) in 1976. The presentation may have been at their home Grange, Pohtatuck Grange No. 129 (though this may be incorrect as they are wearing their Past Voting Delegate sashes).

platform with President Eisenhower and other National Grange officers and their spouses at the dedication of the new Grange building in Washington recently. The building, located one block from the White House, was started in January 1959 at a cost of \$1,250,000, and makes the Grange the only farm organization with headquarters in the nation's capital." - *The Bridgeport Post*, July 10, 1960.

"State [President] Robert K. Mitchell appeared before the Congressional Committee on Federal Highways in Washington on Monday in support of the Federal Highway Act of 1959. The bill is for the expiration on July 1, 1961, of the extra 1 cent federal gas tax as scheduled. Mr. Mitchell also appeared in favor of the use of tax monies collected on automobiles and accessories for highway purposes." - *The Bridgeport Post*, March 26, 1961.

From the *Hartford Courant*, Feb. 17, 1963: "Mr. and Mrs. Robert K. Mitchell, of Southbury, and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Prelli, of Winsted, recently took a trip to Washington, D.C. where they attended the two-day session of the Dairy Committee of the National Grange. Mr. Mitchell is an official member of the committee and also represented Connecticut in his capacity of

...Continued next page

Continued from page 5...

executive chairman of the State Grange, with Mr. Prelli, who is gatekeeper of the Conn. State Grange, as well as assistant to the National [President], Herschel Newsom."

In a *Hartford Courant* article from Aug. 8, 1965, there is a brief mention of a fire at the Mitchell Farm. "Robert K. Mitchell, State Chairman of the Executive Committee, and Southbury Legislator, is recuperating at his home. Mr. Mitchell was recently hospitalized after the barn burned down on his Southbury farm." No other articles or information about this fire have been found.

It was during Mitchell's term that the idea of a State Grange newsletter began to formulate. After meetings of state officers and interested members, the *Connecticut Granger* began publication in October of 1960 and has continued uninterrupted ever since.

The Connecticut State Grange was at the forefront of the "power couple" movement 50 or so years before it became a "Hollywood thing"! We had the Gret-Als (Gretchen & Alfred Beckwith), the Alta-Dons (Alta & Don Peck) and the May-Bobs (May & Bob Mitchell). Each group was made up of members who served under each State Grange President and carried on their dedication to the Grange by working on fundraisers, projects and even the construction of Camp Berger in Winchester. The dining hall at Camp Berger was named the "Alta-Don Hall," and the Staff House was made possible by the May-Bobs.

The May-Bobs were known for holding dinners and raising money for projects like the *Connecticut Granger*. One such *Connecticut Granger* fundraiser was a "Theater Party." "On July 25, 1966 at 8:30 PM, the Oakdale Theatre will be the scene of a gala theatre party arranged by the May-Bobs. The show will be "Carousel" with Howard Keel in the leading role. He is well known and loved by Oakdale patrons for his great performances in "Kismet", "South Pacific" and "Camelot" and holds the top grossing record for a performance in a musical at Oakdale. He played in "Carousel" on Broadway and since then has had a distinguished career on stage, in moving pictures and on TV."

Don Peck's assessment aside, the Mitchells served the Connecticut State Grange for many years and contributed much to the organization as we know it today.

Robert K. Mitchell died at the age of 80 on June 22, 1985 after what was described as a brief illness and was buried in the South Britain Cemetery. May lived 95 years, passing on September 27, 1999.



(L to R) Conn. Lt. Governor John Dempsey (later Governor), Robert K. Mitchell, Conn. Comm. of Agriculture Joseph Gill, National President Herschel Newsom, and May Mitchell.

PROCLAMATION

GRANGE MONTH 2025



GRANGE MONTH - CELEBRATE, CONNECT, AND GROW!

WHEREAS, April is **Grange Month!** A time to celebrate our legacy, embrace new opportunities, and showcase the incredible impact of the Grange in communities across America; and

WHEREAS, for nearly 160 years, the Grange has been a beacon of service, leadership, and unity, bringing together individuals and families who share a passion for making a difference; and

WHEREAS, the Grange is growing, evolving, and thriving, fueled by the energy of its members who create solutions, build friendships, and strengthen rural communities through action and innovation; and

WHEREAS, Grange Month is the perfect time to open our doors, welcome new members, and inspire the next generation of leaders, ensuring the Grange remains a vibrant force for good for decades to come; and

WHEREAS, this is a time to ignite our passion for advocacy, service, and fun, from hosting community events and launching new projects to connecting with neighbors and celebrating the bonds that make the Grange so special; and

WHEREAS, together, we stand strong, dream big, and build brighter futures, carrying forward the Grange's mission with enthusiasm and determination; therefore be it

RESOLVED, I, Christine E. Hamp, President of the National Grange, do hereby proclaim April as Grange Month and invite every member, friend, and supporter to celebrate, engage, and grow with us. **Grange Strong** - Today, Tomorrow, and Always!

Christine E. Hamp

Christine E. Hamp
President
National Grange



WWW.NATIONALGRANGE.ORG



Eye on Communications

GLEANINGS FROM YOUR STATE PUBLIC RELATIONS TEAM

The Heart & Soul of Community: The Impact of Grange Halls

In Connecticut, Grange Halls serve as vibrant centers of community life, with 30 active Granges, 28 of which have their own dedicated halls, or meets in one. These buildings are not just bricks and mortar; they embody the spirit and mission of the Grange, acting as vital gathering places where traditions are honored and new ideas take root.

Historically, Grange Halls have been instrumental in supporting the agricultural community. They began as spaces for farmers to exchange knowledge about crops, share trade practices, and address the pressing challenges that shaped their livelihoods. But as time has passed, these halls have transformed, evolving into multifaceted hubs that connect people beyond their agricultural roots.

A Grange Hall represents much more than a meeting spot; it is the lifeblood of a Grange, fostering collaboration, creativity, and community spirit. With the hall comes the responsibility of maintaining a welcoming and functional environment, which can dramatically uplift members' morale and boost overall engagement. Imagine walking into a well-kept, inviting space filled with historical memorabilia and the scents of fresh flowers—this is the experience that can draw members in and inspire pride.

However, keeping these hallways bright and vibrant requires strategic planning and resources. Granges face the ongoing challenge of managing the costs associated with building upkeep, from unplanned repairs to general maintenance. Is your Grange Hall a cherished gem or an overlooked burden? Does it warmly welcome visitors or



Cheshire Grange Hall

leave them questioning its condition?

From leaky roofs to malfunctioning heating systems, the risks are real and pressing. If the unexpected occurs, could your Grange rally the resources to tackle these issues without derailing daily operations? It's a reality that demands consideration.

As the economic landscape shifts, many Granges find it difficult to keep up with the financial demands of maintaining their properties. With fewer volunteers and tightened budgets, how can Granges prioritize maintaining their halls while also planning for future growth? The good news is that with a bit of creativity and teamwork, it is absolutely possible.

Let's explore four key areas to inspire a fresh approach:

People: Engaging your members is essential. Cross-train officers to enhance teamwork and ensure smooth operations. Keep enthusiasm alive by celebrating the hall's significance and acknowledging the contributions of each volunteer. Encourage a sense of ownership and pride among members—they are

the custodians of this community treasure!

Property: Start with simple improvements. Organize community cleaning days to tackle clutter and spotlight the hall's charm. Little touches, such as freshening up the bathrooms or displaying Grange awards, can enhance member pride. A well-maintained hall should greet visitors with warmth and cleanliness—because first impressions matter.

Income: Fundraising doesn't have to be daunting. Small, fun initiatives can make a difference! Consider game nights or penny drives. Create buzz around these efforts by turning them into community events. Every penny collected can inch the Grange closer to that fresh coat of paint—or perhaps even a new roof!

Reputation: The exterior of your Grange Hall is the first story it tells. An inviting and well-kept façade invites curiosity and trust from the community. Being transparent about the challenges your Grange faces can build goodwill, encouraging community support and even attracting new members who want to contribute to overcoming these issues.

As Granges reflect on their places within the community, they must focus on their strengths and the positive impact they strive to create. Questions like "What goals are we pursuing as a Grange?" and "What does success look like for us?" can help shift the narrative from challenges to opportunities. Honesty and open dialogue about building upkeep can foster trust and engagement, paving the way for a brighter future for Granges and their halls.

With a collective vision and renewed commitment, Grange Halls can continue to shine brightly as symbols of community spirit and resilience, weaving together the past, present, and future of their neighborhoods. Let's embrace these spaces as the heart of the Grange and the catalyst for positive community change.



EASTERN CT POMONA #14

Corr: Carol Hnath

April 5: Rescheduled meeting at North Stonington Grange Hall at 7 pm. Program "Love Languages"

The March meeting was postponed and has been rescheduled for April 5th at North Stonington Grange Hall at 7 pm. The program, "Love Languages", will be presented by the Lecturer. Collection items for our community service project are cleaning products this month such as disinfecting wipes, sponges, paper towels, dishwashing liquid, laundry detergent, etc.

Our meeting in May will be a special meeting for the Fifth Degree. This will be held at Killingly Grange Hall. Anyone interested in taking the Fifth Degree should contact the Secretary of their community Grange for more information.

SENEXET GRANGE #40

Corr: Diane Miller

April 22: Earth Day

April 29: Chicken Pot Pie Supper

May 20: Ham and Bean Dinner

Busy time for our members. Trying very hard to get new members. Challenge by the President to recruit new members. We will prepare a handout for display of the hours our members contribute. We offer

Hillstown Grange Chili Cook-Off



Hillstown Grange held a chili cook-off on March 14 with 12 entries and lots of happy visitors. The winner was "Bear Chili."

classes for various subjects. Line dancing is very popular. Corn Hole is held in the upstairs room as well as the return of Yoga. We held a successful Shepherd's Pie dinner. We will do monthly dinners. These comfort foods are well accepted. The members contribute many hours of community service.

Work Day will be to weed the Memorial Garden and yard. We will also participate in the roadside cleanup. Our outside stairs have been installed and will make the upstairs more able to have more occupancy. Thank all those who helped. The upstairs hall has also been repainted and looks great. New LED lights were also installed. The pellet stove is also in use and provides the necessary heat for cold nights downstairs.

We would like to be able to have our meeting hall used as a

local community center similar to neighboring towns. Looking forward to all our future events.

VERNON GRANGE #52

Corr: Cherie Robinson

April 4: It's A Mad Mad World

May 2: Family Activities Committee Presents Program

We celebrated Women's History month hearing of many strong, influential and inspirational women of the Grange. We firmed up some of our summer activities. Mark your calendar now to come find treasures at the Grange booth at the Strong Family Farm tag sale on June 7th. There will be free seeds available. We will be collecting used garden tools for donation to local community gardens.

On August 17th, we will sponsor the day at Strong Farm with crafts and story times, come see and us and the visiting duck flock!

It's been a long time since we have met in person, and we are so looking

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.

forward to our in person meeting in April. Please join us, we welcome visitors.

COVENTRY GRANGE #75

Corr: Noel Miller

April 4: Happy Easter

This past winter was brutal, storms, illness and ice, glad for spring, Planning for a big Tag Sale end of April or early May.

HILLSTOWN GRANGE #87

Corr: Michelle DeDominicis

Hillstown Grange held a great chilli cook-off on March 14th with 12 entries - including prize winning Bear Chili!

NORTH STONINGTON COMM. GRANGE #138

Corr: Nancy R. Weissmuller

April 11: World War I

April 25: Community Citizen and honoring longtime members

Our hall and grounds are often used for fundraisers and celebrations by local non-profit organizations. The Baptist school held a spaghetti dinner in February, the Lions will hold a pancake breakfast in May, the town-wide yard sale will be here next September, and, of course, the annual North Stonington Agricultural Fair (again headed by our own Mile Riley, Sr.) will take place July 10-13 with the New London County 4H Expo following on Aug. 8-10; and if you are not busy on June 27, 2026 be sure to stop by and enjoy the exciting events sponsored by the town historical society.

Our first meeting in February had to be canceled due to illness of key officers. Luckily all was well by the 28th. We were happy to welcome Dick and Camilla Tarryk, new members who now belong to our Grange as Preston City #110 has merged with us. Hopefully this means we can look forward to some

wonderful accordion music at future programs.

The evening's program featured the Spanish American War and President Teddy Roosevelt (in the form of Jeff Barnes) and Clara Barton (in the form of Cheree Miner)

Legislatively Speaking



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

Since my last article, the Stock Market dropped 1,000 points in one week with tariffs aimed at our allies. There is concern over the efforts of DOGE to close government agencies and a loss of faith in the US economy.

Project Sustenance was featured in the last issue of the Granger, talking about food security. With proposed cuts in food assistance and school lunch programs, our neighbors, children, and families may be left out of these programs.

This reminds me of the Victory Gardens during WWII. When I worked at the UConn Dairy Barn on the Storrs Campus, we had photos of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt visiting the barn watching young men and women from the cities learning to milk cows and do farm work with chickens, pigs and vegetable gardens. The field behind the yellow barn was a bog with drainage tiles that made it a great fertile field. During the war, the area was a large Victory Garden to raise food for the area people to survive due to the rationing. It's that call to service that is needed to help our State. We need everyone to chip in, like the Pandemic, we will have to take care of each other.

were in attendance. Sue's programs are always lots of fun. Wish more friends would join us. And if those daffies that are just peeking their heads above ground will keep on growing, next time we will tell you all about merry March.

We have heard the US Postal Service will be laying off 10,000 workers and request DOGE to evaluate this department. Post Master General DeJoy has submitted his resignation for June 2025. Since he has been Post Master General, he has diligently worked to destroy this agency by removing sorting machines, closing rural Post Offices and regional centers. He now wants to delay delivery to outlying areas, "Rural America", which the National Grange lobbied for in the 1890's.

We should keep our eye on the changes and closures of government agencies. We all need to stand up for ourselves, our children, grandchildren, parents and grandparents. It's the Grange way.

The State of Connecticut has had some hearings on Ag issues. The DEEP is looking to rent or lease land agricultural land purchased under the Open Space Land Acquisition program. Some farmers wish to have an exemption to polystyrene and single use plastics. The Grange passed a resolution three years ago to ban single use plastics and polystyrene containers to help save the environment, plus there are many plant-based options for containers today.

Money is going to get tight- we all need to tighten our belts and help each other get through this.

Happy Easter and pray for an early spring.

WINDOW TO THE PAST

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



This Month



Last Month

No answers were received for last month's picture. Let us know if you have any clues.

Spring is here again!



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

Well Hello Spring! I can't believe it's April already. I hope that you all had a great time with the winter projects that you have hopefully completed. But don't worry, there is still time to start or finish another category to enter into the contests! If you need any entries, please let me know as I have plenty. You can also go online and download one. And speaking of contests, we are announcing that our Family Activities and Lecturers contests will be held on the first weekend of August. (Friday, August 5 – 7th) We will be back at Hillstown for another one of

their extremely delicious pancake breakfasts. More details will follow.

How are your collections going for the G Notes? Here is a hint on how to find more, ask for some 1's when you receive change when you are out shopping! How are all your plans going for this year? Have you written a resolution yet? There are a lot of concerns that your Grange may have that can be turned into a resolution. Down the road, it's always fulfilling when you see something you were passionate about turn into law! The process is fascinating and we get to be a part of it.

Parent & Parent, LLP

ORANGETRUCK AUDIO
PRODUCTION & LIGHTING

WALLINGFORD IN TUNE

1521

WALLINGFORD IN TUNE

Saturday, April 26th, 2025 - 12pm-7pm

A Local Music Festival to Benefit
Wallingford Grange No. 33
586 Center St. Wallingford, CT 06492

Peaches & Diesel If Not For Dreaming Heiress
Missing Phoenix Wallingford Ukelele Club Hat Trick Now & Then
Arcade Vinnie Testa The Other Four The Bear Mountain Band
Jonathan Blair's Timeless Tunes Matt Johnston Adult Supervision
Brandon Kaswer

Tickets \$10 Donation



GRANBY GRANGE #5

Corr: Dave Roberts

On March 8th, Granby Grange #5 held a work party at their historic Grange hall in North Granby. During the event, Connecticut State Representative Mark Anderson, a member, stopped by to lend a hand and present several Grange members with an official proclamation from the Connecticut General Assembly, recognizing this milestone 150th Anniversary.

Granby Grange was the fifth Grange to be chartered in Connecticut. Harvey Godard, the Grange's first president, also served as the first president of the Connecticut State Grange. In 1940, the Grange moved into its current location at 212 North Granby Road, a historic building that once served as both the Town Hall and a schoolhouse.

Today, Granby Grange is led by Judy Doyle, who is deeply committed to building upon the community's rich agricultural history while continuing to serve its members.

WINCHESTER GRANGE #74

Corr: Todd A. Gelineau

April 8: Card & Letter Writing Month, Ref. Pam Wright

April 22: Keep America Beautiful Month, Ref. Marylou Keefe

May 13: Food for Homeless Animals Month, Ref. Potluck at 6 PM

May 27: Memorial Day Program (by Chaplain), Ref. Patrick O'Brien

Winchester Grange held a very successful Baked Potato Dinner

Peter Keefe Remembered



Riverton Grange honored the memory of Affiliate Member Peter Keefe with a Charter Draping at their March meeting. In attendance were State VP Ted Powell, Winchester Grange President Patrick Obrien, Mary Lou Keefe, Earl Phillips, Sandy Phillips, and Deputy Debbie Vail.

on March 15 with many friends, neighbors and Grangers turning out for our first attempt at this type of event. Thank you to the members of Riverton and Wallingford Granges who came out in large numbers to support us. It is appreciated.

At our March 25 meeting we finalized plans for projects around the hall. We accepted a bid from one contractor to replace all eight windows in the dining room and kitchen. The current windows are very old storm windows on the outside with very cumbersome 8 pane window inserts on the inside that have to be removed in the spring and re-installed in the fall. Needless to say, efficiency has nothing to do with these windows.

Recently, our President went to the hall to check on things and the front door actually dropped from its jam, making it almost impossible to close/lock the door. Temporary repairs were made while we gathered quotes for a replacement. The quotes are in and we are moving forward with a quote for new doors and

hardware to replace the 30+ year old doors we have now.

Our project to remove the oval window on the pediment above the front door will be moving forward once we receive an updated quote from the contractor. Plans still call for the window to be removed and the hole to be filled in and sided over. In the place of the window should be a Grange seal. We'll update you all as the projects move long.

TAGHHANNUCK GRANGE #100

Corr: Barbara Prindle

Apr. 10: Spring Cleaning In & Out by ALL NOTE: 6PM Ref: Chris Hopkins

May 3: Grange Dance 7pm-9pm NOTE: No experience needed as all dances are taught.

May 8: Fishing by Mike Taylor Ref: Barbara Prindle

June 7 & June 8: Plant & Rummage Sale 9AM-3 PM

Note: Refreshments & Social time at 7PM with meeting at 7:30 unless otherwise noted.

Continued next page...

It is with a very heavy heart that I must share the news that our dearest member Barbara Bartram passed away on March 3rd. She will be missed. A memorial service will be held Saturday, May 3, at 11:00 a.m. at Sharon Congregational Church. Private interment.

Memorial donations may be made to Sharon Congregational Church, PO Box 6, Sharon, CT 06069.

Our new member, Lynn Cline, was Obligated at our last meeting and is now a member of our Grange. She has been helping us out for a few years with our Plant and Rummage sale. As she said, "I only live 2 minutes away from the Grange Hall", so thought it made sense to become a Granger.

On March 4th we had 15 people in our Hall making seed kits to take home. They brought old packets of seeds, saved seeds including edamame seeds, new bought seeds, popcorn, etc. These were passed out with each person choosing what seeds they wanted to plant in the kits. Everyone shared their experiences about planting and taking care of their gardens. Refreshments were "seed foods", including sesame cookies, berries, home grown popcorn and more. This event hit all three aims of Project Sustenance.

We are not having an easy time collecting the one-dollar G notes. They seem to be few and far between. One of our members got 50 ones from the bank and only came up with a hand full of G-notes.

We hope to see you at our Dance on May 3rd, which is the 1st Saturday of the month 7PM-9PM. Speaking of dance, our program for March was Line Dancing and everyone learned the "Stand By Me" line dance. I was very proud of them.

WHIGVILLE GRANGE #48

Corr: Patricia Smaldone

Whigville Grange #48 held a towel drive to benefit St. Vincent

Granby celebrates 150 years



Pictured from left to right: Pat Tarca, Dawn Percoski, Vice President Carol Innes, Honorable Mark Anderson, President Judy Doyle, Kara Marshall, and Barbara Frederick. Mark Anderson is presenting Judy Doyle with a proclamation from the Connecticut General Assembly in recognition of Granby's 150th Anniversary.

DePaul shelter in Bristol, CT. Members collected gently used towels and washcloths for people to use at the resource center. Many thanks to all who contributed to care for others!

BETHLEHEM GRANGE #121

Corr: Dorothy Fairchild

April 13: Easter Lily Program and Refreshments Carol W.

State Overseer Ted Powell presented Years Service Awards to Fred Camp for 55 years, Albert Maddox for 55 years, Barbara Robert for 45 years, Eloise Osuch and Malcolm for 30 years, and Ray Johnstone for 25 years.

Bean and potato seeds will be given to Nonnewaug High School. Students will donate the harvest to the food bank.

The Town's Park Department's has scheduled a historical re-enactment program of Paul Revere's ride on

April 18 at 7pm. A live rider will ride around and about town. Several Grange members have volunteered to assist with the event's setup of luminaries.

The lecturer's program topic was "Roses" and was conducted by Fred Fairchild

RIVERTON GRANGE #169

Corr: David Roberts

April 4: Riverton Grange #169's monthly in-person meeting. Refreshments will be served at 6:30 PM, and the meeting will begin promptly at 7:00 PM.

April 6: Veteran of the Month ceremony at the hall; 6:00 PM; Open to All; refreshments served following ceremony. Event co-sponsored in collaboration with Riverton American Legion Post #159

April 23: Open House at the hall to recognize Riverton Veteran Ted

Continued next page...

Sweeney on his induction into the Connecticut American Legion Hall of Fame.

Riverton Grange conducted its March membership meeting on March 7th with a packed hall. Connecticut State Grange Deputy Debbie Vail made her official inspection visit, and we were also visited by Connecticut State Grange Vice President Ted Powell. We draped our charter in loving memory of Brother Peter Keefe, a Past Master of Riverton Grange, and were joined by five members of Winchester Grange. In addition, we were so pleased that our pianist, Sister Mary Lou Keefe, widow of Brother Peter Keefe, joined us for the meeting and played the piano. The Grange continues to be very active in the community hosting weekly senior lunches, monthly veteran events, and other activities. On Sunday, March 23, at 1:00 PM, Riverton Grange and Riverton American Legion Post #159 will honor Ted Sweeney, who was recently inducted into the Connecticut American Legion Hall of Fame. This event is open to all.

SIMSBURY GRANGE #197

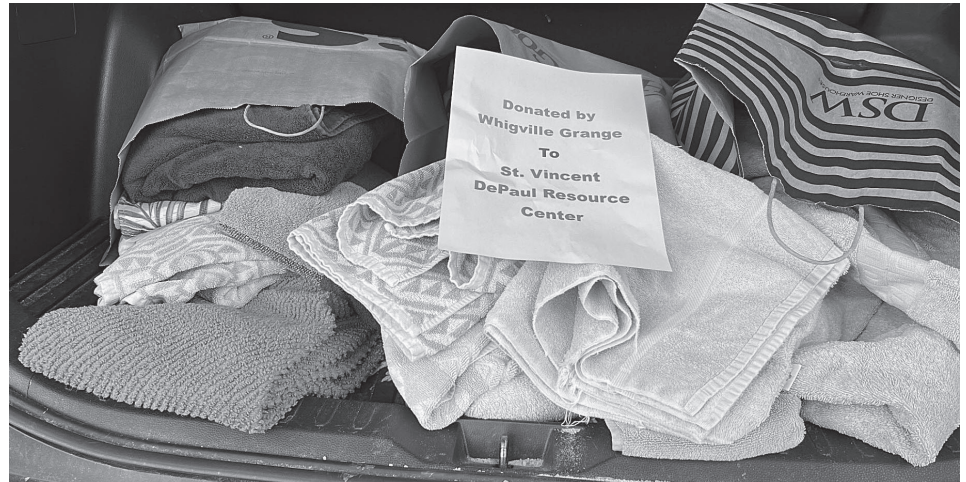
Corr: Marguerite Smith

Happy spring!

On March 13, we held our monthly meeting at the grange and were very pleased to have not one, but two special guests. Debbie Vail and Dawn Anstett joined us and were very helpful with suggestions to improve activities and engagements within our community as well as directing our attention to the helpful information in the 2025/2026 Blue Program Book. We also acknowledged the major success of Simsbury Grange member, Nevan Carling, who is involved in disassembling and relocating a local historic house built in 1771, preventing its demolition. Thank you, Nevan!

If you are interested in heading out our way this spring, look for the following activities being hosted by

St. Vincent DePaul Towel Drive



A sampling of the towels collected by Whigville Grange #48 to benefit St. Vincent DePaul shelter in Bristol.

the Simsbury Grange: March 30th - Sunday - Our 3rd Annual Seed Swap was a HUGE success with many happy gardeners walking out the door armed with seeds for the months ahead. We also hosted wonderful local students who built fabulous Lego creations to enter in our June 14th fair. See you next year at this fun event.

April 4th - Friday - The beaver films are back! This first of five 1 hour films centers on wildlife in early spring at a southern New England beaver pond. Doors open at 6:00 pm for a social hour and the film is from 7:00-8:00 pm. Bring your dinner! Parking at the Farms Village Plaza behind the shops. See you there!

April 5th - Saturday - 9:00 am to 12:00. Our first ever YARN SWAP

in conjunction with Simsbury Yarns. Call 860-416-1140 to rent a 3'x3' table to sell or swap OR come and browse. You never know what great yarn you will find for your next project.

April 7th - Music Mondays this month features Eddie Gautier aka SaintsHouse, Singer, Songwriter, Storyteller. Yes! You can Google him to learn more. Doors open at 6:30pm, music at 7:00pm. Join us!

April 14th - MONDAY - This is a change from our usual Thursday meeting - 7:00pm.

April 27th - Sunday - Food and Fun at the Grange - (rescheduled from 2/23) featuring Amoroso's Pizzeria - Cooking Demo and tasting. Register through the Simsbury Public Library's Calendar of Events and join us from 6:00-7:30 pm.

Spring Cleanup at The Grange

313 Bound Line Rd, Wolcott, CT Sunday, April 13th 8am - 12pm

Rain date: April 27





Join our fun and welcoming group of volunteers for Spring Cleanup at the Wolcott Grange!



NUTMEG POMONA #16

Corr: Joanne Cipriano

I can't say line up your candidates this month in the Granger because next week will be the Fifth Degree conferral. Harmony Grange was paying attention and has said they have 7 candidates. That sure makes conferring the Degree worthwhile. Hope we have some from other Granges.

Our next meeting isn't until Sunday, June 1 at Beacon Valley Grange. More on this next month and what transpired at this meeting.

CHESHIRE GRANGE #23

Corr: Ruel Miller

April 2: Awards Night/Community Citizen of the Year. Open Meeting

April 16: April Events

March and April will include two private dinners we will be putting on to aid our treasury. All of us that own halls are dealing with ever increasing reoccurring expenses. A local theater group is planning to use our hall for a spring play as we have a stage. This will bring the public in to the hall. Arnett Talbot, a recent 30 plus years retiree from the town managers office will be honored on April 2nd as our Community Citizen of The Year.

Nutmeg Pomona will hold their meeting at our hall on Sunday March 23rd at 2pm. The Fifth Degree will be held. Plans are under way for our 140th Cheshire Grange Community Fair to be held the last

weekend in August.

WALLINGFORD GRANGE #33

Corr: Stephen Fengler

Wallingford Grange has had some fun events throughout this past month. First, Josh Miller, of Miller Tree Farm located in Durham, CT, completed an engaging presentation on Maple Sugaring as part of our Community Education program for the year. It was wonderful to learn the steps in the maple syrup making process from finding a maple tree, tapping a maple tree for sap, and turning the sap into maple syrup.

Second, we had a wonderful night learning about Sourdough at the Wallingford Grange with Amanda McQuiad. We even had tasty samples of chocolate and jalapeno sourdough breads! It was a full house!

At our monthly Grange meeting, our lecture program highlighted historical, famous women of Wallingford including Mrs. G. Frederick Hall, one of the founding members of Wallingford Grange. Our lecturer program at our April Grange meeting on Thursday, April 10, at 6:30pm, we will celebrate the coming of spring with a seed and plant swap. We will also have our monthly country store raffle at each meeting. All are welcome to attend. In April to June, some special events Wallingford Grange is looking forward to hosting include a Pancake Breakfast (April 12th: 8:30am -11am), Easter Egg Hunt (April 12th: 11am-11:30am), Wallingford in Tune Concert Series (April 26th: 12pm-7pm), Wallingford Town Wide Pizza Battle (May 3rd: 11am-1pm), Wallingford Grange 140th Anniversary Celebration (May 17th: 2pm-4pm), Town Wide Tag Sale at Wallingford Grange with Pancake Breakfast and Meatball Sandwich Luncheon (May 31st: 7:30am-2pm), Meatball Sandwich Luncheon (June 14th: 12pm-2pm), and Youth Owl Pellet Dissection (June 14th: 12pm-

2pm). 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 winter has only one more week and we can start enjoying the spring season. Winter took a toll on Beacon Valley Grange. Twelve of our officers had some ailment during this time and our February meeting had to be canceled because of the thick ice.

Our members are looking forward to getting together again for our March meeting tomorrow evening. Overseer Ron Gunther will be presiding as Master Joanne is still having a pain problem with a frozen muscle in the calf of her leg.

Our tag sales and open mic, which were canceled for January and February, are starting up again the third Saturday of each month. Tag sale 9 to 3, Open Mic 2 to 5. Thanks to Pat Fischer, Marie Sousa and Marilyn Maxwell, the remaining Christmas and Winter items have been stored away and new seasonal items put out. Each month we have a couple of feature tables. March was craft and Easter items. We had plenty. April sale will feature gardening and spring items.

GREENFIELD HILL GRANGE #133

Corr: Stephen Fengler

Our St Patrick's Day Corned Beef dinner was a great success and full of shenanigans.

A special thank you to CT Grange President Bob Buck and his wife Maggie for attending!

Here are some upcoming dates to mark in your calendar.

April 5, 2025 our 2nd Chili Cook Off! Chili, hot dogs, potato salad and just a lot of fun!

Continued next page...

April 18, 2025 Good Friday Fish Fry Dinner. Eat in or Take out — Fish or Shrimp, fries, cole slaw and all the fixings.

May 3 Spring Tag Sale and Flea Market. Interested vendors please contact Steve. 203.367.4373.

May 24 - How does your Garden Grow luncheon. "Planting seeds and plants outdoors" call Cornelia for reservations. 203.571.8673

All events are reservation only. Please contact Jim 203.259.8023.

Our Annual Agricultural fair will be held August 23, 2025. Interested

vendors please contact Nancy at 203.331.5640.

"In the Spring, I have counted 136 different kinds of weather inside of 24 hours." - Mark Twain

HEMLOCK GRANGE #182

Corr: Maureen Sanborn

May 9: Here We Come Marching into Town

May 10: Hemlock Grange at 17 Sage Hollow Rd., Portland, joins the Historical Society's townwide tag sale 8:30 A.M. to 2:30 PM Members can donate items to the Grange tag

sale pile. Bring your items to the hall Friday, May 9th, 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM Any Grange member can have their own table. Bring your own table, boxes, bags, etc. Call Betty Jane at 860-267-7512 for info/questions.

May 23: Omitted, unless regular meeting is canceled.

June 13: Memorial

June 27: Omitted, unless regular meeting is canceled.

Coffee and refreshments will be served following the meeting.

2025 Lecturer's Department Contests



Dave Roberts
State Lecturer

Riverton Grange No. 169
Lecturer@CTStateGrange.org

National Grange Lecturer Tom Gwin recently announced all the 2025 National Grange Lecturer Contests guidelines, which are now available on the National Grange website! I wanted to highlight this information to all of you. There are various engaging contests for our Connecticut Grange members to showcase their creativity and talents.

To view all the details and enter the contests, visit www.nationalgrange.org/lecturer-contests/.

The 2025 Contests Include:

Quilt Block Contest: Share your creativity through fabric and design!

Virtual Photo Contest: Capture the perfect shot and showcase your photography skills.

Garden Design Contest: Show off your green thumb with a beautiful garden design.

Creative Writing Contest: Let your imagination run wild with original written works.

Design a Garden: Create a conceptual garden design for

bringing your vision to life.

Deadline for All Entries:
September 1, 2025

The contest deadline is fast approaching, so start preparing your entries now! For the Quilt Block Contest, entries should be mailed to Tom Gwin directly at PO Box 1186, Olympia, WA 98507, while the other contests (Virtual Photo, Garden Design, Creative Writing, and Design a Garden) should be submitted electronically to lecturer@nationalgrange.org. Please remember to include the submission form with each entry.

Award Prizes and Recognition
The National Grange Lecturer continues his tradition of offering cash prizes and ribbons for each class's top three place winners. The winners will receive their awards directly after the judging process is

complete.

While there will not be a display of entries at the national session this year, we are exploring creative ways to share the entries and contest results. Options may include a slide show or PowerPoint presentation to be made available to our members.

Encourage Participation

So let's encourage all members to get involved and participate in the National Grange Lecturer Contests. These contests are an excellent way to showcase your talents and connect with the broader Grange community. If you have any questions or concerns about the contests, please get in touch with me. I am looking forward to seeing all your fabulous Connecticut entries!

National Grange Lecturer's Virtual Photo Contest

2024 Winner: Susan Hanks, Riverton Grange (CA)

2024 Winner: Kennedy Rodriguez, Middletown Grange (ME)

ADULT & JUNIOR DIVISIONS

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 1, 2025

<http://www.nationalgrange.org/lecturer-contests>

<https://grange.biz/grangephoto2025>

Prayer



Charles W. Dimmick
State Chaplain

Cheshire Grange No. 23
chaplain@ctstateGrange.org

I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God; incline your ear to me; hear my words. *Psalm 17:6*

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. *Philippians 4:6*

What is Prayer? In its most basic form, prayer is talking to God. This is distinct from meditation or reflection. It is direct communication. We know that the Lord is always willing to listen to us, and seeks to hear from us. There are many forms of prayer and many different things that may be included in prayer. Prayer may include praise, thanksgiving, supplication, and seeking reassurance.

Formal prayer is one type of prayer. When God's people come together to worship him they may express themselves out loud in public formal prayer.

At the other extreme is silent and private prayer, sometimes quite



short and extremely informal. It may be totally unplanned and spontaneous, such as when danger approaches and one thinks "O God, help me", or a very simple "Thank you, God" on other occasions.

We can be fairly certain that God hears all prayers, no matter what the format or the occasion, but it can be argued that some of our prayers are ignored, especially if they are insincere or are given only to impress human listeners. Prayer to God must come from the heart, and the actual words used, whether silent or aloud, are not important. There may be times when we sincerely want to talk with God but cannot find the words to use. Don't let it bother you. God reads our hearts and does not need actual words. In fact, there is a saying

that actions speak louder than words, and this can be true also for prayer. In the initiation ritual of the Third Degree of the Grange, as part of the Overseer's charge, are the words "Work is Prayer". The real meaning of this saying refers to work which is directed toward the betterment of our fellow human beings and the world around us. In such circumstances work "is" definitely a form of prayer.

In Memoriam

Barbara Bartram
Tagghannuck Grange #100

John Roden
Bethlehem Grange #121

"Well done, good and faithful servants."