



Parting thoughts

It's been an amazing few days gathered here in Minneapolis with friends and family at the 153rd session of the National Grange. We are so proud to provide you coverage of the convention through this newsletter, our social media and more.

The Communication Fellows thank you for your kind words and gifts of goodies throughout the week. This program is challenging but rewarding, especially as we witness the joy on the faces of our members as they see the material we produce while learning. We thank you for your gracious acceptance of our occasional errors. Many of us are novices in producing material for deadline, writing in a specific style and using different mediums to get our message out.

The Fellows program is in its 7th year, and has grown to be a major asset of the Order, as we continue to expand our internal and external communication efforts. Each and every Fellow from the past seven years is here for the future of the Grange.

Many thanks to the board and director of Grange Advocacy for supporting this program in 2019. Your decision to assist us in learning so that we may spread messages important to the Grange is much appreciated and not taken lightly. We look forward to paying the Grange back many-fold in the near future.

- 2019 Communication Fellows

PATRON'S CHAIN

The Official Newsletter of the National Grange

Youth march into hearts of session attendees

BY PHIL VONADA

Communication Fellow

On Friday morning, 16 youth and young adults from across the country opened the fourth day of the 153rd National Grange Session in Bloomington. Representatives from Iowa, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Washington marched through the hall to fill the seats of the National Grange officers and open the business meeting for the day.

Emma Edelen (IA), served as Master/President. Edelen introduced the honored guests for the day - Samantha Wilkins (PA), National Junior Grange Director; Billy Greer (CO), National Junior Ambassador; Mandy Bostwick (KS), National Youth Development Director; Rylee Furr (NC) and Zac Mazag (NC), National Youth Ambassadors; and Brittany Oliver (WA) and Katie Fallon (NY), National Outstanding Young Patrons.

Wilkins introduced a parade of visiting Juniors (led by Daniel and Jenna Greer, dressed as red tennis shoes), and Emily Culver, who helped make the "red shoes" a vital visual representation of the Junior Grange, was honored by the delegate body. "It is so important that we continue embracing our culture and traditions," Wilkins said. Then, speaking directly to the youth and Juniors of the Grange, she added, "I encourage you to continue being leaders in the Grange. Let's keep promoting kindness, goodness, and lessons that endure."

Wilkins noted the successful collaboration between all of the departments in the past year, then introduced Pete Pompper, National Grange Community Service Director. Together, they announced the winner of the 2019 Outstanding Junior Granger of the Year, Brianna Gervais of Ekonk Community Grange in Connecticut, who completed more than 220 hours of community service in the past year.

"Thank you to the Foundation for supporting our programs and helping our team get to the conferences," Mazag said on behalf of the Youth Team, "We have learned a lot this week by serving on committees and having the opportunity to sit in session."



National Master Betsy Huber, right, presents Iowa's Emma Edelen, who served as the 2019 National Grange Youth Master, with a gavel on Friday morning. Photo by Lindsay Schroeder.

National Grange Youth Development Director Mandy Bostwick was introduced. With Pompper, it was announced that the youth community service award will be renamed as the "Wib and June Justi Community Service Award," and awarded it to Ryan Orton of New York.

Bostwick thanked National Master Betsy Huber for the opportunity to serve as director, and for all of her support. She noted a successful year with the Youth Team, highlighting regional conferences, Ag Day, The Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA), and more, including the Youth Team's regional workshop "We've Always Done it That Way: Bridging the Leadership Divide."

Bostwick announced the formation of the Six Pillars of G.R.A.N.G.E Youth and the Pillar Projects - Growth, Ritual, Advocacy, Networking, Grassroots advocacy, and Education. "These projects are designed to give our youth and young adults a chance to take their leadership to the next level in the Subordinate Pomona, or State Granges by creating worthwhile and meaningful events or projects within their Granges to better serve their communities," she said. Bostwick also announced new programs, including the return of the Grange InterState Youth Exchange (GISYE) and the Washington DC Experi-

GROW Club welcomes new members, awards scholarships

BY BRITTNEY OLIVER

2019 Outstanding Young Patron

Last Night the G.R.O.W. club hosted their annual banquet. Honoring both the past and new members of the club. Members include grangers who have participated in the National Grange Prince, Princess, Young Couple, Ambassador, or Horizon Leadership programs, or who served as a National Youth team member or as a National Youth Director.

Throughout the year we sold raffle tickets and hosted a silent auction at the session to raise funds for the scholarships we offer. The GROW club offered a travel scholarship to those youth needing financial assistance in traveling to the national session, as well as an academic scholarship that is open to any grange member seeking continued education or technical training. These available funds are often underutilized and we encourage grangers to remind the youth and young adults of their granges to apply for these scholarships.

This year, Leah Bardal of Washington State was awarded an academic scholarship. Leah is a past State Youth Ambassador, Past State Grange Pomona from Kelso, Washington, and is attending Eastern Washington State University studying Recreation Management.

Leah states that “ My experiences in the grange are going to help me with my current job, the rest of my schooling and my career after college. With my current job, I am in a supervisor role, which running for National Youth Ambassador and being part of Washington’s Youth Team has helped me be prepared for supervising my staff. The biggest benefit that I have gained from the grange is my speaking skills have improved tremendously.”

This year, there were no applicants for the travel scholarship. We would like to think that this is because our states are doing an excellent job of financially supporting our youth, but we know that there are still some youth and young adults that could use the financial assistance. With no applicants this year, the elected G.R.O.W. Club Board decided to make a \$1,500 donation to the National Grange Youth fund to aid in the cost of housing at National Session.

National Grange Youth and Young Adult Director, Mandy Bostwick, recognized a few of this years Youth award re-



State Senator John Hoffman, who had led a legislative push to provide capital funding for the Oliver Hudson Kelley Farm, dropped in on the GROW Club banquet on Friday. | Photo by Amanda Brozana Rios.

cipients. Audrey Bowers of Oklahoma received the Junior Mentor of the Year award. The State Youth programs in New York and North Carolina received the distinguished Youth Program award.

The G.R.O.W. Club Banquet is also a big night for the outgoing National Youth Team. Young Patrons Katie Fallon of New York and Brittney Oliver of Washington, along with the Youth Ambassadors Rylee Furr and Zac Mazag of North Carolina, each presented an inspiring speech of their past year’s experiences and opportunities provided to them through the National Grange.

The night ended with an induction of the new members of the G.R.O.W. club and the election for the board members representing each region. Re-elected Mary Jordan of Massachusetts for the Northeast Region and Emily Hartsell of North Carolina for the Southeast Region.

Board members serving out their current term include: Samantha Hanson (Midwest), Robert Beamon (East), Karen Overstreet (Great Plains), and Brittney Oliver (Western).

We’d like to thank all of the grangers from across the nation for their support of the youth and young adult programs over the years and especially those who continue their support.

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Master's Message by Betsy E. Huber

Parting from Grange family is bittersweet

What a week we've had!

Each convention I come away with a new appreciation for the Grange, for our members, for the way in which we talk and debate and come away friends.

It's bittersweet to prepare to pack and leave for home. May you all have safe travels and a renewed enthusiasm for all aspects of the Grange. The delegates all worked hard for long hours. They debated and carefully studied the issues proposed to become Grange

policy. They also had some time for fun and lots of fellowship with close friends they may only see once or twice a year. While a National Grange Session can be grueling and exhausting, it is also exhilarating and creates lifelong, strong friendships. It is truly the highlight of our year and we already look forward to November 17-21, 2020, in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.



Youth show their stuff, crack Code Reading contest

BY PHIL VONADA

Communication Fellow

In its third year, the National Grange Youth Code Reading contest saw three participants tackle the decoding of the Unwritten Work of the Grange. This program is designed to reconnect the National Grange members to the history and ritual of the Grange, and is supported by the Assembly of Demeter.

Participants have the option of the "Novice" or "Patron" categories, depending on their experience and comfort with the codebook. Information on what participants need to prepare can be found in the Youth and Young Adult Program Guide.

According to Mandy Bostwick, National Grange Youth Development Director, "The purpose of the code reading contest is to encourage any member to learn the code and,

in turn, preserve our ritualistic history." Bostwick continued, "My hopes for the youth who participate in this contest will eventually earn their Card of Merit to continue being able to teach and lead the work to new members."

This year's participants were Matthew Horton (NY), Jodi Kensinger (PA), and Ayden Slomonski (NY). The winners were announced at the G.R.O.W. Club dinner on Friday evening. In the Novice category, Slomonski took 1st and Kensinger took 2nd; Horton took 1st in the Patron category.

High Priest Bruce Croucher says "I am incredibly proud of those who wish to participate in this contest, and I applaud those who make the effort to learn the Unwritten Work. It's an excellent way to learn more deeply about Grange ritual and tradition."

We hope to see more participants in Valley Forge in 2020!

Familiar face takes on role of honorary delegate for D.C.

BY PHIL VONADA

Communication Fellow

A familiar face is sitting among the delegates this year, representing Potomac Grange #1. Cheri Watson, who happens to be the wife of Executive Committee Member Leroy Watson, has the privilege of serving as the honorary delegate for the Grange of the Founders.

Watson initially joined Wisconsin's South Greenville Grange #225 at age 5, and stayed involved for her family. She would eventually serve 10 years as Lady Assistant Steward for the Wisconsin State Grange. She met her husband-to-be in 1980 at the National Grange session in Spokane.

Cheri says that she loves the fel-



Cheri Watson, an Executive Committee Member of Potomac Grange #1, D.C., is serving as honorary delegate for the Grange of the Founders, to this session. | Photo by Lindsay Schroeder.

lowship of the Grange, but encourages us to keep the Grange moving forward. "Time changes, technolo-

gy changes, we need to change, too," Watson says, "We can't get stuck in the ritual and tradition if we are going to attract youth into the Grange. Change is good."

Watson has been a member of Potomac Grange #1 for 30 years, after moving to Washington D.C. when Leroy was Legislative Director of the National Grange. While retaining her membership at Potomac, the Watsons have since moved to Wisconsin and now reside in New Hampshire. Cheri serves on the Executive Committee of Potomac #1.

Watson hopes that the next year will see a rise in the National Grange's e-membership program, "to bring in people who are not necessarily able to be at meetings," she said.

25 performers delight crowd at Evening of Excellence

BY KAREN CLINE
Communication Fellow

On Friday evening, 25 Grangers showed off their talents in the annual Evening of Excellence. Vocal, speech, sign-a-song, instrumental, and variety acts entertained a large crowd of Grange members for more than two hours.

Two particularly moving speeches were presented by Colleen Foster and Elizabeth Lesley. Foster presented “You Don’t Know Me,” relating a story of an abused and neglected child. She urged the audience to “see people for more than their circumstances.” Elizabeth Lesley asked “Are you hearing or are you listening? Make an effort to listen with your heart,” as she related her personal struggles and attempted suicide.

New Hampshire Granger Adam Terrell performed in both the sing-a-song and speech categories with Native American Sign Language (NASL). Terrell told the audience that NASL is the easiest sign language to learn and requires no facial expression with delivery.

The evening culminated in an audience vote for best acts in the variety, vocal, instrumental, and speech



Cole Settle, left, and James Lesley,, both of North Carolina, won the People’s Choice for their variety performance of “The Rooster Song” at the Evening of Excellence on Friday. | Photo by Lindsay Schroeder.

categories. Lurae Benzio was the winner in the speech category from Pennsylvania with “Music Moves My Soul.” Benzio used lyrics from a variety of popular songs spanning several decades to tell a detailed story. Harry Traxler from Ohio tickled the ivories with his rendition of “Whispering,” which provided him a win in the Instrumental category. Disney’s signature Little Mermaid song,

“Part of Your World,” was brought to life by Jen Beamon of Pennsylvania, which allowed her to secure the vocal category win. In the variety category, James Lesley and Cole Settle from North Carolina entertained the audience with their musical skill and comical lyrics from “The Rooster Song.”

Former National Junior Director honored Friday morning

BY WILLIAM GREER
2019 Junior Grange Ambassador

Emilee Colver, of Flora Grange #1762 in Illinois, was honored Friday morning for her work as the National Grange Junior Director a number of years ago.

Emilee lives in northern Illinois and has been a member of the Boone County Grange community for the past 53 years.

Even though she does not take credit for its creation, she was instrumental in promoting the “Red Shoe” emblem that the Junior Grange so proudly uses as its logo to this day. It has changed throughout the years but it remains true to the intention of creating visibility for the Juniors, thereby helping others to see the Juniors as the life and future of this wonderful organization.

She got involved in Grange when she was working for two different farmers in Boone County and they each belonged to a different subordinate Granges.

“I guess they had to toss a coin to figure out which Grange I was going to join,” Culver said.

It didn’t take long to know that her children needed to be a part of the Junior Grange. Soon after that, she became the Illinois State Junior Grange Director. She then had the



Emilee Culver, former National Grange Junior Director, was escorted Friday morning around the Session by Dan and Jenna Greer, wearing red tennis shoe costumes. | Photo by Lindsay Schroeder.

opportunity to be the National Junior Grange Director. “It’s been quite an experience. There’s a lot of travelling and I have a lot of friends all over the country,” Culver said.

Juniors get hands-on experience during tour at founder's farm

BY KAREN CLINE
Communication Fellow

The morning of the Junior Grange Oliver Kelley Farm tour took place on a chilly morning, but that didn't affect the excitement level of the attendees.

The introduction to the historic farm site began with a film explaining agriculture through the ages and around the world. Oliver Kelley, founder of the National Grange, was not a farmer when he arrived in Minnesota. He learned how to farm by reading, experimenting, observing, and sharing ideas with others. Kelley was a forward-thinking man, whether he was experimenting with cold climate crops and animals, or trying the latest technology of the day. His motto was "How can we make farming better?"

It should come as no surprise that a man as fearless as Kelly when it came to new ideas, new technology, and even mastering a new occupation, developed a society of farmers who supported one another and shared ideas to make society a better place as they worked together.

After learning about Oliver Kelly, the Juniors were ushered into the "Learning Kitchen," a place that is used to instruct school and community groups with classes on cooking, eliminating food waste, and baking science.

On the tour, the Juniors learned how sorghum syrup is made and were able to taste the difference between commercially made molasses and fresh sorghum syrup made on the Kelly farm. Kitchen instructors told the Juniors that sorghum is an alternative sweetener. They displayed many products that contain sorghum and also talked about World War I



Dozens of Juniors and their parents and leaders visited the Oliver Hudson Kelley Farm on Friday. | Photo by Lindsay Schroeder.

and II food rationing and propaganda.

Greg Lehmann, a Junior from Massachusetts, said, "I liked eating the samples in the kitchen. It the gingerbread made with sorghum was very good. I also liked being able to see and touch the World War II ration book." Carrie Lehmann, Greg's mother, agreed. "The gingerbread was sweeter than I thought it would be. I also liked having some 'hands on history' in the lesson."

Outside, the tour of the farm was divided into the modern "farm lab" and the "preserved Oliver Kelley Farm." The farm lab provided opportunities for the Juniors to pet chickens, horses, and steer. Juniors were able to enter the sheep enclosure and interact with the sheep, which was a time of excitement and fun for both the Juniors and the sheep!

The preserved part of the farm in-

cludes a farmhouse, a two-level barn, a corn crib, a chicken house, and enclosures for sheep and pigs. Two heritage variety animals, Berkshire pigs and Southdown sheep, would have been raised by the Kelley family. Two oxen, still used to pull equipment on the farm today, stood patiently beside the barn as the Juniors showered them with affection. Three Juniors took part in a training demonstration on training the oxen to pull a farm implement.

Since the facility upgrade in 2016, the number of visitors has increased. Manager Anders Mayland indicated that the Kelley Farm receives about forty-five to fifty-thousand visitors per year. Mayland expects usage of the facility to increase for after-hours event rentals as time goes on.

YOUTH

from page 1

ence in conjunction with the Junior department.

More information on all Junior and Youth programming can be found in the department program books. Contact Mandy Bostwick or Samantha Wilkins to get your copies.

National President Huber then presented Youth Master Emma Edelen with a gavel, and said "I am really proud of this Youth Officer Team. We really appreciate the youth presence at National Session, and look forward to seeing

you all grow with the Grange."

The Youth Officer Team then performed a closing a drill to retire from session.

This year's Youth Officer Team was:

President: Emma Edelen (IA), Overseer: Samantha Hanson (IA), Lecturer: Elliot Wilser (NY), Steward: Cole Settle (NC); Assistant Steward: Skylar Zaborac (WA); Lady Assistant Steward: JC Dumolt (OR), Chaplain :Georgia Clark (WA), Treasurer: James Lesley (NC), Secretary: Isabella Lierman (WA), Gatekeeper: Jordyn Moyes (IA), Ceres: Ashley Drop (NC), Pomona: Olivia Barber (NC), Flora: Sasha Secor (NY), Executive Committee: Lane Smith (NY), Ayden Slominski (NY), Melody Shufeldt (OK)

youthful Enthusiasm

ABOVE: On Thursday evening, Youth enjoyed an evening while showing off their best Snapchat filter turned costume. BELOW: Junior members from around the nation performed speeches and Sign-A-Songs on Thursday evening in front of a large audience. | Photos by Lindsay Schroeder



PROFILE: Skip the Horse makes new friend, gets sash

BY LEXIE SUING

Communications Fellow

Over the past 4 years, National officers, State Presidents and directors of all the committees have been paired with members of the Grange Herd, a group of stuffed animals. During that time, many members have made themselves popular by having their own Facebook pages, and various other adventures with their State.

This year the members of the Herd who did not receive their gold sashes last year were provided regalia.

Skip the horse from Maryland was one of them.

According to Kay Stiles, Maryland State Grange First Lady and National Pomona, said he is very friendly, always having a “skip” in his step. When Skip arrived at nationals, he was super excited to see all of his fellow Herd members. He wore his original blue ribbon that all of the members received in their second year, 2014, in service to the Grange. Skip realized he had missed out on receiving his sash last year when he saw all of his friends with capes, pins and gold sashes, and in the case of Bruce the Buffalo from Montana, red tennis shoes.

In order to make sure he was well



Gwen Swenson and Bonnie Mitson secure the regalia to Skip the Horse, a Herd member from Maryland. | Photo by Lindsay Schroeder.

adorned, Skip went to Grange Mercantile Assistant Bonnie Mitson who worked with Gwen Swenson to craft a gold sash for Skip.

Mitson said Skip watched in anticipation all the cutting, stitching and poking to make the sash.

Mitson put the finishing touch, a pin to keep it all together, so Skip could be

as prepared as other members to represent the Grange when out and about.

There are big things planned for Herd members in 2020, but you don’t have to wait to see. Catch up with Herd members on Facebook and look for your state’s Herd member when you get home!