



PATRONS CHAIN

The Official Newsletter of the National Grange

Scheduling Note!

During the Advocacy Luncheon at noon Central time on Tuesday, former FCC Chairman Ajit Pai will address attendees about the importance of rural broadband. Tune into the National Grange Facebook or YouTube channel to watch from home!

State Presidents

Please remember to drop off a USB drive to the Fellows in the Santa Fe Trail Room as soon as you can.



Cheers!

to Elizabeth Hiner (CO) for making sure the Fellows stay hydrated this week! Thanks for your support!

Follow the Fellows on social media, and stay up to date with the happenings at Session.

Instagram:

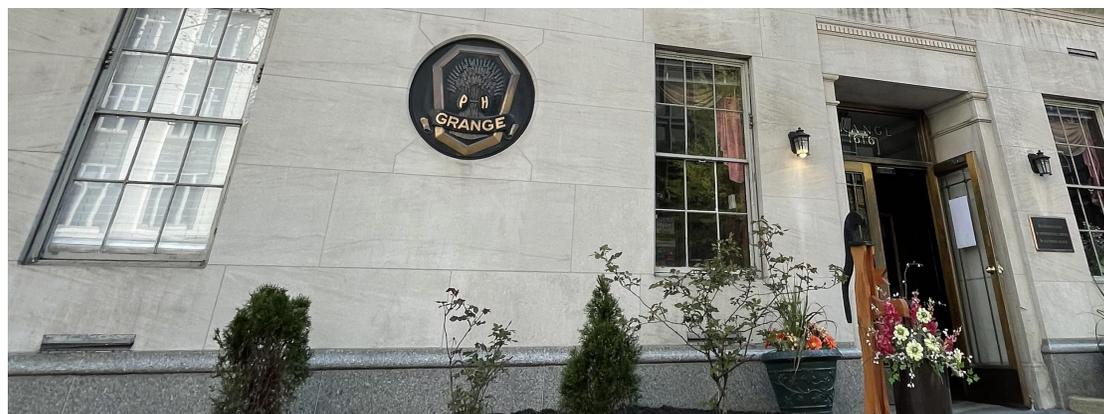
n.grange_communication_fellows

Facebook:

National Grange

Twitter:

NationalGrange



Do We Stay or Do We Go?

Grange grapples with decision on headquarters

BY CHAD SMITH

Communications Fellow

Over the past two years, National Grange leaders have examined the future of our headquarters, located at 1616 H St NW, just across Lafayette Square from the White House.

Like every local Grange Hall across the nation, our headquarters requires a considerable amount of upkeep and investment of both time and resources to keep running. The majority of the office space within the building is leased to other groups - a planned design when the structure was built in 1959 to ensure a steady stream of revenue for the organization.

However, as the membership has declined, sometimes building revenue has been a source used to offset other major and unexpected organizational costs, such as legal fees. As such, maintenance has been deferred in a variety of areas and that, coupled

with the merging life expectancy of certain systems of the building, have caused leaders to ask - do we stay (and do necessary repair and upgrades to the tune of several millions of dollars) or do we go (and if so, where?).

During this year's annual session, Delegates are being asked to decide the future of 1616 H St NW and with it, the way forward once an option is selected.

There are a variety of ideas regarding the fate of our organizational center:

Some come from a sense of legacy - the Grange was founded in Washington, D.C., even though it's always been a rural-facing organization.

Some come from a sense of loyalty - members, some of whom still reside in our own local halls, raised the funds to pay off the mortgage and have continually put money into building donation drives so we could

**HEADQUARTERS
cont'd on Page 4**



The 155th Convention of the National Grange officially opens on Tuesday, Nov. 9 at the Hyatt Regency Wichita. | Photo by Lindsay Schroeder

Great Plains Welcomes You

The 155th convention of the National Grange officially begins on Tuesday, November 9, but officers, Delegates, guests, and friends are already arriving, and hitting the ground running.

Hosted by the midwest region states of Nebraska, Oklahoma, Kansas, Texas, and Colorado, this is the first time National Grange has returned to the Great

Plains since 2015, when it was in Lincoln, Nebraska.

The host region has many special touches in store for the week. "We're excited to have [National session] back in Kansas," said Alice Ficken, Vice Presi-

**GREAT PLAINS
cont'd on Page 5**

Fellows learning, working to keep you informed

BY PHILIP J. VONADA

Senior Communications Fellow

On Friday evening, eager Grange members got to work, serving as Communication Fellows.

Learning the ins and outs of effective communication and media production, the Fellows create publications, articles, and social media throughout the 155th annual session of the National Grange.

Amanda Brozana Rios, Director of Membership, Leadership Development, and Communications for the National Grange, said,

“The 2021 class of Fellows is a talented and diverse group that has Grange’s future in the forefront of their mind. Their work this week will be invaluable to their local Granges, states, and beyond.”

The Fellows this year include,

Ethan Edwards of Belleville, Illinois, is a lifelong member of Shiloh Valley Grange #1807, and is the Lecturer/Program Director for the Illinois State Grange. By day, Edwards is the Chief Instructional Strategist at Allen Interactions, Inc., a learning consulting firm. He has also been involved in a family-operated strawberry farm for more than forty years.

Sasha Secor is a member of Stanford Grange #808 in New York, and has been working as Communications Intern for the National Grange since June. Secor is Lady Assistant Steward and Youth Chairperson of Dutchess County Pomona Grange, and also serves on the Dutchess County Fair Committee.

“I’m excited to be given the honor of being able to cover activities, events, and day-to-day happenings,” says Secor. She hopes to take her experiences back to her Community and Pomona

Granges.

From Junction City, California, Chad Smith is Vice President of North Fork Grange #763. Smith serves as Gatekeeper for the California State Grange. He says he passionate about communi-

ty equity and development and education. Attending his first National Grange Session, Smith said he is looking forward to the opportunity.

“I’m excited to learn and grow with the other Fellows this year, while being of service to the National Grange.”

Returning to the Fellows program is Lindsay Schroeder, who also serves as staff photographer. Schroeder is a member of Virginville Grange #1832 in Pennsylvania and is a member of the Pennsylvania State Grange Youth Committee. She owns a photography business, and enjoys spending her time around chocolate labs.

Serving as Senior Communications Fellow, Philip Vonada of Penns Valley Grange #158 and Eagle Grange #1 in Pennsylvania is excited to return to the program.

Vonada is the Director of the Pennsylvania State Junior Grange, and is no stranger to National Sessions. Vonada has previously served as a Fellow in 2019, as John Trimble Legislative Youth delegate in 2018, and is a former National Grange Youth Officer and Horizon Leadership Experience participant.

Assisting the Fellows this year are Robert Beamon, a member of Hamburg Grange #2103 in Pennsylvania, Jennifer Nauss, a member of Valley



ROBERT BEAMON



ETHAN EDWARDS



JENN NAUSS



LINDSAY SCHROEDER



SASHA SECOR



CHAD SMITH



PHILIP VONADA

All photos by Lindsay Schroeder Grange #1306 in Pennsylvania, and other former Fellows and staff. Beamon and Nauss each served as National Grange Outstanding Young Patrons, in 2015-16, and 2017-18, respectively.

The Fellows will be seen throughout the convention, and want to hear from you. Stop by the Santa Fe Trail Room to visit, or stop one in the halls during the day.

Available in the Communications Office



Spread the word of the Grange and follow up with your members who you haven't seen in a while using these new promotional items, which take phrases from the Degree work.

Vinyl Window Clings
\$2 each

“We Miss You” Cards
10 for \$5



New Faces Bring Fresh Experience to Delegates

STAFF REPORT

As you look around the assembled Delegates at session this year, you will notice some new faces representing Colorado, Delaware, Indiana and New Hampshire. Each of the new Delegates brings a fresh set of experiences and ideas to their committees and the Delegate body.

Gary Wardle, joined by his wife Kathy, is joining the body of Delegates this year. Hailing from Brighton, Colorado, Gary had a storied career of over 58 years in public service, beginning as a seasonal park laborer and culminating as the director of Parks and Recreation for the city of Brighton. As of September, Gary was elected Colorado State Grange President, where he has been a lifelong member of Wheat Ridge Grange #155.

Though this is his first session as a voting Delegate, Gary is a veteran of more than a dozen national sessions. His family spans four generations of Grangers, including his daughters, grandchildren, parents, and his wife, who has also held many positions in the Colorado State Grange.

In his spare time, Gary is passionate about beekeeping, honey production and preserving Colorado's farmlands from development. During his career, he succeeded in facilitating the purchase and preservation of more than 1,000 acres of Farmlands in and around the Brighton area from development, an accomplishment he is rightfully proud of.

"I am here to participate, learn and support the National Grange at all levels," he said.

As newly-elected Indiana State Grange President, Gene Lohrman and his wife Paula are first-time Delegates. Though they have not attended as Delegates before, the Lohrmans have extensive experiences at the National Session and in Grange work throughout the organization.



First-time Delegates include (L-R) Gary and Kathy Wardle (CO), Bob and Jane Trombi (NH), and Paula and Gene Lohrman (IN). | Photo by Lindsay Schroeder

As a lifelong Granger, Gene represented Indiana as State Prince in 1981, and he and Paula were the Young Couple in 1986. In subsequent years, they have traveled with their children to the National Sessions for Degree work. Paula's involvement dates from her marriage to Gene and they have both served their Community, Pomona and State Grange in multiple positions, with Gene holding a state office in all but four of the last 36 years.

The Lohrmans are members of Pleasant Grove Grange #2338. They no longer live in an area served by an active Grange, so Pleasant Grove operates as an online Grange with members across different regions of Indiana. Meeting online presents its own challenges but is a way for people to maintain active Grange participation.

Gene hopes to draw on this deep experience in engaging in this year's session. He describes himself as "a business person; I like to think carefully, running through various scenarios before arriving at the best decision. I'm big into not talking until I have a good understanding of a situation."

He and Paula both expect to be doing a lot of listening and learning how all the pieces of the Grange work together. They are especially eager to take what they learn back

with them to implement at home.

In true Grange spirit, the Lohrmans are most eager to gain new friends. "We know that Grange friends quickly become like family," Gene and Paula agreed. "We are looking forward to the folks we'll be meeting this week."

Finally, from New Hampshire, Robert and Jane Trombi are making their "first appearance."

Though the couple served as National Delegates after Robert was elected as New Hampshire State Grange President in 2020, the convention was held virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Robert is thankful that they are being given a second "freshman year" as new Delegates given the experience of Delegate work was starkly different at the 2020 National Grange Session than previous years.

The Trombis met in the Grange forty years ago and have been together since, including time as the National Grange Young Couple. Recently, the couple celebrated their thirty-six years of marriage.

Jane is excited to learn about the process of traditionally working with the committees, resolutions, and general background information.

She also looks forward to meeting new people and reconnecting with others, while Robert is looking forward to "getting through" the week.

President's Message: Welcome to Wichita!

Welcome to the 155th Annual National Grange Convention in Wichita! We're so happy to be back together again after a long absence. It's wonderful to be gathering with 350 of our closest friends for this week of Grange recognition, celebration, and policy work.

The Delegates have already been working for a couple weeks on the committee resolutions and policy statements in preparation for this session. Since we are all "experts" on Zoom by now, it's been very helpful to get a head start on the policy work so there is time

for careful consideration of each resolution submitted from the State Granges.

Several Delegates arrived early to take advantage of the beautiful weather, touring sites of interest in the area and enjoying some of the delicious offerings at Wichita restaurants. This is really a "foodie" city and I've enjoyed several fabulous meals over the weekend, prior to the opening of session when the hard work begins.

Be sure to take advantage of the wonderful food, beautiful sights, and interesting places if you have time during your stay.



Make your acts of appreciation personal

*How do you say thank you?
What acts of appreciation are truly meaningful to you?*

Grange is a volunteer organization – not just in doing things for others, but also in that no one must hold membership in it. At any time, when a volunteer does not feel connected to, contented by or appreciated for their association, they can choose to leave.

Yet a simple “Thank you” does not work for everyone.

Some people are more oriented to receive thanks through spending quality time with someone they

admire while others know they are appreciated when they receive small tokens of gratitude.

Granges can use the quiz provided by the National Grange Membership and Leadership Development Director Amanda Brozana Rios adapted from the Five Love Languages to better understand their members and what motivates and encourages them to continue their affiliation.

“From personalized certificates to words of praise offered in public or during a meeting, understanding our Grangers is imperative to ensuring their happiness and the longevity

of their membership,” Brozana Rios said. “No matter what we do, we must make sure we are recognizing individuals for their efforts.”

The quiz is available at the Registration Desk and anyone who completes it and brings it back to the Fellows Room in the Santa Fe Trail Room will receive a button and potentially praise from others throughout the week in their preferred style.

Additionally, we will offer tips throughout the week as to how Granges can show appreciation to members based on their different preferred language.



HEADQUARTERS

from page 1

have such a prominent location with great positive impact on the Grange’s bottom line.

Some hang onto a sense of connectivity - a majority of Grange members live west of the Mississippi, and a central location might connect the organization more to its agricultural and rural-culture roots.

Some from a sense of contemplation of “the new” - hoping to find new ways to work, to grow and to be relevant that don’t require a seat just next to the White House.

Certainly choosing to stay will mean deep levels of debt that some fear we will be unable to repay without a significant and swift turnaround in membership numbers that have been on the decline since the early 1950s.

“If we had another half-million members, this would not be a discussion,” said Stephen Coye, who serves on the National Grange Executive Committee/Board of Directors and is President of the New York State Grange.

“Steve is right. If we had a much larger membership to spread the hurt around, we would never move from 1616 H. This is not the case since we have just over a tenth of that, and short of selling ourselves and our values out entirely and becoming a completely different type of organization, this is unrealistic to happen in a tight timeline,” National Grange Membership and Leadership Development Director Amanda Brozana Rios said about

the idea of a rapid and robust reversal of this course of loss. “We cannot turn the Titanic on a dime, and we haven’t found a magic bullet. Putting ‘let’s save the building by getting new members’ out as a panacea is setting ourselves up for failure. I believe we will get new members. I believe people are looking for an organization like us, but they are not looking to join just to save a building that they have no attachment to, and they’re not coming in droves that we can make financial projects on.”

Yet the Washington address is important says Legislative Director Burton Eller.

“The most influential groups in Washington have a Washington address, be it a headquarters or a field office,” Eller said.

But he acknowledged the most important piece of the puzzle is in small towns across America, not one specific property in Washington, D.C.

“The strength of our organization is the grassroots membership. The Grange is filling the void of... rural voices in Washington D.C., which is very important. We represent rural America speaking out, and the pandemic has vaulted the needs of rural America into the light.”

This is echoed in the sentiment of past National President Kermit W. Richardson, said Roger Bostwick, President of the Kansas State Grange, “The Grange does not live at 1616 H. Street; it lives in every community with a Grange.”

Bostwick said the debate has also helped to open new doors.

For the multigenerational Grange member, there is a long-standing hope to see our headquarters moved

to a more central locale in our nation, which could enable our National Grange officers and staff to more effectively manage and interact with the expansive regions of the country.

“I have been to our headquarters several times. I am proud of its location overlooking the White House, but it is time to examine the costs of staying there.”

Bostwick has expressed a desire to see the national headquarters moved to Kansas, which has evolved in recent years into one of the leading agricultural bastions in the nation for both for-profit business and agriculture-based community organizations. He believes that the centralized location would better serve Community Granges nationwide. Evolving technologies and the expanding infrastructure bringing necessities like broadband internet to rural communities has made the viability of relocating the headquarters more possible than ever before, he said.

Other parties agree that it is time to relocate our headquarters, but hope to keep our presence in Washington D.C. secure.

Several Granges across the nation have put forth resolutions establishing and solidifying their state’s stance on this issue. In his position as State Grange President, Coye heard resolutions regarding this subject from the delegate body at their last session.

“While the intentions behind these resolutions are good, we have spent more than five years exploring every avenue possible to save our headquarter-

**HEADQUARTERS
cont’d on Page 6**

Delegates visit local sights



Organized by National Grange Lecturer/Program Director Chris Hamp, Delegates spent Saturday and Sunday visiting local area attractions, including the world's largest mural painted by a single artist, Douglas Design District, the Keeper of the Plains, and the largest Czech egg in the world.

GREAT PLAINS from page 1

dent of Kansas State Grange. "We have a great host committee and everything is falling into place."

The River Walk runs by the hotel, so be sure to step out, get some fresh air and take in some of the sights in downtown Wichita.

Throughout the week, stop by the host office in the Willow Room, or the hospitality room in the Waterview Suite on the 18th floor to say hello to

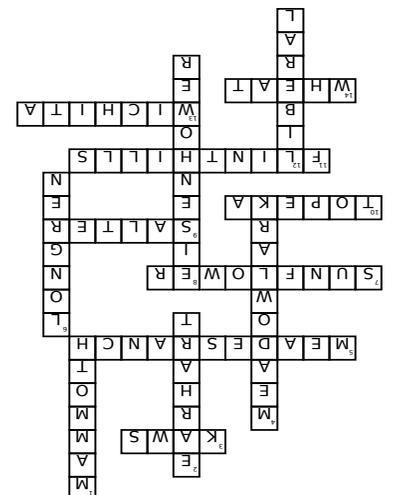
the host committee. If you see somebody with the "Host Committee" ribbon on their badge, be sure to thank them for their work.

Special events planned throughout the week include workshops and a concert by the Peterson Farm Brothers, a visit from the Kansas Secretary of Agriculture and some fantastic tours.

Also look for the "conversation corners," quiet activities and other special touches that have been put together by the region.

Thank you, Great Plains, for what is sure to be an exceptional convention.

Answer Key to Puzzle on Page 6



HEADQUARTERS

from page 4

ters. My head says yes, but my heart says no," Coye said. "Does the headquarters have to go? Probably. There are no viable alternatives. We have reached the critical mass point, where the expenses of keeping the headquarters have overtaken the income the headquarters generates."

Members from Oklahoma State Grange also passed a resolution regarding this subject.

In summary, they believe that it is imperative to keep this building.

"We have to explore our best options to keep this building. It will be a blow to our institution if we lose it. It is the only privately-owned building in the White House district and losing it would be

giving up a piece of our history," said Billy Shufeldt, President of the Oklahoma State Grange.

Pennsylvania also entertained a lengthy debate at their session in October. The floor debate culminated with a vote, that State President Wayne Campbell said resulted in approximately 90 percent opting to sell the headquarters.

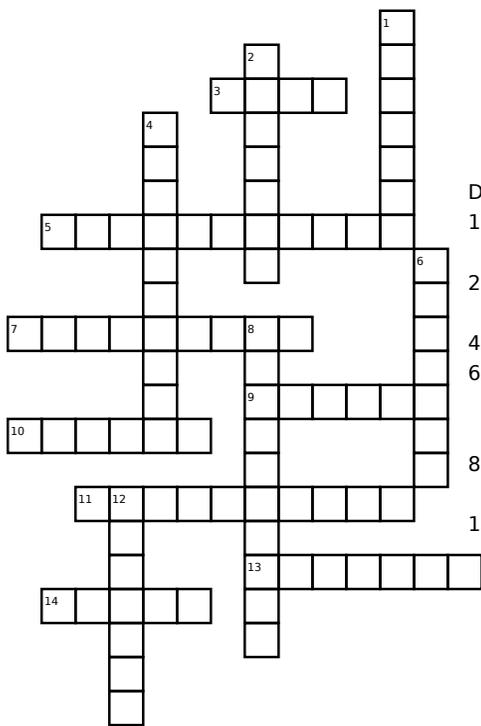
He was not surprised in some ways. "My mother told me that a house does not make a home, a group of people in a house does not make a family. It is the relationship of the people, and the actions they take, that make both family and home," Campbell said.

Campbell further indicated that there are other concerns regarding headquarters - prominent among them is eminent domain. As the last privately held building near the White House, one of many with concerns that it is only a matter of time before our

headquarters is taken in this way, as our previous headquarters was in the 1950's. While the previous action by the government gave us the property at 1616 H Street, the concern is that if we leverage significant debt to renovate the building, it could still be taken, and the Grange would be saddled with considerable debt with little to show.

"So many times I have not gone with my gut, and I have regretted it," Campbell said, "I have a bad feeling about eminent domain."

This subject is expansive and there is not yet a clear, correct answer. This week will give the Delegate body the chance to debate the merits of all options on the floor, and regardless of the outcome, everyone interviewed has agreed - the Delegates to this 155th Annual Session will cast their vote with the best interests of the entire organization in mind.



DAILY PUZZLE

Answers on Page 5

Down:

1. Bones of this giant, hairy best have been found in this state
2. Sometimes referred to as Lady Lindy, this high flyer is a Kansas native
4. This western variety of this is the state bird
6. In 1910, the Flyer model of this brand of plane was built in Topeka and named for its builder/founder
8. He dedicated the National Grange Building during his term as President
12. Known as the "Land of Oz," this is the home of Dorothy

Across:

3. This is the name of the tribe for which Kansas was named
5. This Kansas spot is the geographic center of the contiguous United States
7. This, the state flower is native to North America
9. Argonia, Kansas, boasts the first female mayor elected in the United States
10. While not the largest city in the state, this is the capital
11. In Kansas at this location, you can find the world's largest tall prairie grass ecosystem
13. Home of the first White Castle and Pizza Hut, this is the biggest city in Kansas
14. Kansas ranked as the highest producer of this grain

Editorial: The Juniors are Watching

BY ANNETTE "NETTIE" HARTLEY

President, Moosup Valley Junior Grange,
Foster, Rhode Island

Dear National Officers, Delegates and guests,

Welcome to the 155th annual National Grange convention in Wichita, Kansas. I'm bumming that I can't be there this year, but I can't wait to hear all the daily updates from my dad. Good luck to everyone nominated in this year's election, and the participants in all the contests. But remember our future.

Think about us Juniors and Youth, for what the Grange is going to be like when we get to National level and we are elected into new offices. All of the Juniors and Youth are looking up to you to make sure that we still have a Grange in our future when we get to Subordinate and National level, just as our predecessors did for you.

I know everyone says that the Juniors are the future, but it's true. All of us are at home watching and learning to see what the difference is between Junior Grange and the National Grange. We love watching the great work that you do, so keep doing it.

With all the resolutions and new topics, remember that

your ideas and results will affect the Junior future - for the good and the bad. As I was at the National session in Stowe, Vermont in 2018, I saw and understood firsthand the long days that you all go through being National Grange officers and Delegates. So make sure you get rest when you can, enjoy the food (as Grangers normally do!) and enjoy the fellowship and friendships that you have and make, for you will have them for a long time.

As I am a proud multi-generational Granger, make sure the decisions you make will allow other families to continue their Grange "family tree" so they could be just as proud as the Hartley family has been.

Although I hope to see you all in Reno, Nevada, I also look forward to seeing you all in two years at the National Convention in Niagara, New York, as I am on the host committee co-hosting Rhode Island. We are working hard to make 2023 a great National Session for all to enjoy. So, congratulations and kudos to the host committee who planned this session in Wichita, because as we are planning for our National Session, we all know how much hard work and effort that's gone into this 155th annual National Session.

Once again, have a great week! Please stay safe and healthy, as we are still in uneasy times.