Green Mountain Granger

APRIL 2025

MASTER'S NOTES

Hello, all! Hoping you're having a good April and are finding ways to celebrate April is Grange Month! If you're looking for ideas go to the National Grange website. Included in this issue, if space permits, I have included downloads of the Grange month Proclamation and examples of how you can celebrate Grange all through the month.

A reminder that there is a Needlework Contest and brochures were sent out. If you need another brochure, contact me, I've got a bunch of them!!

As of this writing, no Granger has stepped up to tackle the directorship of Family Activities, so all questions and communication need to come to me.

On March 8th I met with the state officers, deputies and directors. The state officers signed up for Grange visitations that are meant to regain and enhance communications between Granges at all levels. Deputies have been assigned and/or agreed to take on more coverage and evaluations as our deputy pool has dwindled. Still looking for someone to cover the southeast corner of Vermont.

Vermont will be hosting the Northeast Leaders Conference in 2026. A great deal was discussed concerning content, speakers, and time allotted for committee meetings. Still trying to nail down a place to meet.

National Grange has introduced a new tool for helping Granges. It is known as PIP S.M.A.R.T. PIP stands for Performance Improvement Plan, and S.M.A.R.T stands for goals that are: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. These goals are to help you identify if what you want to achieve is realistic, determine a deadline, and how you will accomplish it. You will be hearing more about this soon.

The directors went over new programing ideas for next year. The theme will be "Make it Happen". Debbie Ploof is trying to whittle down every committee portion of the program book to four pages at most.

Fraternally, Kendal Holden
Master VSG

NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee met on March 2, 2025. Major areas of discussion included confirmation of the sale of Maple Valley #318 hall. All paperwork was completed and a check for the sale of the hall was received. After expenses incurred by the VSG were added up with the total of these expenses returned to the VSG, approximately $27,000.00 was turned over to the Trust Officer to invest.

A discussion was held on the progress of the work being done at the Grange Center. It is hoped that the kitchen and well work can be completed in the Spring. A request from the Grange Center was received. They have requested an additional loan in the amount of $30,000.00 to complete the work. A motion was made and approved to ensure that any interest that would be amassed on the several loans to the Grange Center be dismissed.

The Executive Committee is looking at various forms of electronic storage for Grange files. The hope is to get all electronic files in one central place

Worthy Master, Kendal provided some updated information on his search for deputies, information on the 2026 Leaders Conference that will be held in Vermont and information on the Directors/Officers/and Deputy meeting that was scheduled for March 8.

A full copy of the minutes for this meeting will be published in the VSG Journal of Proceedings.

Brenda Rousselle, Secretary of VSG Ex Committee

CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE – GMG APRIL 2025

The Easter season will soon be upon us. It is a time to be reminded of God's promise if we will follow Him. He sent his Son to die on the cross to save us from our sins, if we ask forgiveness. In return, we are blessed with an eternal life. That's the long and short of it!

Many churches in our rural Vermont areas are finding it difficult to keep their doors open. Grange is another way to be reminded in our beliefs of Faith, Hope, and Love/Charity through our degrees.

1 Corinthians 13:13 -" But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love."

And, with that love, there is that assurance if we follow God's rules to live by. Grange gives us that chance to serve others, to love our neighbors, to be kind to one another. We call it Community Service. At Church, we have mission work which can be giving to the local food shelf or dollars to mission work, traveling to a foreign country to give aid or build homes. Here in the US, we have so many needs following our natural disasters and in other countries there will be rebuilding projects to last for years following these terrible wars.

With Springtime comes a renewed spirit- call it Spring Fever, if you wish. We look forward to warmer weather, starting our seeds and planting our gardens. Just remember we must feed God's Holy Spirit in our hearts and pray for His help in all we do. You may feel His tender push to help, to finish what you start, to smile and find hope in the world around us. These unsettling times can be overcome if we take a deep breath, listen hard, try to understand and have patience with one another in our towns, in other countries, and in our leadership. Be vigilant and carry on, knowing that our souls have a place in Heaven when our day comes, if we believe.

Jenny Nelson, Chaplain

LECTURER

I've added new items to the Program Book 25-26 and removed some. June 30 is fast approaching. Will you be ready? Are you writing in your books after (or at) each meeting? At our state officers meeting, we discussed a question that has come up recently. This involves entering the same contest in differently Granges you belong to. It is fine to enter from more than your home Grange, but the entries must be from different categories. In other words, you can't enter the writing contest of same prompt. Let me know if you have any questions.

Alice Daley, VT State Lecturer

EDUCATIONAL AID FUND

We will soon be scoring scholarship applications. We still have loans and grants available. Lois Wakefield, Chair

VERMONT GRANGE CENTER

There has been a change in some Officers for the Center Board---The Vice Chair is now Ruth Hovey-Sicely; the Treasurer is now Beth Morse.

Clean-Up Weekends are scheduled for May 9, 10 and 11 and May 16, 17 and 18---if the snow is gone!!!!! Each Pomona has been assigned a building or area to clean. The Pomona is responsible for minor repairs, replacing interior decorations, curtains, etc. or funding for such improvements. Pomona assignments can be found on page 52 of the current Program Book.

We are asking each Pomona to be responsible for two days at the Rest Area (Sharon). Rest Areas dates are: May 24, 25 and 26; July 5, 6, and 7; August 30, 31 and September 1. As of now, July 27 and August 3 are taken; possibly May 24 and September 1. Each Pomona is responsible for providing the baked goods/food and to cover the Rest Area. No cooking will be done at

the Grange Center. Let me know which days your Pomona would like. Call me at: 802-375-5404. This is one way to raise money for the Grange Center. If you have other fund-raising ideas, let me know. Each Grange is asked to contribute $2.00 per member, or as much as you can. Send your check to: Beth Morse, 92 Happy Valley Road, Middlebury, VT 05753.

The Center has received several loans from the Vermont State Grange of slightly under $100,000.00. The Center also incurs monthly expenses, i.e. electricity, phone, etc. The Board needs all the help you can give to allow us to pay off these loans and to meet expenses. Again, if you have any thoughts for fund-raising projects, call me. Eunice Crowell, Chair

GRANGE CENTER STUDY COMMITTEE

The assessment of the buildings at the Grange Center has been scheduled. We were able to obtain a grant! See this excerpt from the awards email from Ben Doyle, President from Preservation Trust of Vermont::

“I am pleased to inform you that the Vermont State Grange has been awarded a $750 Robert Sincerbeaux Fund grant to hire Ryan Edwards of R. Edwards & Company to prepare a condition assessment and preliminary cost estimates for the campus located at 308 West Street in Brookfield.”

AGRICULTURE/ENVIRONMENT

Spring greetings to all. Many of you know me and some of you don’t. My name is Linda Sanderson and I joined Grange in 1981. I have come up through the Subordinate, Pomona and State Grange having held many offices, and Chair of most committees I have been on. I would call myself an old time Granger. Worthy State Master Kendal Holden has asked me to be the Director of the State Agriculture/Environment Committee. So here I am once again working on something I grew up with. I will try my best to be as good as Sister Jenny.

Environment:

Middlebury College has put in 15,348 solar panels in pursuit of its goal towards 100% renewable energy. People in Washington County can get rebates on approved pellet boilers and furnaces. Also, all Vermonters can check out Efficiency Vermont for heating incentives. De-nailed and sorted, wood finds a temporary home at a salvage lumber warehouse.

Agriculture:

Lobbying in Washington D.C. spiked in 2023 when the Ag bill was being debated, as the pressure to shape the next 5 years of the US food policy peaked. The American Farm Bureau reported spending more than half of their $523 million five-year total. Big Agriculture regularly out spends Defense contractors, and oil & gas lobbyers together.

Hopefully my mailing gets to you before this GMG.

VT MAPLE FESTIVAL April 25-27 in Saint Albans, VT

DAIRY FESTIVAL TBA in Enosburg Falls VT

Linda Sanderson, Director

COMMUNITY SERVICE

There is an expression I have heard many times, and it is: The only thing constant is change. It seems to be true for Community Service as well. During Covid, everyone who could was making masks. I still have 2 fabric cubes marked with label “Mask Supplies”. I don’t want to ever have to use it again but should see if any of those supplies can be used in other ways. You as a Grange may need to change what you do for Community Service. Exam and evaluate what you are doing. Is it still working for your Grange and the community you serve? If not, a change may be in order.

Another change is the submission of your annual Community Service report. There will no longer be a National Judging so I will not be sending the winning notebook to National. BUT there will still be judging at the STATE LEVEL which will determine your prize money!!! Follow the rules in the program book for 24-25. You can put your

report in a separate notebook OR put it into the regular Grange notebook and I will pull it out for judging. To maximize prize money, I need at least 25% of Granges to submit a report. This is not hard! Complete one Community Service project (Word for Thirds, Food Shelf, etc.) write it up on the Community Service Project Report Form, Complete the Annual Report form with Table of Contents (remember history of your Grange and Community info), and Summary page, all easily filled out forms provided in your program book. I hope to see 50% participation this year! Deborah Ploof, Director deporah.ploof@outlook.com

FALL FESTIVAL

Have you planned your garden for this year yet? Now is the time to think about what you would like to submit for fruits and vegetables for the Fall Festival. If you are new to gardening this is a fun way to showcase your hard work. For ideas on how best to showcase your product there is a list on the VT State Granges website http://www.vtstategrange.org/ under committees, Fall Festival to see suggestions on how to prepare your items.

When the new program book arrives look closely through the Fall Festival section as it has been updated. I have eliminated categories as little to no one has entered items under them in a number of years. In the canning category I have added items (suggestions) of cannable items that can be submitted. And per suggestions from the survey, I published in a previous GMG I have added the following handicraft items to that category:

· Candle Making

· Decoupage

· Puppetry (with dolls/miniatures)

· Felting is now separated from Embroidery

· Lace Making

· Leatherwork

· Mosaics

· Soap Making

· Stained Glass/Glass Blowing

· Wood Burning (with Wood carving/Wood Working)

· Metalworking.

This gives you 11 new classes in the Arts & Crafts category to try. Let your creativity soar. If you have any questions about these new classes, please let me know and if I missed any types of crafts they can still be entered for judging.

Stay tuned for more information about activities available during the Fall Festival; plans are being made as you read this. You can also keep updated on our Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61550315001342.

Beth Morse

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

The 2025 Northeast Needlework Contest entries are due on July 12 by Noon at Family Camp. All Pomona Chairs have a copy of the rules. Prize money has been raised as follows: 1st prize $25.00; 2nd prize $15.00; 3rd prize $10.00. I will have the items judged and the 1st place winners will go to the Big E for judging.

Any items for the store should be brought to Family Camp or Fall Festival. I will get them to the Big E. Eunice Crowell, reporting

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Anyone got any new ideas for the Program Book? We met last week and I added some but could use more. Are you keeping up with your reports? Have you documented 6 items you discussed this year? Alice Daley, Director

JUNIOR AND YOUTH GRANGE CAMP

Good afternoon! "A little over 100 days until Junior and Youth Grange Camp! Our theme for this year's camp is Time Travel. If you would like to present on any of our themed days (1860s, 1920s, 1960s, 1980s, and the Future), please reach out to me via email at mfalker03@gmail.com.

We are always accepting donations of food, craft supplies, or your time! For physical donations, please bring them to

Family Camp at the Grange Center. If you're interested in being a counselor, please email me as well!"

Second, I remember you mentioning at the directors' meeting that you had tons of extra buttons. If you're looking for a new home for them, I would love to take them for button paintings at camp. I'm not sure if you'll be at Family Camp, but let me know either way, and I can find a way to pick them up.

Melody Falker
<mfalker03@gmail.com>

LEGISLATIVE

Happy Spring! And welcome to the second half of the Vermont Legislative session.

A few bills that are making their crossover this year are:

S.60 Farm Security fund: asking for appropriation of $20 million to set up a fund for farm relief FY26 with future appropriations based on average loss. This would help VT's small, diversified farms that don't qualify for and/or are left out of federal funding.

H.706 An Act Relating to Banning the Use of Neonicotinoids is slated to come before the Senate Ag. Committee in April.

H.238 Expanding the State ban on PFAS chemicals in several new products has passed the House.

Will we see a new Farm Bill come out of Washington this year? The 2024 Congress extended the 2018 Farm Bill until September 30, 2025. This big bill is always contentious and has recently been made even more so with the passing of the House Budget Plan. This plan calls for $230 billion in cuts to agriculture spending, including SNAP which is the largest part of the Farm Bill spending, approximately 75% of the current bill.

Kathleen Paglia, Director
<kmpaglia@gmail.com>

IN MEMORY

Alfred "Al" Franklin, Sr., 89, lifelong resident of Guilford, VT, died January 18, 2025, at Rutland Regional Medical Center following a period of declining health. Most recently he had made his home with his daughter in Pittsford.

Al was born in Brattleboro on Jan. 30, 1935, raised and educated in Guilford and graduated from Brattleboro Union High School inf 1953. He went on to proudly serve his country in the U.S. Army during the Korean Conflict and was honorably discharged from active service on November 21, 1956. Al was a member of the American Legion, Brattleboro Post #5, and Broad Brook Grange #151 in Guilford, where he and his late wife, Frieda, were very active. She predeceased him in December 2006.

He owned and operated his own farm on Sweet Pond Road for many years and also was a licensed real estate agent for 15 years, representing the former Martocci & Henry Real Estate Company. Active civically, Al served as a selectman for the town of Guilford and was chairman of the selectboard for six years. He was appointed by Congressman James Jeffords to the Vermont Agricultural Advisory Committee where he served as honorary chairman for 16 years. He was active with Rescue Inc. as a trustee representing Guilford and was chairman of Rescue's board of trustees for several terms. A man of faith, Al was a member of the Guilford Community Church where he served as a deacon for many years. Al was known for his common sense and critical thinking as well as his pleasant personality and spirit of friendship. He was an avid reader and enjoyed time shared with his family.

Memorial contributions in Al's name may be made to Rescue Inc., P.O. Box and 593, Brattleboro, VT 05302; Guilford Community Church, 38 Church Drive, Guilford, VT 05301; or to Guilford Volunteer Fire Dept., 108 Guilford Center Road, Guilford, VT 05301. (submitted by Bobbie Haumann)

UPDATES ABOUT OLIVER KELLEY FARM

The following update was shared by Jennifer Nelson concerning activities at or about Oliver Kelley Farm.

Today is (Thursday, February 27, 2025) "History Matters Day" here in Minnesota - which is our state lobbying and advocacy day. People from local historical societies across the state come to the Capitol to meet with their legislators and voice their support for history.

I thought you might appreciate this update from the Kelley Farm which they shared on Facebook.

We had the distinct pleasure of representing the Oliver Kelley Farm today during History Matters Day at the Capitol organized by the Minnesota Historical Society. Our meetings throughout the day were informative and fun. We would like to thank Rep. Paul Novotny and Sen. Eric Lucero for their time today to meet with us and talk about history! Eva Widder

HAPPENINGS AROUND THE STATE

Champlain Valley Pomona #37 met March 14th opening in the Fifth Degree at 7pm following the closing in the Fourth Degree from Blue Spruce Grange. This is a new format we are trying to have in person Pomona (also available via Zoom for members who don't want to travel). meetings, Members elected Kendal Holden to Grange Center board. I am proud to say all Granges in the Pomona submitted information to this GMG about their respective Granges this issue. Good job! Deborah Ploof, reporting

Blue Spruce Grange #574 - Spring is coming on March 21, 2025 – ignore the weatherman. They are only correct 50% of the time. With Spring we can start planning our gardens and cleaning our lawns.

Blue Spruce will be hosting the March and April meetings for the Champlain Valley Pomona at the First Congregation Church in Essex Junction on March 14, 2025 and April 11, 2025 (after our regular Blue Spruce meeting). All Pomona members are welcome.

On March 28, 2025 we will be holding our Junior Project for the year. We will be handing in bags containing things for a party (decorations, gifts, and eats). The bags will be given to the local food shelf for distribution to families. Any theme – Birthday, Memorial Day, Easter, etc. We will also be making handicrafts for a local Craft Fair. Janice M Rousselle, Master

Bridport Grange #303 – Has hosted 3 Legislative events under its program Addison County Legislative Breakfasts with the Addison County Farm Bureau and there are 2 more in the series: one on 3/22/25 at the Shoreham Congregational Church and on 4/8/25 at the Salisbury Congregational Church.

Our last Legislative event was a luncheon with the Secretary of Agriculture Anson Tebbetts. Our representatives present were Rob North, Ruth Hardy and Steven Heffernan. A long discussion ensued regarding our migrant workers and the impact it would have on our farms if they were no longer available.

In other news, Bridport Grange helped the Shoreham Congregational Church sell slices of pie for PIE Day on March 14th. One hundred and forty-four slices of pie were made, 19 pies, 17 different varieties with only two repeats. For an extra dollar people could make their selection al a mode. At the end of the evening there were only 10 slices left. Beth Morse, Master

Caledonia Grange #9 has been meeting at members' homes. We are working on several ambitious projects:

- Planning a series of monthly agriculture and home gardening related workshops for members and for the community to take place over the course of this summer and fall. We will finalize this schedule at our March meeting

- Working with other community groups in East Hardwick to plan the annual Children's Parade and activities. This year's parade date is June 7th, though there are a few details yet to work out for that date.

We have a number of energetic new members and are working toward putting on a number of events for our community this year.

Caledonia Grange #9 is launching a quarterly newsletter this spring and we are also launching a webpage. Our url is https://www.easthardwickgrange.org/ Rob MacLeod, President

Capital City Grange
April 5: We will have a brief Grange meeting, starting at 4:30 PM, followed by a free, public program. This month, it will be long-time Grange supporter Phyllis Rubenstein, talking about and showing pictures of “Spring Flowers on the Appalachian Trail”. Phyllis hiked the “AT” in 2023, starting April 15 from Spring Mountain, Georgia, and following the spring as she hiked north. The program will be followed by our tasty Community Potluck from 6:00 to 7:00. Bring something to share!

April 12 & 13 will be our “Family Weekend” events. April 12, Saturday morning 9:30 to 11:30 is our Kids Trade & Play monthly clothing exchange for kids—we have lots of kids clothes sized newborn to Junior 12 to give away, plus toys, books and games. We ask for a $5 donation per family, but no one is turned away. Donations of clothing, etc. accepted—only items in good condition, please! April 13, Sunday afternoon 3:00 to 4:30 PM, our last Dance, Sing & Jump Around event of the winter season. Dances, songs and play-party games will be taught by Liz Benjamin, Stan Carlson and Alice Smolinsky—and there will be snacks! FREE for kids, we ask for a $5 donation from adults, but no one is ever turned away.

On May 3rd, our Grange meeting will feature our Cooking Contest, with contestants submitting their version of a “Seasonal Fruit Cobbler”. There are so many ways to make these tasty dishes!

In addition to these events, we are working on a grant application, to get some help adding outside-air ventilation to the Main Hall level. We've added enough insulation and air-sealing to our Hall that we need to make sure we have some fresh air coming in. This will be in the form of an “Energy Recovery Ventilator” that will capture some of the heat from air being pushed out, to warm up the fresh air coming in. Timothy Swartz, President

Charlotte Grange is going into the spring with 50 members and a full programming calendar. Our upcoming programs include monthly poetry and walking gatherings, a "My Favorite Charlotte Tree" kids art contest, our spring children's clothing drive, a food drive for farmworkers, and our annual Memorial Day event. Our website, charlottegrange.org, is the best way to find out our latest updates and upcoming event and program details. charlottegrangevt@gmail.com

Ferrisburgh Grange #539 - Because of our sometimes-far-flung memberships' ability to “be here now—from anywhere” via Zoom, Ferrisburgh Grange continues to meet monthly online, no longer taking its customary Winter-break and actively seeking to bring

home-bound Grangers back to meetings.

This month, a Health and Wellness program on Heart Health presented by Vice-President Alice Mae Peabody and Chaplain Lianna Tennal—with the help of some well-loved teddy bears for visual interest and fun—conveyed important information, some of it surprising.

We learned about some key points in maintaining heart health, including getting enough sleep (7-9 hours, ideally on a consistent schedule), getting regular exercise, eating healthy foods, and avoiding junk food and smoking. Emotional wellbeing is also important for a healthy heart, including maintaining good relationships with other people, and avoiding excessive stress.

Discussion followed, bringing up the fact that heart disease is the number one cause of death for women in the US, and that symptoms of what's called “heart attack” can be different for women than for men, and, surprisingly, manifest through jaw pain.

As interesting as those bears proved to be, advancement to membership of Karlene Devine, daughter of a past Ferrisburgh Grange Master and life-long friend of the Grange, provided the meeting's highlight. Next month's program will feature Grange remembrances from our two life-long Ferrisburgh residents, our newest member, Karlene Devine, and oldest, Helen Hawkins Cobb. Don Peabody, President (with everybody's help)

Middle Branch held its baking contest at the February 21 meeting, we had seven entries. First place went to Elizabeth Waterman for her raspberry cobbler, second was Joe Williams, he also used raspberries and third to Joan Wortman for her peach cobbler. On February 23 fifteen Middle Branch members traveled to Riverside to confer the 3rd degree. We also took back the gavel that Riverside won decades ago, probably in the 50's. Middle Branch's history tells of Grangers visiting other Granges and if the guests outnumbered the home members, they got to take the large gavel with them. We look forward to Riverside's attempt to win it back. Our final wintertime card party was on March 1. Judy Powell, State Gatekeeper attended the state officers meeting on March 8. We will hold our annual Dues Paid Supper on April 12th at Our Lady of the Angels Parish Hall in Randolph. Our Easter Bake Sale will be April 19 at the octagon. The chicken BBQ that we held on Memorial Day weekend last year was very successful so we are planning to do that again. For more info on meeting times or any of our events send an email to middlebranchgrange463 @gmail.com. Judy Powell, Lecturer

(photo: L to R: Joan Wortman, Joe Williams, Elizabeth Waterman)

Riverside Grange held a regular meeting on February 7th and draped the charter for long-time member Winne Walker. Three new members took the obligation. On Sunday February 23rd Riverside members were joined by members of Middle Branch Grange, Chelsea Grange, and Bridgewater Grange to confer the 3rd and 4th degrees. It was wonderful to share this experience with members of other Granges and we look forward to more combined activities in the future. The March 7th meeting included the baking contest, and March 21st is our monthly potluck meeting. Cribbage night at our hall is every Sunday. -Emily Hart, Lecturer

Tunbridge Grange #384 will hold its 3rd annual Easter Eggstravaganza on April 19 at the Grange Hall from 10:30 am to

12:30 pm with games, activities, crafts, and a special visit from the Easter Bunny. Lecturer Chancity Young started this spectacular spring tradition that is loved by children and adults alike. President Mary Roberts and Ceres Rosemary Distel have been working to spread the word about the Grange and bring in new members. They attended a volunteer event held at the Town Hall and talked with many area organizations about the Grange. Winter bingo has just about concluded, led by treasurer Paul Amell with many helpers. We are all looking forward to nicer weather! Peggy Willoughby, Reporting