



# MICHIGAN GRANGE NEWS



Volume XXXI NO.1

USPS 345-580

JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 2025

## Michigan School for the Deaf Christmas Party



Grange members who attended: Sharon Popler, Peggy Johnston, Ted Mudd, Fran Longsdorf, Tricia Eidsmoe, Joanne & Randy Cebulski, Evelyn Ward and Dale Moore.



Peggy Johnston and Sharon Popler, DA Co-Directors with Lynn Sedlacko, Coordinator for the Michigan School for the Deaf/Grange Christmas Party.

### Special treats made for everyone



### Grangers at work



Everyone waiting patiently!

*“Wright it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year” —Ralph Waldo Emerson*

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# Michigan Grange News

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January 1	New Year's Day
January 19	MSG Foundation Meeting 3 p.m.
January 20	Martin Luther King Day
February 14	Valentine's Day
February 17	President's Day



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## NEW YEAR'S PRAYER

**As the dawn breaks on a new year,  
let us give thanks for all we hold dear:  
our health, our family and our friends.  
Let us release our grudges,  
our anger and our pains,  
for these are nothing but binding chains.  
Let us live each day in the most loving ways,  
the God-conscious way.**



### In Memory of

**NANCY BLAIR**  
**Dec. 2, 1942-Dec. 19, 2024**  
**Past MSG Chaplain**



Nancy was a very loving wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and friend. She sang like an angel at many weddings, church and Grange services.

Nancy was married to Fred who preceded her in death. She is survived by her children Mary (Mike) Sova, Heidi (Steve) Bosch, Kathi (Phil) VanDoese-

laar, and Jim (Angie) Blair. Also nine grandchildren, 27 great-grandchildren, and several brothers and sisters.

Her funeral service was held Friday, December 27, 2024 at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Jenison

She served as the Chaplain for the Michigan State Grange from 2000 to 2009, as well serving the youth in the State Grange. She is well remembered for singing the Holy City in the 6th Degree with her beautiful voice.

Well Done Good and Faithful Servant

Christopher D. Johnston, Master 6241 Grand River Road, Bancroft, MI 48414  
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## Happy New Year!!

I hope you had a nice holiday and welcome to 2025. As always, a new year is a time to focus on what you want to accomplish in the Grange. Be it new members, new community service activities or the ever challenging ambition to start a new Grange! This is the time to start making those plans!

## National Grange Session

I'm happy to report that the host committee did a fantastic job hosting the 2024 National Grange Session. The committee was tasked with a few new projects and they definitely succeeded with the challenge. The host banquet was different as it was a lunch on a riverboat cruise that was open to all attendees. There were multiple tour options at different times so members were able to attend more than one. And finally, several workshops offered all day, every day that members could choose from. And I'm happy to say that the Wreaths Across America community service project Connie was in charge of resulted in donations of \$5,220.00, sponsoring 307 wreaths! Thank you for helping make that contribution!

As for the business side of things, we sent two resolutions from our state session. The one on balloon releases was rejected as a state issue and the other one on the Grange websites through National Grange was approved.

## Lame Duck Session

Hopefully you've been following the happenings in Lansing. It appears that a few bills regarding the Michigan Department of Natural Resources are being pushed and passed by the house before the democrats lose control, however, they still have to go before the Senate.

House bill 6229 presented by Rep. Amos O'Neal aims to increase hunting and fishing licenses. Some key changes are hunting licenses will go up by 50% from \$20.00 to \$30.00 for residents, fishing licenses will be required at the age of 16 instead of 17, a Shooting and Education Fund created which would then allow the DNR to charge a permit fee for the use of a state-owned shooting ranges, and senior discounts will go down

from 60% to 25%. While fees haven't been increased since 2014, these are still some pretty high increases and the concern is that there will be fewer licenses purchased.

Also passed is House Bill 5428 that would increase the DNR Recreational Passport fee from \$13.00 to \$14.00; but the main issue is that there is no longer the option to enroll. You now will be automatically charged, unless you opt-out of purchasing it. This can be misleading and will require people to pay attention when renewing/purchasing registration tabs if they don't plan or aren't able to use the state parks system.

## Leadership Conference

While normally the Leadership Conference, formally known as the Master's Conference, has been for State Masters in the past, the National President is welcoming other state leaders as well. This would include the President and a second delegate, Vice Presidents, Executive Committee Chairperson or other up-and-comer. This year's conference will be held in Sonoma County, California, February 14 - 16, 2025. If you would like to know more information about the conference, please contact me and I can share the details with you.



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**Happy New Year Everyone!** As I sit writing this two days before Christmas with a little rain, a little sleet, and snow on the way I keep thinking of the day we spent time at the Michigan School for the Deaf for yet another Christmas Party. Did you know that this program has been going on for about 40 years! Each year its such a blessing to be able to see the looks on these kids faces when they open the gifts that so many of our members and friends have purchased for them. There is that possibility that some of these kids are opening the only gifts they will have this year. It was evident this year as always just how much they all appreciate what we do for them. Thank you to everyone that participated in whatever way they could. We had 37 students this year ranging in age from 3 to 19. Only one student that wasn't in school that day. It was a super great day!!

**A  
Happy  
Place  
To Be  
So  
Much  
Fun!!**



*More Pictures on page 6*



Naomi Fletcher, President 14685 25.75 Road, Rapid River, MI 49878  
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**WOW!!** What a way to recharge your Grange batteries! Attending both Michigan State Grange and National Grange annual sessions within two weeks of each other, seeing old friends, meeting new ones, and learning about the progress each Grange is making!

One program that I'd like to encourage your Grange to participate in is the Heirloom Program. It teaches new members about the history and ritual of the Grange as many of us older members know it, and might even impart information to long-standing members who may not know all there is about our wonderful organization. Following is a quote from the program information that can be found at the National Grange website. <https://www.nationalgrange.org/heirloom-program/>

"Change is inevitable, as our founders told us through the ritual work they left us. Even as we change, evolve and grow, it is essential that we retain and impart upon new members our most sacredly held values – not only those of faith, hope, charity and fidelity, but also of civility, respect for others, nonpartisanship, lifelong education, the reverence for those who allow us to meet our most basic of needs (agriculturalists and others that produce our food and shelter), and more."

So let's embrace change, yet keep our roots deep in agriculture. We've become a community service organization as a result of our own generosity over these last 150 years. I hope to be able to provide you with information about other programs and encourage you to participate as your Grange is able.

The first is the Distinguished Grange Award. Our own First Lady, Connie Johnston, is the National Chair for this program. This simple application can be found at the National Grange website. Some items are as easy as submitting a resolution to your State Grange, or hosting a State or National officer or program chair at one of your meetings.

<https://www.nationalgrange.org/distinguished/>

More about each of these programs will be provided quarterly to you in the Lecturer's bulletin.

Did you answer the question to last month's Question of the Month? The Agate, the emblem of the 4th degree, symbolizes Fidelity. May your principles of manhood and womanhood be as firmly impressed as

the lasting colors in the stone, and may our friendship be as firm as the stone itself.

**Question of the month:** What is the season of the 3rd degree?

## GRANGE HAPPENINGS

### BURNS GRANGE #160

One of the members of Burns Grange found a bargain last year after the holidays. Fifteen felt red and white Christmas stockings for \$ .10 each. Couldn't pass that up, so got them and packed them away with the Christmas decorations and forgot them until it was time to decorate this year.

So now what to do with them? A few suggestions were thought up and finally we decided to pack them with different items, such as coloring books, crayons, reading book, craft kits, candy, a tote bag to decorate, etc.

Then where to donate them? After several ideas we finally decided on a local food pantry. When people would come there to pick up needed items, they would be asked about having younger children and these would be dispensed.

Those at the pantry were excited with them and the fourteen handmade lap robes that we also donated to them.



## GRANGE HAPPENINGS

### BURR OAK GRANGE #1350 AND BURR OAK LIBRARY SPONSORED THE MITTEN TREE

*Story by: Ethan Grubb, Burr Oak Grange*

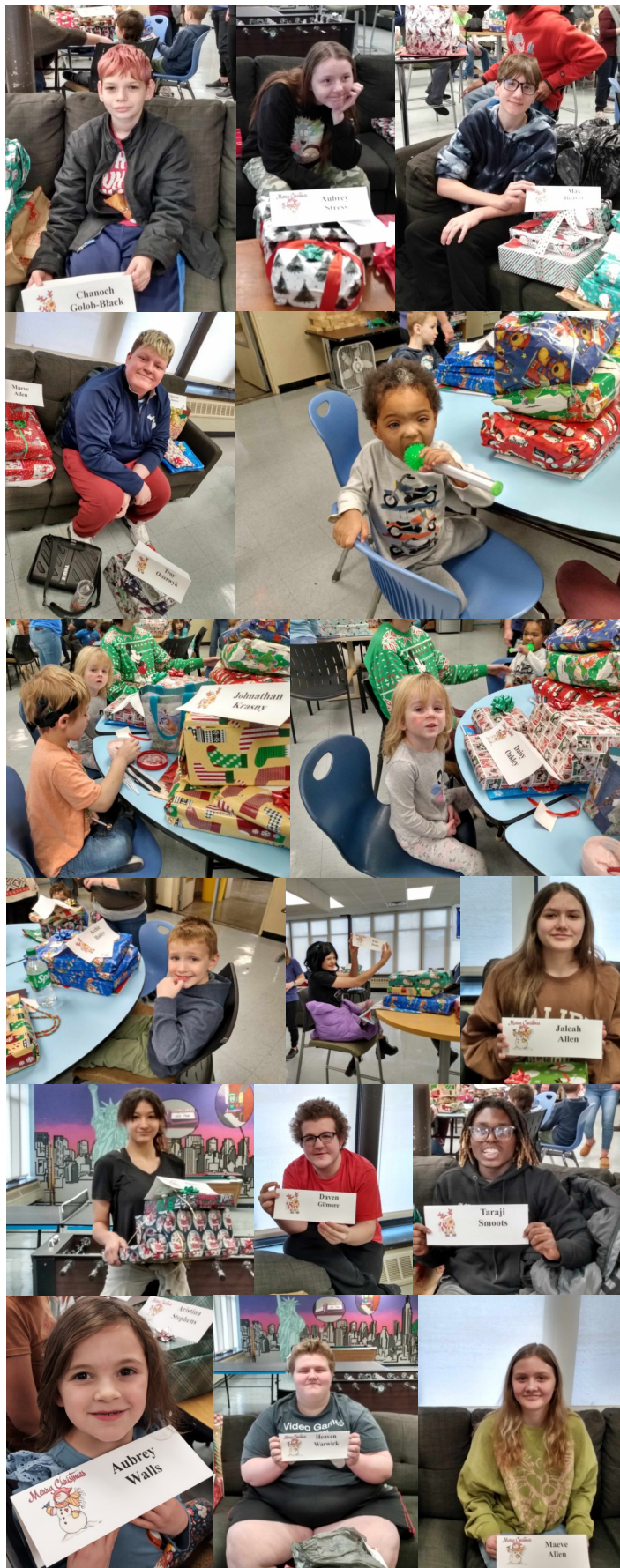
The Mitten Tree which was sponsored by the Grange and the Library was a huge success! The Grange came up with the idea, however, since the Grange hall is not open all the time it was decided to put the tree in the Library where the public could help out with the project of collecting mittens, scarves, ear warmers, hats and even socks.

The Grange members, and Library workers, and 20 individuals and five organizations donated 164 hats, 163 pairs of mittens, 24 scarves, 19 ear warmers and 30 pairs of socks.

The donations were divided up and sent to Burr Oak Community Schools, the St. Joseph County United Way, and the St. Joseph County domestic shelter.

The Community had a great response to the event.

Our Congratulations on an awesome project and results.



**A SUPER GROUP OF KIDS!!**

Kevin Young, Director 60822 Creek Road, Niles, MI 49120  
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Happy New Year everyone! Wow, 2024 is in the books and 2025 has just started! Well, I am sure everyone is starting to think about Spring and winter is not even half over! I know it is important to have snow during the winter months as that helps to add moisture to our farm fields and helps to protect the winter wheat during the cold months. So far, we have had a little bit of snow in my area of Michigan which seems weird as it is Nov 30th as I sit writing this article. What snow we had earlier in November didn't stay around long because the temperature wasn't cold enough. Well at the end of November it is cold!! I hope this isn't a sign of what winter is going to be like. I do not like cold weather where the high temperatures do not get over 32.

Yes, snow is a part of everyday life during winter in our community. And don't we often wish we didn't have to live with it, but we couldn't live without it.

So, while you sit and look at the snow float from the sky, think about what you might want to plant in your gardens or yards this coming spring. Now is a great time to be looking through the seed catalogs and plant books for those special favorites you might want to plant and then share the crops with friends and neighbors.

Here is a good reason to plan early. Be sure to check out the Agriculture Department in the Program Book. I left the classes from 2024 in the program book for 2025. I know it is tough trying to get things to last until our State Session, but I try to have classes that the produce would still be good to enter. If our State Session was during the late Summer or early Fall months, we could do more classes to deal with fruits, vegetables and flowers. Remember that the class under Flowers: Bloom is any type of flower bloom and they are fresh not dried. Please be sure to keep the inserted Program Book for the 2025 State Session.

Keep an eye on the approval process of the new Farm Bill. It doesn't just affect the Farmers etc, but it also affects anyone that receives the SNAP benefits as well. There are a lot of things in this 1,000+ page bill that Debbie Stabenow stands behind and is trying to get passed before the end of her term.

Also, be aware of the tariffs that the new Federal Administration is looking to add to all items from Mexico and Canada. The United States gets lots of PRODUCE from both countries but mostly from Mexico because that's where all of the off season items come from when the United States is between growing seasons. The tariffs proposed will just raise the cost of food for all of our tables. Please be sure to let your Congressmen and Women know that it is not a good idea to make the residents of the USA pay any more than we already do to feed our families.

Well, that is all for now. I have to do a Quarterly Bulletin now as the Directives state that all Department Directors are required to do a quarterly bulletin. I am not sure what it will include each quarter but I will try to provide some good ideas, information or fun items for each quarter.

Here is hoping 2025 is another great Grange year for all and brings bounty to our Agriculture Neighbors and Friends!  
Until later....

**GOOD DAY MAGAZINE**

Are you interested in subscribing to the Good Day Magazine via US mail? Go to: [issuu.com/grangegoodday](http://issuu.com/grangegoodday) to sign up for an electronic subscription or [nationalgrange.org/goodday](http://nationalgrange.org/goodday) and subscribe or you can fill out the following form and mail it to The National Grange, 1616 H Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20006 along with a check for **\$16.00**.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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With this form, include a check made payable to National Grange for \$16 or simply include your phone number so we can call you to take a credit card payment by phone.

**FUNDRAISING**

**Any More Ideas??**

Kevin Young, Chairman 60822 Creek Road, Niles, MI 49120  
Tel: 269-684-3870 E-mail: Kevin60822@sbcglobal.net

Well, hello everyone. What a surprise I had at the State Session back in October 2024 when I tallied all the Grange Dollars that were saved and turned in to me there. What an amazing figure! We collected \$2,712 in Grange Dollars. It was a fun way to bring in a large amount of money to the MSG Treasury. Thank you, thank you, thank you to all that participated in this project. With such a great response, I have decided that we need to continue this project for 2025. So please keep collecting the Grange Dollars (G). Please remember that the Grange that turns in the most will receive a Framed Grange Dollar along with a \$50 gift card from Meijer. We will also be collecting "Pennies from Heaven", so bring your loose change as it doesn't have to be just pennies. It doesn't have to be rolled and ready to take to the bank as I can take it to my local Credit Union where they have a coin counting machine! So, bring as much or as little as you can!

An update on the 10"x10" squares Blanket Raffle. We showed off the beautiful blankets at the 2024 State Session. Once the next Host Region secures a place to host the 2025 Session, Connie Johnston will apply for the raffle license with the State of Michigan. We must know where our Session is being held as we have to tell the State where the drawing will be held. The 1st prize blanket is 8 squares across by 9 squares long, so this will be a very big blanket. The 2nd prize blanket is I believe 7 squares across by 8 squares long. And there is a 3rd prize which is a \$50 Shell gas card and a \$25 Lowe's card. As soon as Connie has received the license from the State, she will then start printing tickets. We will ask that all Granges and Grangers help sell these tickets through 2025. We want to sell lots of tickets so we can make a nice amount from these prizes. Everything so far has been DONATED including the cost of shipping the squares out to Washington State to be put together and to ship the finished blankets back to Michigan.

The Silent Auction did nicely at the State Session as that helped bring in \$680.50 to our Treasury.

I look forward to hearing from you if you have any suggestions for future fund raisers. We need to think of things we can reach outside of the Grange Membership circle to bring in other sources of funds.

Thank you so much to everyone that helped with the fundraising efforts in 2024. I look forward to what we can all accomplish in 2025 when we work together.

**MEMBERSHIP**

**Thank You!**

Tricia Eidsmoe 1451 Grey Road, Midland, MI 48640  
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I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I cannot believe 2025 is almost here.

Thank you to everyone for the thoughts and prayers on the unexpected passing of my mom, Helen Mudd. Our family greatly appreciates it.

**FOUNDATION**

**Next Meeting**

Naomi Fletcher, President 14685 25.75 Road, Rapid River, MI 49878  
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Welcome to a new year! And with the new year comes not only snow, but days getting longer and hopefully warmer.

Please mark your calendar for the next Foundation meeting Sunday-January 19 beginning at 3:00 pm. If you'd like to join the meeting as a visitor please let me know and we'll forward the Zoom link to you. We'll be discussing and hopefully finalizing a new scholarship program. Your input would be valuable in a final decision.

I'd like to welcome Asgeir Sigurdsson aka Oz as the newest member to the Foundation board. He brings financial planning knowledge to the board and will be a valuable asset.

Your continued support of the MSG Foundation is greatly appreciated-by memorials, gifts and endowments.

Thank You!

**MSG FOUNDATION,**

**Jackie Bishop, Sec/Treas.**

**479 Tuscany Drive**

**Portage, MI 49024**

Please accept my donation to help support the Mission of the Michigan State Grange Foundation.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**In Memory of:** \_\_\_\_\_ **In Memory**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Birthday**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Anniversary**

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