



MICHIGAN GRANGE NEWS



Volume XXXII NO.2

USPS 345-580

Grange Month — 2026

Grange Month – April 2026.

Annual celebrations for Grange Month, taking place in April, are set to honor the grassroots actions, service, education, advocacy, and agriculture awareness, actioned by the Grange.

We celebrate Grange Month in April in recognition of the anniversary of the organization of the first working Grange in the world, Fredonia #1 in New York. The theme that ties together all activities is

“Grange Strong: Rooted, Resilient, United”.

- **Theme:** The overall theme for 2026 is described as **"2026–2027: A Year of Growth. A Year of Action. A Year for All of Us,"** with a focus on celebrating America’s 250th birthday.
- **Significance:** April is celebrated annually as Grange Month to mark the anniversary of the organization of the first working Grange in the world (Fredonia #1 in New York). Let’s celebrate all Granges in the country!
- **Grange Spirit Week:** Planned for **April 13-19, 2026**, as indicated by preliminary 2026 planning materials. Plan to wear Grange clothing, jewelry, hats, etc during that week to let people know you are a member and **PROUD OF IT!**
- **Focus for 2026:** The organization is focusing on community service projects, particularly those related to the "Share Your Project's Story" form, which celebrates America's 250th birthday.

HOW WILL YOUR GRANGE CELEBRATE GRANGE MONTH?

**NEWS ARTICLES, WINDOW DISPLAYS, SPECIAL EVENTS,
GREAT TIME TO HONOR YOUR MEMBERS WITH MEMBERSHIP AWARDS**

**HONOR YOUR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER, TEACHER, FIREFIGHTER,
DEDICATED WORKER, COMMUNITY CITIZEN, V.I.P.**

<i>Page 2</i> <i>Spring Retain members</i>	<i>Page 3</i> <i>Grange Month & Other Events</i>	<i>Page 4</i> <i>Let's check our Hearing</i>	<i>Page 5</i> <i>Lecturer's Program & Contests Higher Education</i>	<i>Page 6 & 7</i> <i>CS judging Spring new beginnings..Pocket change</i>	<i>Page 8</i> <i>Day of Learning</i>
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Michigan Grange News

(USPS 345-580)

Periodical postage paid at Durand, MI

Michigan Grange News is published bi-monthly for the members of the Michigan State Grange.

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March 8	Daylight Savings Time
March 17	St. Patrick's Day
April 5	Easter
April 15th	Tax Day
April 25	Day of Learning (Spring Conference) Midland



Happy St. Patrick's Day



Whole page	\$150.00
1/2 page	\$90.00
1/4 page / business card	\$50.00
\$40.00	

The above rates include advertising space for two months.



Prices effective June, 1997. Payable in advance, check should be made to Michigan State Grange. Please include camera-ready copy. Copy to be received no later than the 15th of the month preceding date of insertion. Advertisements for alcohol or tobacco will not be accepted. Michigan State Grange reserves the right to refuse copy. Discounts available on multiple insertions.

6 issues per year, bi-monthly
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Chaplain

Spring!!

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Spring Is Just Around the Corner

To everything there is a season, and as winter's frost begins to thaw, spring arrives as a divine invitation to renewal, restoration, and growth.

Just as the earth awakens from its wintry slumber, our souls have "spring seasons" where God invites us to step forward into fresh beginnings. This transition teaches us several core spiritual truths.

Spring serves as a powerful metaphor for the resurrection, showing that God can bring life out of what appeared dead or dormant. While winter is often marked by silence, spring is marked by noise, the audible call of the Lord to get up and "get your hands dirty" in the work He is doing.

We cannot force the seasons to change. Only God changes the times and seasons. This shift reminds us to rest in His sovereign timing rather than our own. To embrace this spiritual spring, consider these intentional steps. Just as a gardener removes dead debris to allow sun to reach new growth, ask God what "dead leaves" of old habits or negative thought patterns need to be cleared away. Growth often happens underground first. If you don't see instant results, trust that God is working in the "subterranean" places of your life. Spring is an invitation to sow seeds of faith. Take time to be in communication with God through prayer to hear where He is calling you to plant next.

Prayer for the Season

Father, I thank You for Your faithfulness that remains steady even as seasons change. Thaw the places in my heart that have grown cold or dormant. Give me the courage to arise with the new life You are bringing and to trust Your timing for every bloom. Amen.

Song of Solomon 2:11-12: "For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come."

MEMBERSHIP

Retain

Tricia Eidsmoe 1451 Grey Road, Midland, MI 48640
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Welcome to spring! Or maybe not depending on which part of the state you live in.

This year's program is simple – retain the members you have on your roster. For Granges that do not drop any members during the membership year (July 1 through June 30), there will be a reward and recognition at state session.

I will also reward all the Granges that take in new members. I know it is not easy to get members. For the Granges that are able to do this, they will be rewarded and recognized at state session. The more members you take in, the better the reward.

There will be a Day of Learning (spring conference) on Saturday, April 25. It will be held at the Midland Township Hall 1030 S. Poseyville Road, Midland 48640. Make plans to attend.

Studley Grange will be the host. I plan to have information to share about membership and possibly a roundtable discussion for those that would like to share their practices. I hope many Granges attend this conference as all the directors are working hard to have information to present.

Please reach out if you have any questions about membership.

Christopher D. Johnston, Master 6241 Grand River Road, Bancroft, MI 48414
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Grange Month

Legislative Review Committee Once again we are approaching a month that we take time to celebrate this wonderful organization. April is Grange Month. Take this time to celebrate Grange as well as honor yourselves as Grangers. Invite the public to a meeting, present awards, have some fun with games, and don't forget what Grangers are known for, fantastic feasts!! You don't have to limit your awards to just the community service awards (police, firefighter, teacher, VIP, etc) but give out some special awards to your members and the folks in your community. Have someone that always shows up to help at every dinner? Show how much you appreciate them! And have some fun and present awards that will make them laugh, like the one that always dresses the most colorful. This is the month to really make the Grange shine and invite everyone to make a difference with us!

Day of Learning

Have you often wondered about the different departments within the Grange and what their programs are? Have questions about a certain project that you might be interested in participating in? April 25th is your chance to come enjoy some fun, fellowship and of course food while you hear from all the department directors about their programs! Get your questions answered and learn of any exciting changes from last year. Load up the vehicle and bring a crew! This all day event with a potluck lunch will be held from 9:00 - 4:00 pm at the Midland Township Hall, 1030 S. Poseyville Road, Midland. The committee has started meeting and is already making progress in reviewing the Michigan State Grange legislative policy to bring it current. They will be meeting monthly and will be bringing their report to State Session to be reviewed by the delegate body to make their changes final.

Roland and Beulah Winter Memorial Scholarship

I would like to remind members of the new scholarship through the Foundation honoring Roland and Beulah Winter. This is the first year of the scholarship for members attending a college, university, vo-

ational, technical or trade school, either full or part time. Applications are due June 1st and winners will be announced in July. The applications are available on the Foundation page of the website.

Help Wanted!!

I'm in search of a couple folks that would like to take the leadership role of a department. I need someone(s) interested in leading the future members of the Grange, Juniors/Youth/Young Adults. This department would be getting the younger members of the Grange involved and educated on the Grange while having lots of fun. Because of the age difference, having co-directors would be ideal.

I also need someone that is interested in the legislative side of the Grange. The Legislative Director promotes the policy of the Grange.

If either of these departments catch your eye, please reach out to me.

Michigan State Grange Webmaster

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Send any events or announcements for your Grange to Connie for the Website.



Peggy Johnston, Co Director

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Helpful Hints for Better Hearing

- ◆ Good light on the speaker
- ◆ Face-to-face interactions are best.
- ◆ Sit close to the speaker.
- ◆ Minimize background distractions—turn off TV or radio, move to a quieter area.
- ◆ Small groups are easier than large groups.
- ◆ Rooms with rugs, curtains, furniture are beneficial to better hearing.
- ◆ Restaurants with tablecloths are best.
- ◆ Use assistive listening devices in auditoriums, theaters, or other public places.
- ◆ Insist on use of microphones when in meetings.
- ◆ Sit in the front of the room when in Grange meetings, or other functions.
- ◆ To help hearing impaired persons understand, don't chew gum. Keep hands, pencils and other items away from face, and don't have a moustache.

Hearing Loss Quiz

1. T/F Most Deaf Children are born to hearing families.
2. T/F The percentage of accuracy for persons who lip-read is between 30% – 40%.
3. T/F Hearing aids make speech sounds clear and understandable.
4. T/F American Sign Language (ASL) is the universal language used by persons who are Deaf.
5. T/F Michigan law prohibits people who are deaf from driving.
6. T/F People who are Deaf read Braille.
7. T/F A person with partial hearing experiences fewer communication difficulties than a person who is deaf.
8. T/F The term "hearing impaired" implies that one is hard of hearing.
9. T/F A person with a profound hearing loss can still enjoy music.
10. T/F Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing have below average intelligence.

Do you Need a Hearing Test

If you are 18 to 64 years old, the following questions will help you determine if you need to have your hearing evaluated by a health professional. Answer YES or NO.

1. Does a hearing problem cause you to feel embarrassed when you meet new people?
 Yes No
2. Does a hearing problem cause you to feel frustrated when talking to members of your family?
 Yes No
3. Do you have difficulty hearing or understanding co-workers, clients, or customers?
 Yes No
4. Do you feel slowed down by a hearing problem?
 Yes No
5. Does a hearing problem cause you difficulty when visiting friends, relatives, or neighbors?
 Yes No
6. Does a hearing problem cause you difficulty in the movies or in the theater?
 Yes No
7. Does a hearing problem cause you to have arguments with family members?
 Yes No
8. Does a hearing problem cause you difficulty when listening to TV or radio?
 Yes No
9. Do you feel that any difficulty with your hearing limits or hampers your personal or social life?
 Yes No
10. Does a hearing problem cause you difficulty when in a restaurant with relatives or friends?
 Yes No

If you answered "yes" to three or more of these questions, you might want to see an audiologist for a hearing evaluation.

Naomi Fletcher, President 14685 25.75 Road, Rapid River, MI 49878
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As I write this, it is a balmy 18 degrees, with a windchill sitting at about 3. That means the wind-speed is approximately 15 miles per hour. So the snow is blowing like a banshee, drifting across roads causing hazardous driving conditions. We've been getting snow and ice on and off now since early November. Way too early for this region. If you've seen pictures of trees heavily laden with snow, that's what my front yard looks like. Cold, blowing, freezing snow. The good part about it is the snow mobilers are having a great time, boosting the local economy, which is a great thing. Hope your winter isn't as wicked as ours has been.

On to programming. The National Grange "Lecturer's Department is intentionally returning to its educational roots. While contests and awards have played a role in the department's history, the emphasis moving forward is on participation, engagement, and impact, rather than competition. Education may take many forms, such as guest speakers, workshops, demonstrations, discussions, hands-on activities, cultural programs, or collaborative learning experiences. All are equally valuable when they create opportunities for growth and understanding." (From the National Grange website). In my articles, I will encourage you all to adopt the programs the National Grange is providing, and encourage your Grange members to enter the MSG contests set forth in the Program Handbook.

My thinking is how best to recognize our efforts than exhibiting them at our Convention, much like we do in our local communities at county and state fairs. How best do we recognize excellence than through exhibition and competition? "May the best person win" probably shouldn't be the slogan, but possibly "May the best exhibit teach others." Sharing our knowledge and skills to others could be a form of competition. Doing our best to educate our community about who we are, what we do, and why we do "it", whatever "it" looks like.

With that, here are the National Grange's prompts to educate, include and promote not only Grange, but what the Grange supports. I hope you will share these with your membership throughout this next year.

March – Agricultural Literacy & Education Pro-

ject Sustenance Alignment: Education & Awareness • Telling agriculture's story as the foundation of food security • Ag Literacy Week activities tied to community education • Connecting agriculture to everyday life, nutrition, and sustainability • Helping the public understand where food comes from—and why it matters- Connection: Agricultural literacy builds informed communities capable of sustaining themselves.

April – Environment, Conservation & Stewardship Project Sustenance Alignment: Sustainability & Stewardship • National Grange Month activities highlighting stewardship • Soil health, water conservation, and sustainable farming practices • Pollinators, habitats, and long-term food production • Earth Day as a moment to connect conservation with food security -Connection: Sustainable environmental practices ensure long-term agricultural productivity and resilient communities.

FOUNDATION

Higher Education

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'tis the season when students seeking higher education are preparing applications for scholarships and grants. I'd like to encourage you to provide the new Roland and Beulah Winter Memorial Scholarship application to your high schools, vocational schools and community or state colleges and universities, as well as students in your Grange. You can find the application on the MSG website in the Foundation section. While we do not know how many or how much each scholarship will be yet, applications must be submitted no later than June 1 to the Secretary, Jackie Bishop. The award(s) will be based on the interest earned from one of the annuities held by the Foundation and will be determined at the July Foundation meeting. Scholarships are available to any student of any age seeking higher education in either a degree or vocational program, or wishing to continue their studies.

The Student Loan program is also available, with \$1,000 awarded to a student seeking higher education. The loan is interest free, and is to be repaid within one year following completion of a degree or certificate. A Grange sponsors the individual receiving the loan.

We'd like to thank those over this last year who have memorialized their family members with contributions to the Foundation. Your continued support assures the Foundation's programs are funded in a meaningful way.

Mary Ann Rocco, Director 145 Beadle Lake Drive, Battle Creek, MI 49014
 Tel: 269-209-6640 Email: roccomaryann@yahoo.com

Wishing everyone a Happy Saint Patrick Day! And a Blessed Easter.

Per delegate action at the 2025 National Grange convention, winning community service books will have a place to be displayed at the 2026 National Grange Convention in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.

ADOPTED: 605-MI – Community Service Notebook Judging

WHEREAS: for many years, Granges across the United States have put together Community Service notebooks or at least filled out a report form; and **WHEREAS:** this is a real encouragement for Granges to work hard at the Community Service projects they take on; and

WHEREAS: working hard on projects and spending many hours putting a notebook together in the hopes that they just might have a winning book and be recognized by the National Grange; and

WHEREAS: recognizing and honoring Granges and Grangers is a great way to keep these members encouraged and involved in the Grange; therefore be it **RESOLVED:** The National Grange honor state winning Community Service books by allowing them a place to be displayed at the National Grange Convention; and be it further

RESOLVED: that it be known, if said State Grange is going to send its book; it is at their full expense, and it is their full responsibility to display and remove their book at the end of the convention. Michigan Grange will judge our Community Service books the same way they have done in the past.

Our Granges are doing many exciting projects throughout their communities I would love to share something your Grange is or has done this year. Just let me know and I'll put it in the Michigan Grange News.

Lets take a look at what our Community Service reports should include,

The Notebook Reports:

- The summary report should be placed at the beginning of the Notebook. This form is required!
- Material should be organized. Suggested ways to submit the Notebook is to have the projects grouped together by the size of the project, chronologically or

have your Notebook read like a book. Easy to read and follow activities. This is your opportunity to tell the story of your Grange in a neat and concise manner.

- Please do not send more than one Notebook. Notebooks cannot be larger than a 2-inch binder! More isn't always better!
- Videotapes and computer discs cannot be used in place of a report for judging.

Projects:

- Describe the new and old project(s) that will answer the Who? What? Where? When? Why? And How?
- Why did you choose this project? Did it benefit the community? Did you overcome obstacles? Did you record what you would do differently?
- Would you recommend this type of project to other Granges?
- Include the details of the work. Were there special committees? Did it take cooperation of other groups? How many Grangers and non-Grangers were involved? What did you accomplish? Describe your successes.
- Include support materials used such as publicity, pictures, news articles & letters.
- Keep the report concise. Include only material that directly impacts the projects you are explaining.
- On the Project List pages: List the projects, the approximate number of hours spent on each project. List the number of Grangers and non-Grangers who assisted with the project. If more space is needed use additional pages.

Community Service Reports are due Sept. 10th, 2026.

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**

In Memory of: _____ **_____ Birthday**

_____ **Anniversary**

Address _____

City/State _____ **Zip** _____ **_____ Deceased**

Donations made by: _____ **_____ Other**

Thank you for your Support!

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

Spring is just around the corner!! It is February 23rd as I sit and write to you. Winter finally reminded us what winter used to be like when I was younger! We have had plenty of winter “moisture” this year. We had a nice warm up during the week of Feb 16th and all of the snow that we have had since December finally all melted. But, not to disappoint, we got about 14” in 2 days time! Now we are looking to finish February with temps in the 40s and 50s At least we received moisture to help replenish the ground prior to growing season.

I hope everyone that plants a garden, no matter the size, took the time to plan their garden plantings for this growing season. It won’t be long, and we will be out working up the soil in preparation to plant and reap the harvest through the growing year.

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.

I hope you also took time to look over all the class offerings not only in the Agriculture Department but all of the contests for every Department in the new Program Book that was in the last issue of the MGN. There are lots of activities for young and old in the Program Book. I did add one sub category in the Agriculture contests. My 1st quarter Bulletin talked about it and gave steps to take to “preserve” a pie pumpkin that you then use as a vase to put either fresh, dried or artificial flowers in. This could be a fun class to try out.

If you are able to buy local, please support your neighbors or the small businesses in your communities over shopping at the Big Box stores. The small businesses and your neighbors will be the first ones to be hurt by the lack of funding or cut programs.

Please remember that Spring is a time for new beginnings and growth. I hope you all can Grow your Grange! Watch out for farm machinery on the roads in April. Keep our farmers safe!!

Here is hoping 2026 is another great Grange year for all and brings bounty to our Agriculture Neighbors and Friends!
 Until later....

FUNDRAISING**Pocket Change**

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

Well, hello everyone. Just a few reminders of our upcoming or ongoing fund raising efforts for the Michigan State Grange. We are continuing to do the “G” Dollars again this year. It is a fun way to raise funds for the State Grange. Any amount helps, even \$2.00 “G” Bills!!!

Do you have pocket change that you don’t want to keep?? We will take any and all of your change! Our “Coins from Heaven” campaign will be collected at our State Session in October. If you have just a few coins on you when you are there, we will take them off your hands as it all adds up for the MSG!

Grow the Grange is our Theme for this year’s Raffle. We have been given a beautiful hand made Quilt by Naomi Fletcher which will be the 1st place prize. Peggy Johnston and Dale Moore have donated a 32” flat screen TV and also a crock pot. We are open to other items as well. I think if we had a few

more items, it would make selling tickets much easier. The drawing of the winners will be at the State Grange Session’s Annual Banquet. More to come on this project.

Thank you so much to everyone that helped with the fundraising efforts in 2025. I look forward to what we can all accomplish in 2026 when we work together. Every little extra we put in the bank account keeps us from needing funds transferred from the Invested Funds. Until next time....

Gardening made easy!

An old man living alone in South Armagh, whose only son was in Long Kesh Prison, didn't have anyone to dig his garden for his potatoes. So he wrote to his son about his predicament. The son sent the reply, "For HEAVENS SAKE, don't dig the garden up, that's where I buried the guns!!!!!"

At 3 AM the next morning, a dozen British soldiers turned up and dug the garden for 3 hours, but didn't find any guns.

Confused, the man wrote to his son telling him what had happened, asking him what he should do now? The son sent the reply: "NOW plant the potatoes!"



Michigan State Grange

DAY OF Learning

Want to know what each department
program is about? Come hear from
the Department Directors!

APRIL 25, 2026

9:00 am - 4:00pm

Potluck Lunch

Midland Township Hall

1030 S. Poseyville Road,
Midland, MI 48640

