



# KANSAS GRANGER

- Official Newsletter of the Kansas State Grange -



## NATIONAL GRANGE ANNOUNCES NEW LEADERSHIP/MEMBERSHIP AND YOUTH DIRECTORS

From National Master Betsy Huber...

In approving the 2019 budget, you allocation funds to hire a full-time membership director, so we welcome Joe Stefenoni back to the National Grange. He has lots of new ideas so be prepared to hear a lot from Membership in the upcoming year. As I said at convention, he will not be traveling constantly to the states, but will be identifying and training regional workers to assist you with membership programming.

I'm also excited to announce that the new National Youth Director will be Mandy Bostwick of Kansas. Mandy was the National Outstanding Young Patron in 2016 and has great plans for the youth department. Look for more information in the upcoming Good Day! issue that you should be receiving shortly after Christmas.

Congratulations to Joe and Mandy from the Kansas State Grange!!

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE KANSAS STATE GRANGE MASTER

Happy Holidays Grangers,

Hope this holiday season finds everyone happy and healthy. Another Grange year has come to a close and a bright new year is just beginning.

We suffered a great unexpected loss on the opening Monday of National Session. Brother Ed Komski, State Master of California passed away. He and his wife Cynthia were in Stowe when brother Komski suffered a heart attack. He did not recover following heart surgery. May we keep the Komski family in our thoughts and prayers at this difficult time during the holiday season.

One important issue that was passed by the delegates at National Session this year involves the safety of our younger members. At national or regional events starting in 2019 there is a new requirement: you must have a background check to participate as a volunteer or manager with Junior or Youth. The reminders of dangers to children are all over the nightly news, and most parents, grandparents and others working with children at schools, community sporting leagues and other organizations are used to hearing the common question “do you have your background clearance to work with kids” when they are volunteering. While for many years the National Grange has encouraged states and regional conference organizers to make sure all interacting with children and vulnerable adults have background checks on file, this year at the 152nd Annual National Grange Convention, Junior Director Samantha Wilkins unveiled a program that will allow the process to become more universal across the Grange world.



Our thoughts and prayers are with the Komski family.

Well done good and faithful servant.

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## A NEW YEAR FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

Grangers, we have been given a new Grange year in which to excel. Do the most with it and do what Grangers do best - spread community service all around! Repeat the tried and true projects from years past. Believe you can, then add new projects that you've been dreaming to do. Opportunities are endless. Enjoy!

Helpful tip: Print off the 2018-2019 Community Service Program (forms and guidelines) found on the [ks-grange.org](http://ks-grange.org) website. Each month, fill out the appropriate forms for projects done and by August, your report will be almost complete and easily ready to submit! The reports this past year were very well done. Following the format given in the guidelines made for easier review and judging. Remember to be thorough, fill out all blanks, include details/specific numbers. I know Grangers are not good about tooting their own horns, but please try to keep track of the number of hours donated while doing your projects. National Grange is especially interested in this information as a Grange talking point. As always, I look forward to hearing of your accomplishments and how you are making a difference in your communities.

Please note that my address has changed. Please contact me anytime with questions, suggestions, etc. Would love to hear from you! Best wishes!

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2018 was a great year for community service in Kansas. Congratulations to the following winners announced at State Convention in October.

**4th place:** Pleasant View Grange #1459, Jefferson County

**3rd place:** Richland Grange #1995, Linn County

**2nd place:** Morning Grange #227, Johnson County

**1st place:** Gardner Grange #68, Johnson County

**“You Make a Difference” Award** went to McClouth FAA Chapter and member Sydney Murr for planning, organizing and hosting a food packaging event where 25,728 meals were created for Kansas families in need.



## SUBORDINATE GRANGE HAPPENINGS

### • BAYNEVILLE GRANGE

It's peanut brittle time! Our members have been busy making peanut brittle and our community, family and friends have been buying! Proceeds will go to purchase dictionaries in the spring for the 3rd graders in five Augusta elementary schools.

### • PLEASANT VIEW GRANGE

For their Halloween party/meeting on October 26th, Pleasant View Grange subordinate members helped the Juniors hold a Junior Grange meeting and work towards a merit badge. Our Junior officers were: Master Sarah VanHouse, Overseer Bodie Ballenger, Lecturer Taegen Malsbury, Steward Bradley Ballenger, Asst. Steward Domanic Malsbury, Lady Asst. Steward Macayla Malsbury, Chaplain Kimber Newman, and Ceres Ellen Durand. For the program, the Junior members showed off their Halloween costumes to the adults and received a goodie bag.

Pleasant View members donated personal toiletry items that were taken to the National Grange convention as part of their service project, and also donated Project Linus blankets at the blanket day in Topeka on October 27th.

Pleasant View's Christmas Party was on December 7th, starting with a potluck soup and sandwich dinner. The big announcement of the evening was that Mandy Bostwick had been asked to serve as the National Grange Youth Director and accepted. She will be working closely with the Junior and membership director on her program, she said. Members did a sign painting craft, led by Master Molly Newman. It was fun for adults and kids alike. There were 21 in attendance. Santa Claus arrived and the kids got to have an audience with him as well as a photo opportunity. Gifts for our adopted Christmas children through God's Storehouse and the Meriden UMC were brought to the meeting. We adopted a boy and a girl this year and provided their Christmas gifts



## MOSAIC WOWED NATIONAL GRANGE ATTENDEES



The mosaic painted by Kansas Grange Youth/Young Adults traveled to Stowe, VT for the National Grange Convention. Attendees were encouraged to put the pieces together much like they were at State Convention. During breaks several people were found trying to solve the puzzle. Many people had positive comments about the uniqueness of the project. Philip Vonada, Pennsylvania, shared a photo on his facebook page and stated "I love this. The Grange is a patchwork of people, of ideas, and of backgrounds. None of us are the same, but we work toward creating common goals and making our communities better. We are strong because we are divers. We are able to accomplish so much because we have people who have such varied interests to make almost any idea work."

## FAMILY ACTIVITIES

The Family Activities contests had 90 entries this year, representing both adults and Junior members. Our best of show winners were Susan Mathia in the non-food categories and Donna Bates in the food categories. Our judge appreciated the variety of entries and the participation from the Junior members.

It's not too early to start work on projects to enter for next year, especially for sewing, quilting and woodworking. If you think we need to add a contest category, let us know.

Don't forget to remember shut-ins this holiday season, take a box of greeting cards to a nursing home for residents to send a note to loved ones. Work with your Grange members to make a Project Linus blanket. Together we make a difference.

Donna Bates, Family Activities chair



## MASTER'S MESSAGE CONTINUED...

The company that the National Grange has partnered with is Safe Gatherings, originally founded as the Methodist church's own system that has grown into a nationally recognized leader in background check systems. Safe Gatherings provides four levels of background checks: Local, State, National and Sex Offender. More details about the system along with a demonstration is available on the company's website, [safegatherings.com](http://safegatherings.com). Wilkins said she had used the system at her own church and was comfortable with the administration, ease and cost of Safe Gatherings, which provides professional reference checks and training for abuse prevention and ideas on how to appropriately work with minors who are at their most vulnerable time in life. "This program has a very low cost for our members to get clearances and a huge relief for our organization to ensure the safety of our children," Wilkins said. The program includes a two-year clearance for only \$36. "Safe Gatherings will make it easier for all of our states to get the background checks done that they need to for our Junior and Youth programs. It will eliminate many hurdles states had to go through," Wilkins said. Wilkins said she believes State leaders will appreciate that "the pressure on them to make sure these critical steps are taken appropriately in accordance to their state laws" is taken off. "Everything is handled from the National Grange office and your information is kept safe and secure through the Safe Gatherings Network. No personal information is held with the National Grange," Wilkins said. Delegates to the recent convention also strongly suggested as part of the policy statement of the Grange Growth committee, that states able to cover the cost to certify volunteers do so.

Leroy Watson, New Hampshire, was re-elected to the National Executive Committee; Susan Noah of Oregon was elected to a position on the Executive Committee and therefore resigned her position of National Pomona.

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## MASTER'S MESSAGE CONTINUED...

Kay Stiles of Maryland was elected Pomona to complete the one-year term vacated by Susan Noah.

All the information, reports, policies, resolutions, addresses will be available on the National Grange web site after the holidays. The new theme for the new Grange year is Super heroes - Super G Heroes. If you see me flying in with my new "super cape", you will know why.

Around the first of December National Master announced that the National Grange Youth and Young Adults Department will come under new leadership in January. Mandy Bostwick has been named as the replacement for Charlene Shupp Espenshade, who had held the post for 10 years. National Grange President Betsy Huber said the timing of the search for a new director coincided with things she had been learning about what young people are looking for when affiliating with organizations like the Grange. "After reading about the interests and characteristics of Generation Y regarding membership, I thought it made sense to look for a member of that generation to bring a fresh outlook to our Youth Department. Mandy's ability to think outside the box impressed me, and I'm thrilled that she's willing to undertake this responsibility," Huber said.

Congratulations Mandy on this new chapter in your Grange life.

Joe Stefenoni is excited to return as membership director. Joe says, "Choose a job you love and you'll never have to work a day in your life." Nothing could more accurately describe how it feels to return as Leadership/ Membership Director for the National Grange. After a brief interregnum (while completing a Master's Degree), the National Grange will officially have a Membership Director again beginning January 1st.

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## MASTER'S MESSAGE CONTINUED...

At State Grange I was asked, "What is the definition of a family farm?" National Grange Agriculture Policy under the Family Farm Policies and Farm Preservation Programs states:

3. The National Grange believes that a family farm is a business or enterprise involved in the production of food, fiber and related products or services that is owned and operated by the members of a family who make the management and financial decisions and supply at least part of the labor.

The USDA considers a "family farm" as any farm where the majority of the business is owned by the operator and his or her relatives. Nearly 98% of all the 2.2 million farms in the United States meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) definition of a "family farm."

I hope this answers some questions to help with future reference when addressing agriculture related issues.

I am looking forward to working with everyone in the upcoming year.

Have the merriest of holidays and the happiest new year.

Fraternally,  
Roger

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The Spring edition of the Kansas Granger will be printed in March. Please send submissions to the editor no later than March 1st.



## ABOUT THE GRANGE

The Grange was founded in 1867 and is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, fraternal organization that advocates for Rural America and Agriculture. With a strong history in grassroots activism, family values, and community service, the Grange is part of more than 2,100 hometowns across the United States.

The Grange was the first national organization to give full voice and vote to women, 50 years before Congress adopted the same. Our passionate style of grassroots vigor has ensured that the average citizen is fully represented in public policy dialogue for nearly 150 years.

Family and community are the foundations of the Grange. Family values are promoted, taught, and woven into Grange activities and events. We are proud to have generations come together to learn from one another and build a stronger America, one community at a time.