

The official publication of the NC Grange

January / February 2019

# GRANGE NEWS



APPLE WEDGE PACKERS | FARM OF THE YEAR

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

February 15-17	Winter Youth Conference   Camp Caraway
April 26-28	Family Conference   Greenville, NC
July 7-13	Grange Camp   Eastern 4-H Center
July 19-21	Eastern Regional Conference   TBD
September 12-15	State Convention   Durham, NC
November 5-9	National Convention   Minneapolis, MN

The Grange is a grassroots, community service, family organization with a special interest in agriculture and designed to help meet the needs of people, young and old, through a cooperative effort with government and other organizations that also seek the greatest good for the greatest number.

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## A NOTE FROM JIMMY:

# R E L A T I O N S H I P S

So much of what we do in the Grange depends upon relationships. In order to work well with those outside our organization we must have good relationships. For the staff of NC Grange, working with people is an everyday task. We have some great partnerships, coalitions and friends. Our advocacy work with the General Assembly and Congress is enhanced very much by building relationships with the members as well as their aides. The success of the State Grange is based to a large extent on our ability to get to know people, find common ground, and work with them.

The strength of any local Grange is totally dependent upon the ability of the members to get along with each other. This is true of any organization that depends upon volunteer membership. Nothing requires any member to remain a part of the organization. If they find an atmosphere in which members are not doing well together, they will leave. To get and keep new members, they must be brought into a pleasant atmosphere that is positive and encouraging. The good news is that the Grange is already known for this. The Grange is viewed as an organization working for the good of communities and advocating for rural needs. The organization is seen as a group that upholds moral values and provides a wholesome environment for all ages.

As Grangers work together, will there be differences? Yes. We all have ideas that are different combined with varied personalities and beliefs on what is best. The ability is within us to work through those differences and continue working together in fellowship. When I think of people having conflicts, it is easy for me to think back to the days when I was an elementary school Principal. Those kids were constantly re-teaching me about lessons for which I needed to be reminded as an adult. It was not unusual at all to see conflicts among those young students, but they had an amazing ability to work them out and continue as classmates.

Our ability to work well together is the key to strong Granges, both inside and outside the organization. There is a statement in the closing of Grange meetings that is said by the President which goes like this: "Let us be quiet, peaceful citizens, feeding the hungry, helping the fatherless and the widows, and keeping ourselves unspotted from the world." This is a powerful statement reminding us of our mission through the Grange organization and the great things that can be accomplished.

# EASY BLUEBERRY CAKE

PATTY SWING | ARCADIA GRANGE  
FIRST PLACE BERRY CAKE

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## BATTER

ONE CUP BLUEBERRIES, FRESH OR FROZEN  
ONE CUP SUGAR  
ONE CUP SELF RISING FLOUR  
HALF CUP SUGAR  
ONE AND A QUARTER STICKS OF BUTTER  
ONE CUP EVAPORATED MILK  
TWO EGGS  
SIX DROPS PURE ANISE EXTRACT FLAVORING

## GLAZE

QUARTER CUP BROWN SUGAR  
QUARTER STICK OF BUTTER  
QUARTER CUP OF WHOLE MILK

MIX HALF CUP SUGAR INTO BLUEBERRIES, STIR WELL AND SET  
ASIDE FOR ONE HOUR.

HEAT OVEN TO THREE-HUNDRED AND FIFTY DEGREES. MELT  
BUTTER IN YOUR BAKING DISH INSIDE OVEN, ONCE BUTTER HAS  
MELTED, REMOVE PAN FROM THE OVEN.

MIX MILK, FLOUR, EGGS, FLAVOR AND SUGAR WELL. POUR BATTER  
INTO YOUR DISH OVER THE MELTED BUTTER. MIX BLUEBERRIES  
AND DROP THEM EQUALLY OVER THE MIXTURE. BAKE ABOUT  
THIRTY MINUTES OR UNTIL THE TOP IS BROWN.

MIX TOGETHER A QUARTER CUP OF BROWN SUGAR, A QUARTER  
STICK OF BUTTER AND QUARTER CUP OF MILK. HEAT THE MIX-  
TURE AND POUR OVER CAKE.

# CAROLINA PEANUT BUTTER FUDGE

LIZ ENLOE | EDNEYVILLE GRANGE  
FIRST PLACE NUT CANDY

HALF CUP (1 STICK) UNSALTED BUTTER  
ONE-EIGHTH TEASPOON GROUND NUTMEG  
ONE POUND SOFT DARK BROWN SUGAR  
HALF CUP MILK  
ONE TABLESPOON VANILLA EXTRACT  
ONE CUP EXTRA CRUNCHY PEANUT BUTTER  
TWO AND ONE THIRD CUPS  
CONFECTIONER'S SUGAR  
HALF CUP HONEY ROASTED PEANUTS,  
CHOPPED  
HALF CUP DARK CHOCOLATE OR SEMI-  
SWEET CHOCOLATE CHIPS (OPTIONAL)  
MALDON SEA SALT FOR SPRINKLING  
(OPTIONAL, BUT RECOMMENDED)

OVER MEDIUM HEAT, MELT THE BUTTER  
IN A LARGE SAUCEPAN ALONG WITH THE  
GROUND NUTMEG. STIR IN THE BROWN  
SUGAR AND MILK, REMOVING ANY LUMPS,  
AND BRING TO A BOIL FOR 2-3 MINUTES  
WITHOUT STIRRING. REMOVE FROM THE  
HEAT, AND STIR IN THE VANILLA, THEN THE  
PEANUT BUTTER.

PUT THE POWDERED SUGAR IN A LARGE  
HEATPROOF MIXING BOWL. THEN, POUR  
THE HOT PEANUT BUTTER AND SUGAR  
MIXTURE ON TOP OF THE POWDERED  
SUGAR, AND BEAT UNTIL SMOOTH. STIR IN  
PEANUTS.

POUR INTO AN 8-INCH SQUARE BAKING  
PAN, COVER THE TOP WITH PARCHMENT,  
AND PRESS DOWN TO SMOOTH OUT THE  
TOP, SET ASIDE TO COOL SLIGHTLY (10  
MINUTES SHOULD DO), THEN PLACE IN  
THE FRIDGE TO COOL COMPLETELY.

TURN THE FUDGE OUT OF THE BAKING  
PAN ONTO THE PARCHMENT, CUT INTO 36  
SQUARES (OR SMALLER, IF PREFERRED).

MELT THE CHOCOLATE, AND ADD A THIN  
LAYER TO TOP OF EACH PIECE OF FUDGE.  
ALLOW THE CHOCOLATE TO SET, AND  
SPRINKLE EACH PIECE OF FUDGE WITH A  
FEW GRAINS OF FLAKY SEA SALT.

STORE IN AN AIRTIGHT CONTAINER.

# NC AGROMEDICINE INSTITUTE

by: Robin Tutor Marcorn, EdD, MPH  
NC Agromedicine Institute Director

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Agricultural Worker Protection Standard (WPS) is aimed at reducing the risk of pesticide poisoning and injury among agricultural workers and pesticide handlers. The WPS offers occupational protections to over 2 million agricultural workers (people involved in the production of agricultural plants) and pesticide handlers (people who mix, load, or apply crop pesticides) who work at agricultural establishments (farms, forests, nurseries and greenhouses). Pesticides are used in agricultural production across North Carolina to kill organisms and pests that damage or destroy crops.

On November 2, 2015, the US Environmental Protection Agency revised the Worker Protection Standard (WPS) to implement more protections for agricultural workers, handlers and their families. The WPS revisions are intended to decrease pesticide exposure incidents among agricultural workers, pesticide handlers and their families. All of the WPS revisions are now in effect. WPS training materials are available at the Pesticide Education Resources Collaborative (<https://pesticideresources.org>)

In addition to requiring an updated safety poster, suspending an application if

someone is in the application zone and other protections, the WPS requires that anyone handling a pesticide labelled for respiratory protection complete a medical clearance, fit test and training prior to using handling the pesticide. Fit test and training must be repeated on an annual basis with medical clearance being repeated under certain conditions.

Assistance with respiratory protection requirements is available to farms, nurseries and other agricultural establishments through the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute ('the Institute') thanks to support from the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission and the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services – Pesticide Environmental Trust Fund. Contact the Institute for more information at 252.744.1008.

## References:

US EPA – WPS <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-worker-safety/agricultural-worker-protection-standard-wps>  
Pesticide Resources Collaborative- <https://pesticideresources.org>  
NC Agromedicine Institute – Respiratory Protection <http://www.ncagromedicine.org/program-respiratory.php>





Hendersonville holds a dear place in my heart. My parents moved there right after they were married. My father had finished up his Masters in Plant Pathology at NCSU (State College at the time) and taken a job with the Extension Service there. I heard stories about Hendersonville my whole life and was understandably happy to make the trip from Raleigh to interview our Farm of the Year recipient, Apple Wedge Packers and Cider, a 200-acre orchard with approximately 75,000 apple trees located on the outskirts of Hendersonville in the community of Edneyville. Apple Wedge produces 12 different varieties of apples.

Apple Wedge is owned by Greg and Lisa Nix and although a 5th generation farmer, the land that they farmed was originally owned by Greg's grandparents which he later purchased from his mother. Apple Wedge is now ranked as the largest apple packer and distributor in the Blue Ridge Mountains, and the highest volume shipper in North Carolina. In addition to their apple crop, Apple Wedge produces 100,000 gallons seasonally of pasteurized apple cider. They also provide packing and storage facilities for around

15 other apple growers in the area marketing approximately 200,000 bushels annually. Apple Wedge, as I discovered, is on the cutting edge of technology. The Nixes understand that consistency and diversification is critical to profitability. They also know and understand that their commitment to their loyal employees and their customers is absolutely critical to their success.

During the harvest season, which usually falls between the end of July and the end of November, Apple Wedge manages approximately 40 employees inside and 25 to 30 outside. My visit was right in the middle of the harvest which proved to be a great time to actually see Apple Wedge in full production.

Greg, as owner of Apple Wedge, is involved in every aspect of the operation in the orchards as well as the packing facilities. He is integrally involved in the planning and management of the fields and the packing line. He is also involved with other growers in the community, and understands how vital it is to maintain a strong relationship with them. He holds a board seat on the NC Apple

MORE

## THAN AN APPLE A DAY AT APPLE WEDGE

STORY : LAURIE BARNHART

PHOTOS : JESSICA HORTON



Growers Association and the Premier Apple Cooperative. Greg has been the recipient of NC Apple Grower of the Year and American Fruit Grower of the Year.

Lisa is also heavily involved at Apple Wedge. She has not only pioneered the food safety program there, but has brought other Henderson County growers up to date with food safety and “Good Agricultural Practices” (GAP). She is involved with the NC Apple Growers Association and participates in the annual cooperative Grading Standards Board. Like Greg, Lisa is involved with maintaining relations with other growers in the Henderson County area. She is one of those amazing women that somehow is able to maintain a perfect balance with her work, her family and her business. The Nix’s daughter, Christen, did tell me however, when I interviewed her that her Mother is working towards having a little more recreational time which I am sure she certainly deserves. Although I met Greg briefly, my interview was with Christen who along with her sister Bryson work for Apple Wedge. Christen, who

attended Meredith College, recognized my class ring right away which immediately put us on common ground. This, along with that and the fact that I too had grown up on a produce farm, gave us a lot to talk about. Her story was fascinating, and I will admit quite enviable. Christen’s major role at Apple Wedge is in sales which includes grocery store chains, farmer’s market distributors and produce distributors who supply schools, the military and prisons. Although Christen started out seeking a teaching career, her heart was always on the farm where she grew up and had worked since she was 10 years old. In 2012 she returned to Apple Wedge and took on a sales role. As a child, her first jobs on the farm were pulling water sprouts from the orchard and painting trees to deter rats. Later she took on a role known as “scouting” which required her to observe the incoming fruit of other growers in the area. Both Christen and her sister Bryson hardly remember a time when they did not ride on the tractor with their father. They loved every minute!



Bryson, who is two years younger than Christen, also worked on the farm at a young age and is now the orchard manager at Apple Wedge. This role requires her to be involved in every aspect of the apple growing process from chemical planning in the spring to managing the orchard crews to make sure that each apple variety is harvested at just the right time to ensure the best quality possible to their customers.

The Nix family has done amazing things to make sure Apple Wedge prospers in a time when technology moves so quickly that it is easy to be left behind. Apple Wedge uses good environmental practices as well. They apply filter cloth to help with erosion under orchard roads and in the rows during orchard set up. They also house their chemicals in an approved spray house which includes proper storage and an approved spray-fill system and draining system in the floor for proper water disposal. The farm practices Integrated Pest Management for the economic control of pests. This system of pest management is to keep the level of pest low enough to prevent damage to yield levels. In addition, Apple Wedge installed an environmental room which the apples travel through after they have been waxed and before they are sorted. After they leave the 90 degree temperature environmental room where the humidity is kept to a minimum, they emerge with much less moisture. In addition, the room provides

a more comfortable working environment for employees and consumes less energy due to the stable climate.

The most amazing piece of equipment that I saw was a Durand Wayland defect sorter that the Nixes had installed at Apple Wedge in 2016. It sorts apples based on the criteria of each grade. The camera separates the apple into ten pie pieces and takes twenty pictures per second, and afterwards places the pieces back together to get an overall photo of the apple to see how it should be packed. This is an incredible six second process.

Hand thinning is a process that Apple Wedge uses to produce apples that are optimal in size for packing. The apple orchards are separated into blocks. Three trees are selected from each block and the apples on these particular trees are counted. Once they are counted a selection of apples on the tree are sized. These figures are entered on a spreadsheet that determines which apples to pick from the tree to achieve the outcome desired. This was a technique that Bryson and Greg have tailored to their needs at Apple Wedge. They have been very pleased with the success.

Unless you know a thing or two about agriculture, you probably have no idea what an apple has to go through from the time it is picked until it arrives at the grocery store. After they are picked, the apples at Apple Wedge are stored in a bin in one of the five cold storage units until they are ready to be packed. When the apples start the packing process they are dumped in a water tank with a food grade cleaning agent. The apples are then floated to a roller incline, brushed clean and then a food grade wax is applied for shine. The apple then goes through the “environmental room” where excess moisture is removed. The apples are graded by the human eye for major defects and then dropped into a cup conveyor. After that process, the apples go through the defect sorter and then are sent to its proper packing drop based on its size, color and grade. The apples are packed in either a tray, bag or bulk box, stacked on a pallet and placed in cold storage until ready to be sent to the retailer.

Apples that are not graded high enough to be sold are taken to the cider house for cold storage until they can be pressed into apple cider. The apples are dumped into a stainless steel hopper where they travel down a conveyer belt, sprayed with water and sent to the press room. The apples are graded by the human eye and any defects are cut out. The apples are then placed on a belt press where they are squeezed by rice hull to get the most juice from the apple possible. The juice then is filtered into a holding tank where it is flash pasteurized. The cider is bottled and



capped after the pasteurization process in the bottling room, labeled and boxed. It is then held in cold storage until ready to ship.

Like most farming businesses, Apple Wedge has its challenges. Although indeterminate weather is not as much of a risk with apples, there is the unpredictable and occasional freeze in the spring and hail storm in the summer. Christen also told me about Glomerella leaf spot and fruit rot which is a devastating fungal disease that results in premature defoliation and diminished fruit quality. Apple Wedge has seen some evidence of this disease rearing its ugly head recently. This leaf spot so far has only been seen on cultivars with Golden Delicious parentage. Christen told me the biggest challenge they had at Apple Wedge was separating their work from their personal life. This was not news to me. I think every family-owned farm has these same issues. Christen did tell me that for her, there was no better job and no job more stressful. I do not think she would have it any other way! It was gratifying to see that two young women can work for the farm they grew up on and have satisfying and successful careers doing what they love most.



# CAPITOL NEWS *by: Laurie Barnhart*

The NC General Assembly gavelled in the 2019 Long Session on January 9th. It was a typical first day with the Senate and House members swearing in ceremony and nominations of the Senate and House leadership. Below are the leadership positions for the new term.

## Senate Leadership:

- President Pro Tem: Sen. Phil Berger R-Surry
- Deputy President Pro Tem: Sen. Ralph Hise R-Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Yancey
- Senate Majority Leader: Sen. Harry Brown R-Jones, Onslow
- Majority Whip: Sen. Rick Gunn R-Alamance, Guilford
- Majority Whip: Sen. Jerry Tillman R-Guilford, Randolph
- Republican Caucus Leader: Sen. Norman Sanderson R-Carteret, Craven, Pamlico
- Democratic Leader: Sen. Dan Blue D-Wake
- Democratic Whip: Sen. Jay Chaudhuri D-Wake
- Democratic Caucus Secretary: Sen. Ben Clark D-Cumberland, Hoke

## House Leadership:

- Speaker: Rep. Tim Moore R-Cleveland
- Speaker Pro Tem: Rep. Sarah Stevens R- Alleghany, Surry, Wilkes
- Majority Leader: Rep. John Bell R- Green, Johnston, Wayne
- Deputy Majority Leader: Rep. Brenden Jones R-Columbus, Robeson
- Majority Whip: Rep. Jon Hardister R-Guilford
- Democratic Leader: Rep. Darren Jackson D-Wake
- Deputy Democratic Leader: Rep. Robert Reives D-Chatham, Durham
- Democratic Whip: Cynthia Ball D-Wake
- Democratic Whip: Deb Butler D-Brunswick, New Hanover
- Democratic Whip: Carla Cunningham D-Mecklenburg
- Democratic Whip: Garland Pierce D-Hoke, Scotland
- Democratic Whip: Amos Quick D-Guilford

## Committee Appointments

To date, the House has not released all of the names of their committee chairs. This information will be released closer to when members return on January 30th. The committees that have appointments are as follows:

House Appropriations: Jason Saine, R-Lincoln; Linda Johnson, R-Cabarrus, Donny Lambeth, R-Forsyth; Dean Arp, R-Union; Rep. Josh Dobson, R-Avery; Rep. Chuck McGrady, R-Buncombe; Rep. John Faircloth, R-Guilford; Rep. William Brisson, R-Bladen

House Finance: Julia Howard, R-David; Mitchell Setzer, R-Catawba; John Szoka, R-Cumberland

House Rules: David Lewis, R-Harnett

There is not a lot of news at the state level at this time; however, I am sure that will change rapidly when the General Assembly members come back to Raleigh on January 30th to begin work. There are some pretty interesting statistics about our new membership that I would like to share with you. For the 2019 long session, we have 44 women serving in the General Assembly which makes up 26% of the membership. There are 36 African-Americans serving; 26 in the House and 10 in the Senate. We also have one Native American and two Indian-Americans serving. This is an increase in diversity for North Carolina.

Our General Assembly also has 32 members with military experience. Twenty-five percent of the Senate is made up of newcomers and 20% of the House are newcomers. As one can imagine, there will be many new names and faces to learn for all of us. It is also a great opportunity to help acclimate these newcomers to an often very daunting and challenging atmosphere. Please visit the new General Assembly website at [www.ncleg.net](http://www.ncleg.net) for detailed information that will be coming on introduced bills, committees and schedules.

## From the Hill

I am quite sure that nobody wanted to ring in the new year with a Federal Government shutdown, which is now the longest shutdown in US history. Many government offices have been affected and one is the US Department of Agriculture. Because the FSA (Farm Service Agency) offices have been closed, many farmers that rely on farming programs have been unable to get assistance that they were expecting. Unfortunately, the past two years were tough on

farmers and the shutdown has made it even worse. Disaster relief payments from the USDA have been in a holding pattern because of the shutdown. Many farmers that lost their crops or a large portion of their crops in Hurricane Florence in 2018 and Michael in 2017 are in a perilous situation. The federal payments that were going to farmers as a result of the trade disputes with China have also been on hold due to the shutdown. We are all so hopeful that this can all come to an end quickly. Time is truly of the essence, especially in agriculture.

On a positive note, the new farm bill finally passed in December with a large margin of bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate. Below is a synopsis of what is in the new bill from our National Legislative Director, Burton Eller.

#### Trade

- USDA's four trade promotion programs were funded at \$251.5 million per year.

#### Commodity Programs

- Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage are similar to the 2014 farm bill with several enhancements on reference prices and yield data.
- Loan rates are increased substantially
- The new Dairy Margin Coverage Program builds on the recent Margin Protection Program passed in February by reducing premiums on the first 5 million pounds of production (about 240 cows) and raises the top margin coverage from \$8 per hundredweight to \$9.50.
- Does not set payment limits on eligibility for commodity program payments

#### Conservation

- The Environmental Quality Incentives Program has increased funding; the Conservation Stewardship Program has reduced funding but is preserved as a standalone program.
- Conservation Reserve Program enrollment is increased from 24 million acres to 27 million acres.
- The Regional Conservation Partnership Program is now a standalone with its own rules separate from other conservation programs from which it was previously funded.

#### Nutrition

- Additional work requirements and tightened eligibility requirements were omitted from the final Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provision; governors will be required to approve state agency applications to USDA for waivers from the existing work requirements.
- The Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Program is given permanent funding and is renamed the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program for the former USDA Undersecretary and Grange member from Massachusetts.

#### Credit

- Farm loan limits on operating and ownership loans are increased (\$1.75 million on guaranteed operating and ownership loans; \$600,000 on direct ownership loans; direct operating loans are raised to \$400,000).

#### Rural Development

- Provides permanent authority and rules for the \$600 million rural broadband grant and loan program created by the fiscal 2018 spending bill.
- Prioritizes funding for projects to combat opioid addiction and authorizes a 33 percent increase in grants under the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program.

#### Research

- Funding is increased for the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research, the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative and the Specialty Crop Research Initiative.

#### Forestry

- Renews the categorical exclusion that allows diseased and insect infested trees to be removed from government forests.

#### Energy

- Renews the authorization but reduces the funding for bioenergy programs

#### Horticulture

- Legalizes the production of industrial hemp
- Creates a new Local Agriculture Market Program
- Creates a new Urban, Indoor and Other Emerging Agricultural Production Research, Education and Extension Initiative
- Maintains funding for Specialty Crop Block Grants
- Authorizes USDA to require additional documentation for shipments from abroad under the National Organic Program

#### Crop Insurance

- Hemp is made eligible for crop insurance
- Discounts for beginning farmers and ranchers are extended to 10 years from the current 5 years under Whole Farm Revenue Protection
- New policies will be researched by USDA to cover crops affected by hurricanes and tropical storms

#### Miscellaneous

- Creates and funds a new Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program that includes a new Foot and Mouth Disease vaccine bank
- Creates a new Farming Opportunities Training and Outreach Program
- Requires the President to nominate an undersecretary for rural development

# GOTCHA COVERED

## TIMES ARE CHANGING

*by: Mark Davis*

Everyone knows the definition of insanity – “doing the same old thing and expecting different results.” That was the normal way of doing business for our healthcare providers and health insurance companies. Many times both of these sectors had been the model for insanity by incorporating very little change and expecting different results. However, since the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), we have not seen any reduction in healthcare cost or the premium reductions as promised by our government leaders. In fact, we see higher medical utilization cost with band-aid type fixes for many chronic medical issues verses a life changing, long term medical solution. We are also seeing higher health insurance premiums. We still have a significant amount of individuals without insurance coverage. These are individuals that previously had health insurance coverage from their small group employer or were on an individual basis, but since they are ineligible for premium subsidies they are simply priced out of the health insurance market and now uninsured. This has effectively shifted the group of uninsured individuals from the lower income bracket to those of the working upper middle-income brackets.

Thankfully, BlueCross BlueShield of NC has taken an innovative approach for 2019. These include the introductions of MyChoice insurance products for individuals as well as small group employers, and the more recently announced Blue Premier provider contracts.

Individuals insured under the MyChoice products are heavily engaged in the cost of their care. The insured is ultimately responsible for filing their claim. Payments will be made to the insured for the actual cost of service up to a maximum of 140% of the Medicare-approved charge. This actively engages the insured in all aspects of their care, insuring that they get the best service and care for their dollars. The MyChoice plan is also Health Savings Account (HSA) eligible, so the insured can put aside funds into an HSA account and receive a tax credit for those funds up to the maximum IRS limit. The MyChoice plan typically runs about 25% to 30% lower than a comparable ACA plan. MyChoice is limited to certain areas within our state. MyChoice is ideal for those who are not eligible for ACA plans premium subsidies and willing to be totally engaged in their health care and cost thereof. While we did not see the participation in the program as I hoped for this past open enrollment, I do believe we will see additional movement toward this type of product in the future as we educate both consumers and providers of the products’ benefits.

The Blue Premier provider multi-year contract announcement is just off the press. For 2019, there are five different health systems

signed on. Those are Cone Health, Duke University Health System, UNC Health Care, Wake Forest Baptist Health, and WakeMed Health & Hospitals.

This is a new program designed on a value-based model of patient care. Under this model, both the provider

and BCBSNC are jointly responsible for better health outcomes, exceptional patient experience as well as lower cost. This is moving from a “risk based” model to the “value-based” concept which considers not only the cost associated with the care, but now includes the quality and ultimate outcome of that care. Both the provider and BCBSNC will “share” in the financial risk of that care.

These five systems represent 25% of total medical expenses. By the end of 2020, BCBSNC expects 50% of the medical expenses will be payable under Blue Premier contracts and the remainder of providers under this type of contract within five years.

How does that relate to us as the insured? The goal is for better collaboration between the health system, doctor, and BCBSNC, which helps the doctor to more actively manage a patient’s health conditions, ultimately leading to fewer hospital visits and proactively managing that patient’s condition/illness. Ultimately, the patients will have more access and time to communicate with their doctor. This is a major turning point from “sick care” to “wellness care” and that will reduce overall health cost and ultimately premiums will stabilize and possibly even decrease.

The Blue Premier program closely ties outcome and cost to two of the three players in health care, specifically the provider and the health insurance company. The third player, the insured, is a significant factor to the success of this program as well. As alluded to earlier with the “band-aid” fix, in many cases if a lifestyle change does not occur, we have just kicked the healthcare issue down the road only to have to deal with it again, usually in a short period of time. It will be interesting to see what carrot on a stick is utilized by the provider and/or the insurance company to entice the insured to join them in moving to the “wellness care” model that encourages insured lifestyle changes.



**BlueCross  
BlueShield**

## Prom Joyce

by: Joyce Chadfeller, Family Living and Community Service Director

As I write this, I am looking out through my upstairs window at the ice hanging on the trees around our house. It's beautiful, but it can be dangerous! I'm so thankful that the ice isn't too bad and that everyone is safe. As the occasional bad weather keeps us indoors, I hope that all you crafters are able to use these winter months to make items for our Crafts Contest!

I also hope you saw my article in the last magazine concerning the changes made to the annual Baking Contest. I only received one response about the changes which was very positive. I did receive one concern regarding custard pies. We have entered sweet potato pies for many years without any problems. Just do what you feel is best. We can always make changes before next year if we find this category needs to be revised. On these cold days of winter, try a new recipe then save it and make it for the baking contest. It just might be a winner, which will make the convention's tasting party even more interesting this year. Don't let September

sneak up on you when planning your entries!

Our Community Service project this year will be to benefit the clients of the Durham Rescue Mission, a homeless shelter and addiction recovery program. The Mission was established approximately 45 years ago. It is composed of two Residential Facilities, one for men and the other for women and children. They serve approximately 330 men, 90 women and 25 children at this time. They also have three thrift stores. Clothes that are not given to residents are taken to these stores and sold. Approximately 45% of their income comes from these stores.

The Durham Rescue Mission's needs are many, but the most pressing need is for socks and undergarments. Also, due to the larger amount of men served, larger sizes are needed most. Therefore, for 2019, we are asking all Grange members and local Granges to collect these undergarments for this year's service project. These items should be easy to

collect over the coming months. With our State Convention being in Durham in September, this will be a great way to serve the city and surrounding area. We often take these items for granted, but to the mission's residents, they are a blessing. We have an opportunity to help a lot of men, women and children, so I truly hope you will take this project and run with it!

I will try to have more information at Family Conference for you to take back to your local Granges and communities. I look forward to seeing you soon and to seeing what we can do as a group to help those less fortunate than us. Let us be a loving and caring group and show our support for this most worthy project. May each of you have a blessed year, and I look forward to seeing all your new entries at convention this September!

**DURHAM  
RESCUE  
MISSION**

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## SCHLEY GRANGE CHAMPIONS BROADBAND FOR ORANGE COUNTY

by: Laurie Barnhart

Schley Grange has done an absolutely amazing job in bringing Open Broadband and Orange County together to bring high speed broadband to their rural community. At their Grange meeting last month, it was standing room only when Schley hosted Open Broadband (openbb.net), a NC-based company that specializes in wireless broadband serving rural areas around the state. It is so exciting for Schley Grange, who has been working with the county and others on this for several years, to see this long fought battle coming to fruition. Orange County will soon become the first

county in North Carolina with high speed broadband for nearly everyone.

Grange members Bonnie Hauser, legislative director for Schley Grange, and Tony Blake have been instrumental in this effort. Bonnie has worked tirelessly to bring this much needed technology to rural Orange County. The NC State Grange would like to thank Rep. Graig Meyer from Orange County for all of his support as well as Schley Grange President Kat Cheek and the Orange County Commissioners.

Please stay tuned for more information on this effort. This is what the Grange is all about—bringing communities together for the betterment of its citizens. It has been a true grass roots effort.



# CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

*bless and be blessed*

by: Jerry Snyder, NC Grange Chaplain

We are facing a new year and many people make resolutions for the new year. It seems kind of the thing to do. But really, how long do the resolutions last?

I would like to propose a resolution for us to consider as Grangers. The resolution I am proposing is "bless and be blessed." The dictionary finds "bless" as "to honor and exalt; to invoke God's favor on a person; to bestow happiness or prosperity on someone."

As we treat people with love and kindness and concern for their welfare, we receive a blessing in return. When we make it a point to listen to them and understand their needs and desires, we receive a blessing. When we show love to people that are different from us, we are doing what Jesus told us to do and that is to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Love is not a feeling; love is a decision. So we can decide to love the unlovely, or those who disagree with us.

I am astounded by the nurse who treated the man responsible for killing the eleven Jewish people in the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh on October 27 of 2018.

The nurse was Ari Mahler who wrote in a FaceBook page about the suspect Robert Bower. "I didn't say a word to him about my religion," Maler said in the post. "I chose not to say anything to him the entire time. I wanted him to feel compassion. I chose to show him empathy. I felt the best way to honor his victims was for a Jew to prove him wrong."

Mahler, who said that his father was a rabbi, and that he experienced anti-Semitism a lot as a kid said he acted out of love.

"Love. That's why I did it," he said. "Love as an action is more powerful than words. And love in the face of evil gives others hope. It demonstrates humanity. It reaffirms why we're all here."

Jesus, a Jew, whom we call Christ, the Son of God, came to show us love, forgiveness and peace. Ari Mahler, a Jewish nurse, chose to act with love to a killer of his people. May we choose to do the same by being a blessing to others in 2019.

Peace and shalom.

## CORRECTION

In the November/December 2018 issue of Grange News, Christy Clark (D-Mecklenburg) was inadvertently listed as defeating both John Bradford (R-Mecklenburg) and Bill Brawley (R-Mecklenburg). Rachel Hunt defeated Bill Brawley after a recount. She is the daughter of the former Governor, Jim Hunt.

The Courier Times, Person County's local, newspaper sponsors the "Miracle in Giving" each year.

All donations go to the Christian Help Center in Roxboro, North Carolina. Bushy Fork Grange #1073 collected canned goods and non-perishable items at the Annual Christmas Dinner to donate to the "Miracle in Giving".



## In Memoriam

Ms. Lena Joyner  
Mr. Gerald Cameron  
Mr. Ned Johnson  
Ms. Mary Casteen

Grantham Grange  
Beaufort Co. Grange  
Schley Grange  
Associate Member

*You light a lamp for me. The Lord, my God, lights up my darkness.*

Psalm 138:28  
\* 50 Year Member

# A TRUE TEAM

by: Jennie Gentry, NC Grange Youth Director



This past year has been an incredible year for our Youth Program. Grange youth continue to have wonderful opportunities to grow all while developing amazing friendships across the state. But there is one group of young people that must be recognized for their hard work this year, our 2018 State Youth Leadership Team. Our events and activities would not be nearly as fun and successful if it weren't for this great team.

Our team is made up of eight youth: Nick Jones and Lucas Carter (both of Southern Wake Grange); Tyler Leonard (Arcadia Grange); Amber Long (Bushy Fork Grange); Lillie Griffin and Margie Griffin (both of Troutman Grange); and our two Ambassadors, Rylee Furr (St. John's Grange) and Zac Mazag (Troutman Grange). They are the voice of the program, helping to develop and lead activities that youth enjoy at every state event we hold.

With a busy schedule that took them from Asheville to Columbia, NC, the team worked very hard for the Grange this past year. They took promotional pictures with words they picked to describe the Grange which was used for a social media campaign. They worked a Grange booth for two days in an expo at the

State FFA Convention, talking to students about the Grange and encouraging them to join and attend youth events such as camp. They also planned and led an entire week of Grange Camp with the most extravagant theme that we have seen yet, "Come as You Are" based on the movie *The Greatest Showman*. Yes, they even opened Grange Camp with a video and live dance routine dressed up as Ringleaders!

While serving on the team is an incredible leadership opportunity that pushes each person to grow, team members bring different personalities and talents together uniting them into a special crew. The beauty is that they use their gifts together to inspire other youth, to help them grow, and to help other youth learn to become leaders. They lift others up, encourage them to try new things, and never let a youth sit alone, making sure everyone has a friend.

They started their year as individuals with tears of joy as they found out they were selected for the team. They are ending their year together as a special unit, a true team that has brought compassion, dedication, enthusiasm, laughter and excitement to our wonderful program; and we thank them for helping make this a magical year for our youth.



## did you know?

Hello! We are Al and Vinni Kirmss and have been members of Capitol Grange in Raleigh for the last 2 years. We transferred from Albany County in New York, where we were members of Ravena Grange No. 1457 and Albany County Pomona Grange for about 30 years. At the community and county levels we have held several offices. At the State level we were Deputies for 5 years and State Membership/Leadership Directors for about 15 years. During our Grange years, we have learned many facts and tidbits of information about the Grange. We thought other Grangers may be interested in these, too. In this article and the following ones, we want to share some of these with you. Thus, the title "Did You Know?"

After the Civil War, the farmers were looked down upon as a part of society. For the most part, they were uneducated or had very little education. They lived outside the main stream of the community and had little or no contact with others. Therefore, they were easily taken advantage of. There were no agriculture organizations to help farmers to improve their situation.

The Founders of the Grange (Oliver Hudson Kelley, William M. Ireland, William Saunders, John R. Thompson, Aaron B. Grosh, Francis Marion McDowell, John Trimble and Caroline A. Hall) wanted to stop this situation and help improve the life of the farmer. They visualized a farm organization where farmers could learn to help each other and improve their plight.

President Andrew Jonson wanted to know the plight of the post-Civil War farmer, so he asked Oliver Hudson Kelley, who was employed in the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, to study the farms in the South. Kelley came back and worked with the other founders on how to put their vision into practice. They spent the next several years developing the great organization of the Patrons of Husbandry, commonly known today as the Grange. The National Grange was founded in December, 1867.

If you have any comments about this article or any facts or tidbits you would like to know about, please let us know by contacting the North Carolina Grange headquarters.



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