

The official publication of the NC Grange

July / August 2020

GRANGE NEWS

CANCELLED CAMP LEADS TO VIRTUAL MEMORIES



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UPCOMING EVENTS

September 11	Virtual Awards Ceremony
September 12	Virtual State Convention
November 17-21	National Convention King of Prussia, PA (delegates only)

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: GRANGE HISTORY

Recently, Jennie Gentry began a project organizing our NC Grange historical documents which are in boxes located in a storage unit. Occasionally we get requests for information about closed local Granges, but it has been difficult and time consuming to go through the materials and lift out items that may be associated with a given Grange. For example, not long ago we received an information request for Etowah Grange which existed in Henderson County. An effort is underway to develop a display in their community library that will highlight Etowah Grange. So, we sent them information that we could locate.

Jennie has been working on this project, and she would sometimes ask me to look at documents. It really

was interesting to see notable people as well as important achievements of the NC State Grange. Furthermore, the activities conducted many years ago by local Granges were quite significant. The Grange has a rich history with very important accomplishments recorded throughout the years. It is a history for which we can be proud.

Even though we have many great Grange accomplishments from our past, what about the future? Our past is important, but our future is even more critical. Fifty years from now, what will the historical writers say about the Grange? I hope they have some great things to write about!

Please remember our office is still currently closed and no one is there to accept phone calls. Please email staff when you have questions.



NC GRANGE MEMBER JAMES LAMB *by: Laurie Barnhart*

2020 SUNBELT EXPO NORTH CAROLINA FARMER OF THE YEAR

The NC Grange is mighty proud to announce that Taylor's Bridge Grange member James Lamb has been named the 2020 Sunbelt Ag Expo North Carolina Farmer of the Year. Our Grange staff participated in the 2019 Sunbelt Expo as one of the sponsors of the "spotlight" state. We saw firsthand that this expo is a very big deal. For Lamb to receive this award is quite an honor. Following is the story from the Sunbelt Ag Expo.

As a boy growing up in Sampson County, North Carolina, James L. "Cookie" Lamb was curious about everything pertaining to farm life. He yearned to drive a tractor or a truck, take care of animals, and understand how farm tools and equipment worked. It was the beginning of a lifelong devotion to the land—land to which his grandfather and father dedicated their lives. The Lamb family's cash crop on their seventy-five acres had traditionally been tobacco, but they also grew cucumbers, okra, corn, and soybeans and raised hogs and a small herd of cattle. Lamb remembered, "My dad was originally intent on a US Army career when my grandfather's health declined. My dad abandoned his own dream and came home to help out. Looking back, I guess that decision was pivotal because it enabled me to grow up on the family farm and discover my true calling."

That calling would be put to the test when his father died in an automobile accident when Lamb was only sixteen. Suddenly the heavy responsibility for the farm fell on his young shoulders. After graduating high school and continuing to work on the farm on weekends, he enrolled in North Carolina State University's School of Ag Engineering. He obtained his BS in Agriculture and Environmental Technology in 1996.

In 1994, while still in college, Lamb had interned with a North Carolina company called Prestage Farms and learned about the various stages of pork production. He realized quickly how drawn he was to the nursery operation. He said, "Prestage Farms was the ideal fit because it is a family-owned and operated local business with 260 contract pig farms and as many turkey farms. They are big enough to be a major industry player and yet small enough to call you by your name." So Lamb built a pig nursery farm on the same 75-acre tract in Clinton where he grew up. He and his family manage the nursery operation and grow corn, soybeans, millet, and Bermuda grass and raise a few cattle. Over the years, Lamb has constructed two swine barns to house his animals and purchased three new tractors and attachments.

He receives weaned pigs at 21 days of age from Prestage's trucking staff and keeps them for seven weeks or until they're about 50 pounds, and then forwards them to finishing farms until they reach their market weight. Lamb explained, "Here we have an eight-week cycle or turn that includes a week to clean the facility before the next turn begins. There are approximately 3,040 pigs here at any given time. Given our six-and-a-half cycles or turns per year, this amounts to around 20,000 pigs annually." The yields on Lamb's contract farm are as follows: 4.29 acres of irrigated Bermuda hay yields 6900 lbs.; 5 acres of millet are grazed by the farm's cattle; 2 acres are planted with sunflowers as a wildlife habitat; and 22 acres of corn and soybeans yield 160 bushels/acre and 40 bushels/acre respectively. There's also an acre and a half of cultivated garden space. The farm has 7 brood cows and 1 bull. Seven calves per year are raised to approximately 400 lbs. and then sold to market in Smithfield, NC where they are sent on to a feed lot in the Midwest and grown to a finishing weight of 700 to 800 lbs.



In the early 1990s, Bill Prestage, owner of Prestage Farms, perceived how the regulation trends in the industry were moving, so he decided to employ someone in the capacity of environmental specialist. With his practical experience and educational background, Lamb was the perfect fit, and he assumed this full-time responsibility in 2003. He said, "I handle environmental compliance for all of the company's hog operations across NC and one in SC, conducting annual inspections of those sixty-one farms. I also deal with more than 200 contract growers, assisting them with their compliance, irrigation calibration, and sludge surveys—roughly 385 lagoons. I've worked to develop a 'sludge boat' that helps farmers navigate these lagoons faster, and I assist producers in creating waste plans and help them fill out their annual reports."

Lamb Family Farms is a team effort. James met his future wife, Felicia, while the two were attending Union High School. With aspirations to go to law school, Felicia enrolled in Campbell University but ended up becoming a teacher, first for eighth graders, then fourth graders. James and Felicia were married on Valentine's Day in 1998. She went on to earn a Master of Arts degree in reading and now works as a Reading Specialist with second graders at Union Elementary in Clinton. She was honored as Teacher of the Year in 1998 and as the Walmart Teacher of the Year, Clinton, NC, in 2003.

Daughters Maegan and Kinsley came along in 2001 and 2006 respectively. Maegan has finished her freshman year at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, majoring in pharmacy studies. Kinsley graduated eighth grade this spring and will begin high school next fall. She has inherited her mother's interest in pursuing a law career. James's mother, Thelma, at the age of 89, still helps her son daily with farm chores.

In his role as the environment specialist for Prestage Farms, Lamb enforces a strict biosecurity program at the nursery including air filtration to prevent airborne diseases, mandatory shower procedures for farm personnel, and disposable boots and coveralls for farm visitors. Pest control programs ensure the reduction of insects, rodents, and wild animals. If animals require treatment, they are subject to FDA withdrawal periods

and treated by a veterinarian. The farm maintains certifications with Pork Quality Assurance.

On the local level, Lamb is the Sampson County Soil and Water Supervisor, the Sampson County Cooperative Extension Advisor, and the Sampson County Schools Curriculum Advisor. On the state level, Lamb is currently serving in the Agriculture Commissioners Circle, is a member of the Cape Fear Farm Credit Nominating Committee, a member of the Eastern NC Technical Assistance Group, and a member of the NC Pork Council Promotions Committee. On the national level, Lamb is a past member of the National Pork Board's Nominating, Environment, and Domestic Marketing committees and is a current member of the National Pork Producers Council Environmental Committee. He has also appeared in the industry video series entitled "Well Raised, Well Traveled," a national and international educational program, and he has made industry-related visits to Mexico and Brazil. Lamb was named "Outstanding Pork Producer" in 2016 by the North Carolina Pork Council. Giving back is an important component of Lamb's day-to-day activities. He sponsors youth and intern programs, attends career fairs, and gives educational talks to students about opportunities in agriculture. He also assists the North Carolina Pork Council and the National Pork Producer's Council with marketing efforts within the swine industry.

When the chance for leisure arises, the Lamb family likes to get away to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. James noted, "Felicia's parents also have a place in Topsail Beach on North Carolina's southern shore—a nice place to relax. At home, I like to do some small game hunting and take my mama fishing at a nearby saltwater lake at least twice a year."

When asked about the most challenging aspect of farming, he doesn't skip a beat when replying, "Profitability. You can offset a bad weather year if your row crops or livestock prices are high. You can come back from a drought or a flood. But you are always at the mercy of the market." As to the rewards of a farming life, Lamb commented, "In this type of rural community we know our neighbors' names. A kind of bond forms naturally that people in cities often lack. I

enjoy the tightknit group of producers and farmers in this area because we help and learn from each another."

He said another important takeaway from living and working on a farm is the value and amount of hard work it takes to be a successful farmer. "When I was a youngster on the farm, 'break time' didn't come mid-morning and mid-afternoon. It was when you got to the end of the tobacco row, no matter how far away that was. And we didn't stop at five o'clock. If there was a storm brewing off the coast during harvest, we could run all night. Mother Nature always dictated the schedule. And she still does."

James L. Lamb was nominated North Carolina Farmer of the Year by Jessica H. Tripp, District Field Representative for North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation. She commented, "Lamb is the type of farmer who does everything in his power to help preserve the agricultural industry as a whole. He's managed to maintain his farm operation while working full time for Prestage as an environmental specialist, a job that requires a huge commitment of time and energy." Tripp added, "James Lamb is a nationwide advocate for agriculture, a leader and gifted spokesperson for North Carolina's hog industry, and an educator who enjoys informing the public about where food comes from and introducing them to new trends and innovations in today's agriculture. Farming for him is not just a job; it's a way of life, a heritage, and a calling."

A distinguished panel of judges will visit James Lamb, along with the farms of the other nine state finalists, the week of August 10-14 to determine the overall winner for 2020. The judges include John McKissick, long-time University of Georgia agricultural economist at Athens, Georgia; David Wildy, Manila, Arkansas, the overall winner of the award in 2016; and Cary Lightsey, Lake Wales, Florida, the overall winner of the award in 2009.

"James L. Lamb North Carolina Farmer of the Year 2020." Sunbelt Ag Expo, July 15, 2020, <https://sunbeltexpo.com/james-l-lamb-north-carolina-farmer-of-the-year-2020/>.

CAPITOL NEWS

by: *Laurie Barnhart*

On the morning of July 15, the headline in Raleigh's *News & Observer* was, "Cooper: NC Schools to Reopen With Social Distancing Measures." The article directly below that one was titled, "Governor Extends Phase 2, citing 'troubling' virus trends." It is still so hard to believe that this has all actually happened. Now, we are looking towards the end of summer, still in Phase 2. We are all hoping and praying that things will improve over the next six weeks.

To say that the 2020 short session was unusual would be the Covid-19 understatement of the year! Between virtual sessions, temperature checks upon entering the legislative buildings, wearing daily arm bracelets, and staying six feet apart, life was anything but status quo at the General Assembly. Despite of all of the chaos, the North Carolina General Assembly accomplished a great deal during the time they met for the short session.

Appropriating Covid-19 funds alone was a daunting and exhausting task that took many committee meetings and late nights. In addition to passing Covid-19 related bills, there were other bills that were passed and signed by the Governor which are highlighted below. Both chambers adjourned on July 9 to reconvene on September 2 unless called back earlier for Federal Covid-19 fund appropriations. The bills that would be considered at that time would be additional fund appropriations related to Covid-19 or possible action on any appointments that may be made by the General Assembly or Governor Cooper. If all goes as planned, legislators will then adjourn Sine Die and return to their respective districts to campaign and prepare for the November elections.

There were five bills that Governor Cooper vetoed that the General Assembly attempted to override but was unsuccessful. A veto override in the Senate or the House requires the support of three-fifths of lawmakers present and voting. They did have majority support for all the overrides, but the supermajority votes needed did not happen. The vetoed bills were all Covid-19 related. Below are bills that the Grange followed that were passed by the General Assembly and signed into law by the Governor.

HB 1023 Coronavirus Relief Funds/Additions and Revisions

This bill was passed and sent to the Governor on June 25. It allocates \$10,000,000 to the NC Dept. of Ag which can be used for appropriations for small meat processors assistance covered in HB 1201.

SB 818 Compensation of Certain School Employees

This bill was passed and signed by the Governor on June 26. It regards the administration of the one-time, lump sum bonus

of \$350 for teachers employed in a qualifying public-school unit as of October 1, 2020. It also requires the Department of Public Administration (DPI) to allocate funds for bonuses for charter schools, regional schools, innovative schools, and laboratory schools on the basis of the funded average daily membership (rather than the allotted ADM) of each school.

SB 808 Medicaid Funding Act

After being passed and signed by the Governor, this bill took effect on July 1. It appropriates funds for the Dorothea Dix campus relocation project and for North Carolina families accessing services through technology (NC FAST). It appropriates coronavirus relief funds for behavioral health and crisis services, early childhood initiatives, covid-19 testing, contact tracing, and trends tracking and analysis. It also appropriates funds for the operation of the North Carolina Medicaid program, the implementation of Medicaid transformation, and making Medicaid transformation-related changes.

SB 212 Capital Appropriations/R&R/DIT/Cybersecurity

This passed and was sent to the Governor on June 26. It provides for the DIT Secretary to prescribe and accept applications and sets forth grant application requirements. It directs DIT's Broadband Infrastructure Office to give priority to applicants that will provide access to the greatest number of unserved households, as defined, and to exclude households awarded a grant from the Growing Great Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) program.

SB 315 North Carolina Farm Act of 2019-2020

This bill made amendments to already existing NC ag laws. It establishes and modifies the Industrial Hemp Commission and Hemp Program, requiring a quarterly smokable hemp study report. It eliminates all coordinating provisions, including civil and criminal penalties relating to the proposed changes to the hemp program. This act modifies the proposed changes to no longer include shooting sports in the definition of agritourism activity, and amends the proposed changes to no longer include specified shooting sports in the definition of agritourism with regards to buildings being used for agritourism qualifying as a bona fide farm purpose. It also changes the effective date of disposition of certain unused easements and now applies to easements acquired on or after October 1, 2020 (was October 1, 2019). The act also makes clarifying changes regarding the regulation of catering on bona fide farms, prohibiting counties and cities from requiring businesses located on a property used for bona fide farm purposes that provide on and off-site catering services to obtain a permit to do so.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me with questions or if you need clarification on anything that transpired during this short session. Following is our policy update from Burton Eller, National Grange Legislative Director.



From the Hill

Policy Updates & Issue News
From Burton Eller, National Grange

Agriculture & Food

Food Prices Skyrocket While Farm Prices Nosedive

The cost of food from the grocery store bought to eat at home during the lockdown skyrocketed, rising the most in 46 years as the food supply chain struggled to get surplus farm commodities to the consumer. Restaurant carryout meals spiked as well. Analysts predict supermarket and restaurant customers should not expect prices to drop anytime soon. At the same time, farm gate earnings are expected to plunge for the foreseeable future without additional pandemic economic aid.

Congress Extends Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility

Congress overwhelmingly voted to increase from 8 to 24 weeks the amount of time businesses and farms are given to spend proceeds on qualified expenses in order to have their PPP loan forgiven. This extension was aggressively supported by the National Grange and producer organizations. Congress created the PPP in its CARES Act to help small businesses and farms survive the economic impacts the COVID-19 lockdown.

Grange: Include Ag Organizations in PPP

The National Grange is asking members of the Senate to extend Paycheck Protection Program eligibility to agricultural organizations as the Senate crafts a CARES 2 relief package. President Betsy Huber told Senators producers depend on their organizations for news, communication, advice, market intelligence, best practices and much more. Strong producer organizations will be in much better positions to assist members with their much-needed economic recovery and emotional support, she said.

Grange Asks for Trucking Relief

The National Grange and over 60 agricultural and food organizations are asking House members to support the FARM to TABLE Act (Joyce, R-PA). Joyce's bill will extend truckers' hours of service rule exemptions year-round for agricultural commodities within a 150-mile radius from the source of the commodity.

General Aviation Important to Rural Areas

The National Grange, joined by 15 other organizations, is asking Senate and House leadership to temporarily suspend fuel taxes for general aviation aircraft as Congress did for commercial airlines in their CARES Act. This can be accomplished in Congress' CARES 2 Act being crafted now. General aviation and local airports are a key economic driver for recovery in rural regions of the country.

Senators Support Small Plant Expansion

As the food supply chain begins to recover and meat processing plants return to capacity, there is a renewed push to expand small and local processing capacity. Nine Senators (Kramer R-ND, King D-ME, Rounds R-SD, Manchin D-WV, Daines R-MT, Smith D-MN, Barrasso R-WY, Tester D-MT, Enzi-WY) have cosponsored the bipartisan New Markets for State-Inspected Meat and Poultry Act which would allow state products that have been inspected by an approved (at least equal to federal standards) state inspection program to be sold interstate. National Grange policy supports equal-to state inspection and subsequent interstate sales.

Five Million Food Boxes and Climbing

USDA's new Farmers to Families Food Box Program was designed to connect farmers and distributors to support food banks, community and faith-based organizations and other non-profits to those most in need across the country. Instead of destroying commodities that are not marketable, producers can sell directly to distributors of federally funded feeding programs. Five million food boxes had been distributed by early June.

The Environment

Waters of the U.S. Rule Goes into Effect

The new Navigable Waters Protection Rule went into effect in early June after a federal judge declined to block its implementation. The rule was widely supported by farmers, ranchers, landowners and others after an earlier 2015 rule was deemed to have overstepped congressional intent of the Clean Water Act and infringed upon private landowner rights. On the same day, a U.S. District judge in Colorado granted a preliminary injunction to prevent the rule from going into effect there.

Senate Bill Would Pay Farmers for Carbon Sequestration

A bipartisan Senate bill is garnering support that would give USDA a key role in overseeing voluntary agricultural carbon markets. Lead sponsors are Braun (R-IN), Stabenow (D-MI), Graham (R-SC) and Whitehouse (D-RI). The Growing Climate Solutions Act would create a USDA system for certifying third-party verifiers and technical assistance providers. Farmers and ranchers could receive assistance and incentives for implementing practices which reduce carbon emissions on their operations. In addition, they could sell excess carbon credits to commercial firms who exceed their carbon emission cap. During a Senate Agriculture Committee hearing on June 24, the bill appeared to have broad support among committee members.

Health Care

Extend Medicare Enrollment

The National Grange joined a large number of patient advocate groups to urge the Centers for Medicare and

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GOTCHA COVERED

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

by: Mark Davis

When someone is sworn into court to give testimony, they take an oath that their words are nothing but the truth. Today, with everything we hear on the news, television, internet and social media, there are conflicting, and many times totally opposing, reports on the same issue or story. Unfortunately, many times the report is spun to the reporter's prejudices, and they fail to give us the whole truth. The data and sources are creditable, but other significant and important factors are omitted from their narrative to support the point they want to drive home. Hence, we potentially do not have all the facts but only those they want us to hear and consider.

A prime current example of this is our daily COVID-19 reports from the NC DHHS. The department gives us the number of positive test results, the number of those in the hospital, and the number of deaths from COVID-19, but only updates the presumed recovered cases on a weekly basis, and that report is buried deep in the NC DHHS website. Another very important factor omitted is the percent of the NC population currently suffering with COVID-19, which as of July 13 was 0.18% currently infected. Inversely, this means that 99.8% are either without Covid-19 or have recovered from it as calculated from the NC DHHS website data. So, what is their narrative? Yes, COVID-19 is a real virus that requires our attention, but we need all the facts to fully determine our unbiased potential risk from this virus versus blindly following someone else's lead.

You are now wondering what this has to do with insurance, right? It is simple. In just a very few weeks, open enrollment will start for 2021 for both senior and individual health plans. During this time, you will see many commercials and the marketing of various plans. You may hear many sales pitches touting the wonderful benefits that their plan has to offer to sway you over to their plan. A prime example occurred this week with a client I worked with. He saw a commercial on the TV from another carrier advertising dental as part of their plan. It turned out that the "dental" they offered was for preventative care only. Their dental did not cover any cavities, caps, crowns, or major services, which he wanted and was under the impression their dental benefits would cover.

It is prudent to look at all the facts, pros and cons, networks, and potential total cost of any plan prior to selection. Make sure that you get to see the whole picture. Then, you can make

an informed decision based on your individual anticipated needs. Thankfully, our NC Grange agents are not just after a "sale." They consider what is best for their clients and want to establish a long-term relationship with their clients and families.

Our NC Grange agents have just started their 2021 training which will continue through September, so we will be ready to assist you with your needs and choices this fall for the 2021 effective dates. We know there are changes in each market every year, so we can discuss those with you once the marketing period begins. From the very limited information we received so far, our BCBSNC offerings are very attractive for 2021! Please let us assist you with navigating the 2021 health insurance choices available to you.

Advocating For Whole Milk

BY: JIMMY GENTRY

The process is underway within the US Department of Health and Human Services along with the US Department of Agriculture that will determine recommended dietary guidelines for 2020-2025. As part of that process, the Health and Human Services Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee has released a Scientific Report that will be considered for writing the final recommendations. Public comments are being accepted until August 13 for input, and Jimmy Gentry has provided a statement for the State Grange.

Dairy products have been included as an important source of nutrition in the dietary guidelines, including lower fat milk. Research is increasingly revealing that whole milk is also important to the diet. We all know that over the years, higher fat products have been discouraged, but evidence now shows the benefits of whole milk. As a result, the Grange is advocating for whole milk to be added to federal dietary guidelines along with lower fat milk.

The comments submitted by Gentry are as follows: "In developing new dietary guidelines for our citizens, whole milk should be added as a healthy and viable nutrient choice. Numerous studies continue to show that the consumption of whole milk can have beneficial impacts. Those studies have found the following related to whole milk intake: 1. This beverage reduces childhood obesity. 2. Consumers of whole milk tend to weigh less, and chronic illnesses are reduced. 3. Drinking this beverage leads to less weight gain in adult women and men. 4. The risk of cardiovascular disease is reduced. 5. Children have higher levels of Vitamin D because it is fat soluble and may be better absorbed. 6. Whole milk has a higher omega-3 content which has many health benefits such as healthier hearts, brains, and a lower risk of cancer.

"There is no doubt that lower fat dairy products should remain a part of dietary guidelines. However, sound science is pointing to whole milk as a viable option as well. As the new dietary recommendations are developed, strong consideration should be given toward the inclusion of whole milk."





COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT UPDATE

from Sharon Underwood, Community Service Director

Hello, fellow NC Grange members! Several local Granges have continued to find ways during the pandemic to provide meaningful acts of service to their communities while keeping safe. I have enjoyed reading and hearing about those projects, and I encourage you to keep working and to continue sharing your activities with Jessica Horton and the State Grange. By sharing what your Grange is doing, it encourages others to keep doing all the good we can, even in tough times.

Our NC Grange Staff and Program Directors recently met virtually and decided that we will continue working on Baby Bundles as our state community service project for 2020-2021. Please continue to collect, purchase, or make

items for babies. We will collect all these nice items at the 2021 State Convention in Charlotte, NC. The collected items will be given to families in need throughout Mecklenburg County. Families have been thrilled and grateful to receive such generous gifts from Baby Bundles in the past. Some recipients have claimed it is "like receiving a baby shower in a bag."

If you have questions about the project, please review the website, www.babybundlesnc.org, and check out the packet of information that was sent to each Grange President. You may also contact me by email at community@ncgrange.com. I look forward to seeing your collected items in 2021.

CAPITOL NEWS CONT.

Medicaid Services at the Department of Health and Human Services to extend special enrollment and premium relief flexibilities for Medicare. These extensions are necessary to ensure access to coverage for older Americans during the remainder of the COVID-19 crisis.

Widespread Testing Helps Halt Outbreaks

Meat processing plants have been among the country's worst coronavirus hot spots. It is typical for large numbers of employees to work in close proximity under one roof. Across the industry, thousands of workers became infected and hundreds died. But rapid rollout of testing in those plants could offer guidance to other businesses to emulate as they try to re-open. Processing plant workers who test positive have to

isolate themselves and if no symptoms appear, they can return to work. This testing and isolation along with face shields, social distancing in common areas, and plastic dividers to separate workers on production lines seems to have paid off with big reductions in coronavirus cases.

Telecommunication Infrastructure Broadband Mapping is Priority

National Grange president Betsy Huber wrote members of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee to again urge members to commit full funding to create more precise broadband maps through the Broadband DATA Act. Current broadband mapping cannot accurately depict the underserved areas of rural America for effective broadband deployment investment.

The Grange letter was in advance of the June 24 Committee oversight hearing with all five Federal Communications Commissioners.

Grange Participates in Broadband Briefing

National Grange president Betsy Huber was a panelist on a virtual briefing hosted by the Connect Americans Now coalition. The briefing focused on the urgency to address the digital divide, the progress that has been made to clear regulatory hurdles, and actions Congress can take to allocate funding to most rapidly and cost-effectively close the broadband gap. Other panelists included the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, American Farm Bureau, National Rural Education Association, and Student Veterans of America.

CANCELLED CAMP LEADS TO VIRTUAL MEMORIES & CHALLENGES *by: Gennie Gentry*

I went on my first trip to Grange Camp when I was 7 years old. While my parents served as counselors for the youth, my sister and I took part in Junior activities. I do not remember a ton of details from my earlier years as a Junior camper, but I do remember two things: being smothered with lots of hugs and love by Judith Barnes, Frances Suther and Linda Hutson, and having an absolute blast!

Grange Camp was my absolute favorite week of the year throughout my entire childhood and teenage years. Growing up in the Grange and attending Grange Camp each year really made an incredible impact on my life. I started learning about leadership at an early age, and as I became a youth, I gained confidence in myself and my abilities to lead, serve, and develop friendships. As an insecure teenager, it was serving on the Youth Team and as a State Youth Officer that prepared me for college by giving me the confidence that I desperately needed. The values and skills I learned through the Grange were incredible, and I learned to believe in myself. The ultimate gift, however, was the friendships.

I share this because our youth today will tell you the exact same thing. They gain various skills, increase their confidence, and learn so much about themselves, but their Grange friendships are by far the most special. Because of this, not having their absolute favorite event this year, Grange Camp, has been very difficult for our youth, Juniors, and everyone who attends.

Grange Camp was supposed to be held July 5-11 at the Eastern 4H Center. Instead, we held a virtual

Grange Camp on Instagram and Facebook. This virtual week included videos, songs, questions, thoughts of the day, vespers, contests, and many pictures from past camps that gave everyone a chance to share their amazing memories. A "Grange Camp Memories" picture template was also created so that youth could share their favorite camp memories on their social media stories while tagging friends to do the same.

The NC Grange Youth social media pages, especially Instagram, were full of comments and shares by current and past youth who spent the week reminiscing with their Grange friends. Reading though the comments during the week showed me just how much our kids were missing camp.

One of the biggest parts of camp that our youth enjoy is Battle By the Bay, in which teams compete against each other throughout the week in a series of challenges. The overall winning team is announced on Friday night at the end of the week and each person on that team receives a championship t-shirt and major bragging rights. Although we missed those competitions this year, we still were able to hold three contests during our virtual camp.

The first contest was for Best Bunk. If you have ever attended Grange Camp, you know that it is a long-time tradition for campers to make their beds each morning. At lunch, a few best bunks for the day are announced and those campers receive a candy bar. This year, youth, Juniors and young adults made their beds at home and sent in pictures of those bunks. The four winners were Brylie Newton, Makenna Seymour, Abby Gentry, and Cody Stevens. Cody won Best Decoration with his two Golden Retrievers sitting on his bed. Instead of candy bars, these winners received Target gift cards.

The second contest was the Grange Spirit Award for social media enthusiasm. This



Olivia Barber, Costume Contest Winner

"I have waited years to finally be part of the Youth Team. This year was supposed to be my year with my team, an experience I was counting down the days to have. When I heard that camp got cancelled, my heart was crushed, but it made me realize how truly lucky I was to be able to go every other year. Camp has always been my safe space, the place where I know everyone will accept me for who I am without judgment. To miss out on that experience hurts, but when camp comes again, I will definitely make the most of it."

-Asheton Medlin



award went to the youth and young adults who were the most active on social media by sharing, commenting, tagging, and participating in virtual camp. Our first place for youth was Asheton Medlin, and first place young adult was Montana Riley. Second place went to Karly Denning, Katie Leonard and Lillie Roquet. All winners also received a gift card.

The final contest is one that follows another favorite Grange Camp tradition, our costume

contest. Each year, we hold a talent show and theme night at camp in which everyone dresses up in a costume that deals with our week's theme. In 2019, the camp theme was "Home on the Grange," so everyone dressed up in "wild west" attire for theme night. This year, we held a costume contest to "swamp theme," which is a bit of an inside joke among our youth. This was the biggest contest of the week and the winner was Olivia Barber who turned her camouflage costume picture into a hilarious magazine cover. She also won a gift card to Target (pictured left).

Virtual Grange Camp was not the same as the real thing, but it did give youth a chance to connect and remember why they love the Grange so much. I will be honest; it was a very hard week for me. I miss our youth terribly and have struggled not being with them this summer. I love watching them laugh, learn, and grow their Grange family with new friendships. Four young adult ladies and I decided to have a Zoom on the Friday night of what would have been Awards Night at camp. Living in different cities and 3 different states, I was excited to see their faces and get to catch up. What I thought would be a 5 person Zoom turned into a major surprise...a computer full of youth and young adults, all of whom have been to camp and have all been huge

parts of my life over the years. I cried. What an amazing, joyful surprise! Someone knew exactly what I desperately needed. This is an incredible testament to how much Grange means to us all, and for most of us, it started with a trip to Grange Camp.

Grange Camp started in 1940 with a simple weekend. The State Youth Program had just started in December of 1939 and the following summer brought its first

ever weekend together, which turned into a short week of camp in 1941. Today, Grange Camp lasts a full week and has not been cancelled since a polio epidemic in 1948. Just like it was as a child, Grange Camp is still my absolute favorite week of the year. Though the activities we hold throughout the week have varied over the years, this traditional event for our organization has always built incredible leaders and has changed many lives.

I want to thank everyone who reached out and participated in our virtual Grange Camp. I received some of the most amazing, inspiring messages that week and was blown away by the memories that our campers shared. You can see posts on both FaceBook and Instagram by following @NCGrange and @NCGrangeYouth.

"Not being able to go to camp is like being promised the best week of your life and watching the plans of that week crumble in front of you, because that's what Grange Camp is. It's the best week of the year. You get to see all of your old friends that you have known for years, and you get to make new ones and watch them experience their first week of Grange Camp. It's a whole week with the most loving, caring people in the world."
-Jacob Roquet



RxALITM

Rx Abuse Leadership Initiative

by: Jimmy Gentry

On July 23, 2020, NC Grange participated in a Webinar that included three other organizations: Rx Abuse Leadership Initiative (RALI), Code 3, and Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA). Panelists included Jimmy Gentry, NC Grange; Joe Abdalla, Code 3; and General Arthur Dean, CADCA. US Representative Richard Hudson provided recorded remarks, and Candace DeMatteis with RALI moderated the event.

RALI is an organization that works with partner groups in working to prevent the abuse of prescription medications. National Grange is one of the partner organizations. The Code 3 organization trains local police to equip them with the resources they need in working with

the opioid epidemic. CADCA works to create safe, drug-free communities. Grange members are encouraged to visit the websites of these organizations to learn more about their work. One of the presentations during the webinar was a virtual look at a trailer that was developed through a partnership with RALI and CODE 3. Mr. Abdalla, who is a former law enforcement officer, took us through a virtual tour of the trailer that replicates a bedroom that might be used by a young drug abuser. This is a great educational tool to help parents find clues that a child using drugs may leave in the room.

Barden Culbreth, a member of Capitol Grange in Wake County, worked with the partner groups in arranging for this Webinar.



DELICIOUS PECAN PIE

PATTY SWING | ARCADIA GRANGE
FIRST PLACE NUT PIE

3 EGGS (BEATEN)
3/4 CUP DARK SYRUP
2/3 CUP WHITE SUGAR
1 TABLESPOON FLOUR
PINCH OF SALT
1 TABLESPOON BUTTER
2/3 CUP CHOPPED PECANS

MIX ALL INGREDIENTS
EXCEPT PECANS AND STIR
WELL.

ADD PECANS AND POUR
INTO AN UNBAKED PIE
SHELL. BAKE AT 375 DEGREES
UNTIL MIXTURE JELLS.

CHECK AFTER 25 MINUTES
AND IF NEEDED BAKE
LONGER



**BlueCross BlueShield
of North Carolina**

For More Information

Contact:

Mark H Davis

336-613-6315

or

mhdavis@ncgrange.com

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FERGUSON GRANGE SERVES POLICE

by : Sharon Underwood

Ferguson Grange met July 16 and enjoyed a program on home safety, presented by Wilkes County Sheriff's Deputy and neighbor, Harper Hartley. He shared ways that we could live more safely in our homes and gave us new awareness of safety issues. Ferguson Grange presented the Hartley with five boxes of treats to show appreciation for the Wilkes County Sheriff's Department.

Pictured right are Michelle and Harper Hartley posing in front of their boxes of treats for the sheriffs department.

Pictured below is a group of Ferguson Grange members standing behind items they made for the state community service project, Baby Bundles.



CORRIHER GRANGE COOKS OUT

by : Katie Greene

Corriher Grange gathered on Saturday, July 11, for food, fun and fellowship. Held at Tranquility Farm, the hosts for the evening were David and Crystal Allen. Thirty-eight people attended the cookout with tents set up outside to keep social distancing protocols in place, but remain in the shade. Hamburgers, hot dogs and muscadine slushies were served inside the farm's new building. The children ran, played and laughed while the adults enjoyed talking and catching up with each other. It was a much-needed gathering for the community. We are already looking forward to Corriher Grange's next meeting, the annual ice cream social!





The Grange Exchange



For Sale: 2014 Ford Explorer, 154,000 miles, 3.5L V6 engine. The vehicle was purchased new and has been used by the NC Grange. This Explorer has been well-maintained and has been a reliable vehicle. Features are as follows: 18" aluminum wheels, keyless entry, light stone leather seating, 4.2" LCD screen, cruise control, SYNC Bluetooth, Sirius radio capable, rear heat and air controls, power locks, reverse sensing system, back up camera, power liftgate, 3 row seating. Price: \$8,000.00.

If interested, contact Jimmy Gentry @704-880-3527 or jwgentry@ncgrange.com.



ARE YOU RECEIVING EMAIL FROM US?

If you are, great! If not, please consider adding your email to our list. We send bi-weekly emails on Monday mornings with new updates. You are free to unsubscribe at any time, however if you unsubscribe you will have to add yourself back if at any time you wish to receive emails again. Our software will not let us add you back.

Emails from the NC Grange are the fastest form of communication for the staff. You will receive event notifications, Grange News early to your inbox, special news alerts and other important information. We will never sell your email address and will never spam you!

If you are not receiving emails, but would like to, visit ncgrange.com and click 'join our mailing list' at the top of the page.

The Grange Exchange

The Grange Exchange is a new column here in *Grange News* to help members sell an item. If you have something you'd like to sell? Email it to Jessica Horton at JLHorton@ncgrange.com to list it!



NORTH CAROLINA GRANGE
1734 WILKESBORO HWY
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704-878-0000
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"Grange Camp is the week every year that I can put away whatever is going on in my outside life and be in the moment. No work; no drama; just fun. This year, we all needed it. We needed normalcy, but thanks to Covid-19, that was taken away. It has given me less time to be a kid. I only have one year left to go to Grange Camp as a youth, so next year I will make it count!"

-Olivia Gentry

