

GRANGE NEWS



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On the cover: Ryleigh Hartsell, Kayla Laws, Carter Settle and Taylor Rogers serving as youth officeres in Niagara Falls.

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Legislative Director	Laurie Barnhart
Youth/Young Adult Director	Jennie Gentry
Junior Director	Emily Hartsell
Community Service Director	Anna Liles
Events/Publications Director	Jessica Horton

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 9-11	Winter Youth Conference Asheboro, NC
March 14-17	Family Conference Atlantic Beach, NC
July 7-13	Grange Camp Eastern 4-H Center
September 19-22	State Convention Durham, NC

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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FROM JIMMY | NC SUCCESS

A few weeks ago, we finished the National Grange Convention in Niagara Falls, New York. North Carolina had several successes that you will read about in another article in this issue. The successes we had at the convention are a direct result of the people we have and the programs we conduct as part of the North Carolina Grange. NC Grange is not the largest in the country, but we are strong. Our strength comes from our members from across the state, members who are dedicated to the organization and want to see good things happening in the community.

Strong local Granges leads to a strong State Grange. Across this state, Granges are conducting great, impactful activities to serve their communities in various ways. These service activities are so important and are part of the mission of our organization. The opportunities we have to serve are endless. Ideas and imagination are true assets for us.

While in Niagara Falls, NY at the National Grange Convention, David Allen, Vice-President of NC Grange was elected as Gatekeeper at the National Convention. For the past two years, David has served as a co-delegate for North Carolina. He is a retired Police Chief and owns Tranquility Farms in Rowan County, along with his wife Crystal. He serves as President of Corriher Grange.



Photo: Lindsay Schroeder, Pennsylvania

Thank you for allowing me to serve you. It is truly a blessing to be a part of NC Grange. As we approach a new year, I challenge all of us to make every effort to keep our local Granges strong and active. Remember, activity attracts interest and interest attracts members. Best wishes to all.

THE STAR

I fondly remember lying on the ground as a child with my sister, Candace, and looking up at the bright stars at night, finding the big dipper and many other constellations. Of course, we'd watch for a fallen star to make a wish upon. While lying there, we would also talk and confide in each other. Being only 23 months apart in our ages, she was my best friend. Oh, how I miss those times. But now, as I gaze upon the stars, I know she is there among them shining brightly in heaven with Jesus.

From the beginning of creation, God made the stars for us to enjoy, not only as light in the darkness, but as a symbol of life. Did you know that no two stars are alike, just like snowflakes, and our fingerprints? It seems lately that I see stars in other ways. Most of the time it means something good. As I've paid more attention to this symbol, I've noticed it in so many places: stars on the flag, a star on a sheriff badge, stars on crowns, stars on a barn, star ratings for hotels or other products and services, stars in the limelight such as actors or musicians, stars on clothing, stars in sports, or even the stars in tv shows about astronomy. But the one I see everywhere now is the star of this special season, Christmas. It's the most important one to pay attention to.

This special star represents the "star in the east" that the Magi, the Wise Men, saw and followed to find the newborn "king of the Jews." "We have come to worship him," (Matthew 2:2) they told King Herald. "When they went on their way, and the star they had

seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, and of incense, and of myrrh," (Matthew 2:9-11). This has become the tradition of giving gifts at Christmas.

The star here led them to Jesus, who later called himself The Morning Star (2 Peter 1:19). Peter emphasized this point in the prophecy of the churches to pay more attention to it, as "a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the Morning Star rises in your hearts." Also, in Revelations 2:26-28, Jesus told John the revelator to write, "to him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will also give The Morning Star."

Jesus says, "Behold I am coming soon...I am the Bright Morning Star, (Rev. 22: 7, 12, 16). Let us still be wise men today, to seek Him, to follow Him, to worship Him, and allow "The Star" to shine in our hearts and lives until He comes. AMEN!

In Memoriam

*Jane Zimmerman**

Arcadia

Mrs. Michael Stanley

Greenwood

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

Psalms 118:28

** 50 Year Member*



FERGUSON GRANGE

by : Sharon Underwood

Ferguson Grange donated two handmade quilts to the Whippoorwill Academy and Village’s annual Veteran’s Day celebration. Grange members worked on the larger quilt this past year to give as a door prize to a Veteran. The smaller quilt was donated by Grange members, the Freemans. The winners receiving the quilts were Dick Martine and Gary Hayes. The celebration also included a speaker, music, spoken poems, and refreshments. It was a great event to honor our Veterans.

At our December meeting, Ferguson Grange members made 33 “cake mix in a mug” gifts by wrapping cake mix inside of festive mugs. Members delivered the mugs to our local seniors as Christmas gifts and spent time visiting with them. During the meeting, Margaret Martine gave a devotional on David and Goliath using a giant puppet she had created.





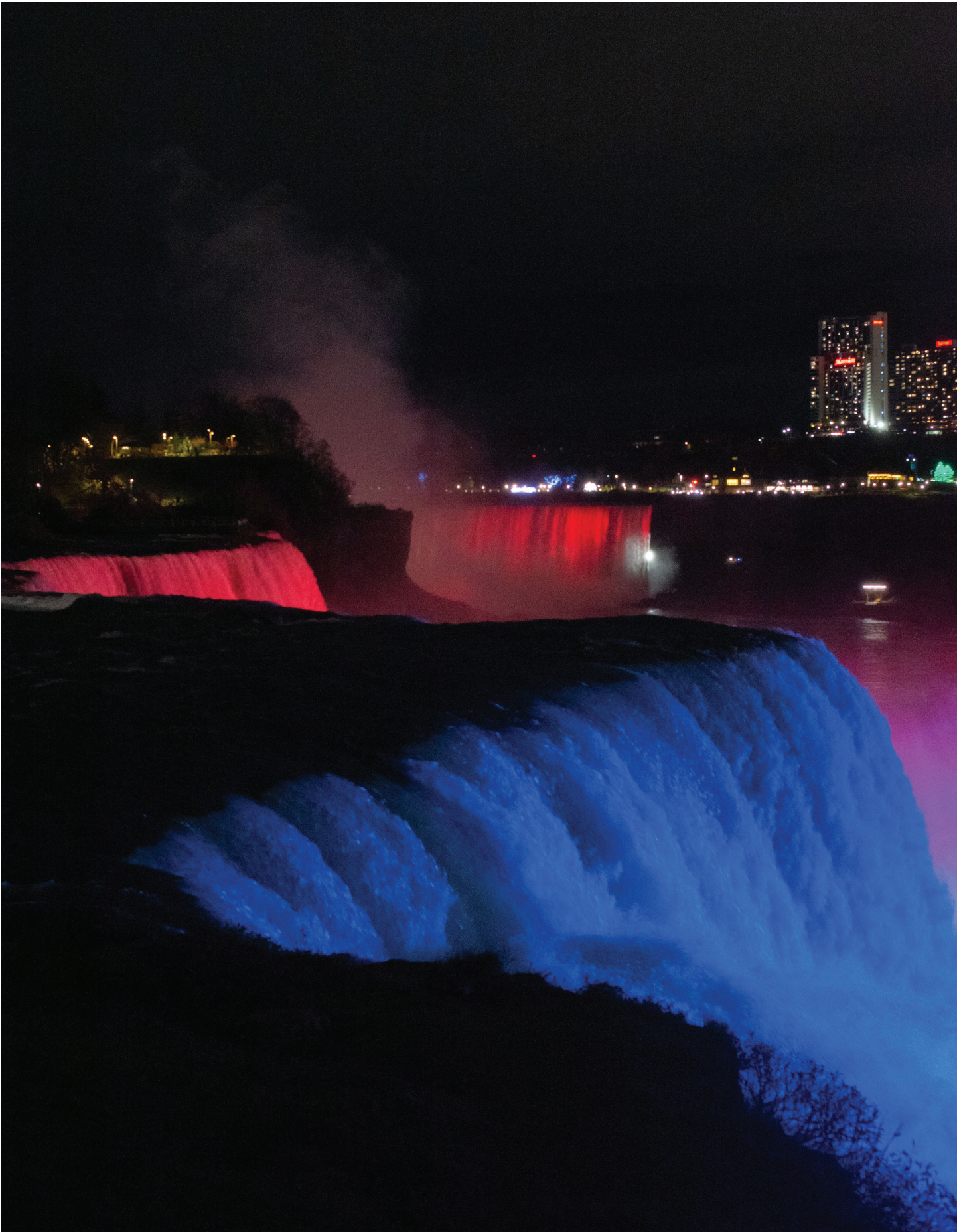
GRANGERS MAKE A SPLASH IN NIAGARA FALLS

by : Jennie Gentry

The 157th National Grange Convention was held in scenic Niagara Falls, NY, in mid-November. This is the last event of the year that Grange members travel to, and our NC delegation represented us well. State Delegates and National Officers and staff arrived by Sunday, November 12 to begin business sessions, orientation, and committee meetings on Monday. Jimmy Gentry and David Allen served as our state's delegates.

The convention was officially opened after the Advocacy Luncheon on Tuesday, and National Grange President Betsy Huber gave her annual address. She highlighted the Grange's overall net gain in membership as well as legislative efforts the Grange has made this year. These efforts heavily focused on attaining critical services for rural areas such as high-speed internet, cellular networks, and healthcare. Delegates then continued their work to develop legislative policy.

When Wednesday arrived, so did most of the convention's attendees, including youth. The evening session was full of excited members ready to stand and cheer in the annual Roll Call of States. A special presentation was made inducting four past Grange members into the National Grange Hall of Fame for their significant contributions. The Quilts of Valor presentation followed, led by National Grange Program Director Ann Bercher. Three veterans received their quilts, honored for their military service. After the session adjourned, youth activities began with games led by the National Youth Team including Autumn Whitaker of NC. The National Youth Officers also attended a meet-and-greet with the National Officers who offered words of wisdom and encouragement.



Thursday featured several speakers and workshops for convention goers. The afternoon session included a panel discussion led by Jeff Winton, founder of Rural Minds. Travis Carlson, writer and Emmy award-winning independent filmmaker, and Becky Wiseman, licensed therapist and Family Consultant Case Supervisor for Cornell University's NY FarmNet Program, joined Winton for a presentation and discussion of Mother's Day, Carlson's independent movie depicting the struggles of dealing with mental health issues within the family.

Following the presentation, attendees engaged in a second panel discussion led by the same group with the addition of several Grange members. Included on the panel was Asheton Medlin, NC youth and UNC-Chapel Hill student, who was asked to represent the youth-aged perspective when talking about mental health issues. The panel answered questions from the audience and led an interactive discussion on such an important topic for all ages. It was powerful and very well attended.

The GROW Club banquet was held that evening where NC Youth Ambassadors Asheton Medlin and Jacob Roquet and NC Young Adult Patron Ashley Holloman were inducted into this special club that includes a long list of past youth leaders. Youth and Juniors ended the evening with a Silent Disco Party in full disco attire.

Friday morning's session room was completely full as convention goers watched the National Youth Officers perform their drills and open the session. Serving on the team were four youth from NC including Taylor Rogers, Treasurer; Cartle Settle, Steward; and Kayla Laws and Ryleigh Hartsell as Executive Committee members. This is always a highlight of the convention and these youth did a fantastic job. During this session, Autumn Whitaker, National Young Adult Patron, gave her farewell speech, wrapping up her incredible year. Her message moved us all as she expressed her heartfelt gratitude to NC and the National Grange for the opportunity to lead and serve in such big ways this year.

Grangers enjoyed a day of touring the area on Friday. They visited the Robert Moses Niagara Power Plant where they enjoyed lunch

and a presentation about the facility. The group then engaged in hands-on learning activities including an interactive grid table to try to power a town, and watched a 4-D, roller-coaster style movie to learn about electricity. The group also visited Cave of the Winds

where they wore ponchos to get a close-up view of Bridal Veil Falls at the Niagara Falls. The tour included a walk to an overlook for a beautiful view of Niagara Falls.

The youth also visited the Community Mission, an organization that serves a vulnerable population of individuals facing a wide variety of social service issues such as homelessness, addiction, and mental health. The group participated in a service project sorting clothing and writing Christmas cards for individuals in the community.

Five Junior Grangers attended the convention with their families this year. They participated in games and activities led by National Junior Ambassador Nettie Hartley from Rhode Island. These young Grangers also participated in workshops, toured Niagara Falls and enjoyed new experiences. We also proudly watched Lucy Anderson as she represented NC as our State Junior Ambassador this year.

On Friday afternoon, the induction ceremony was held for the newly elected National Grange Officers. After being elected the day before, Chris Hamp from Washington State was inducted as the new National Grange President. North Carolina will again be represented in this officer group as our State Vice President David Allen was inducted as the new National Grange Gatekeeper.

After a full day, the National Grange Honors Night commenced. A variety of recognitions were made, and it was a big night for North Carolina. Two Granges from our state were named Distinguished Granges: Grantham Grange and St. John's Grange. Our State Youth Program was recognized as a Distinguished Youth Program, and our State Junior Program was recognized for its state report. We were also excited that the honor of

National Grange Law Enforcement Officer of the Year went to Deputy Donnie Ross of Henderson County, NC.

As the night continued, Ashley Holloman was presented with the Wib & June Justi Youth Community Service Award, announced by



Pete Pompper. The crowd was also inspired when Asheton Medlin gave her winning speech for the Public Speaking Contest. The evening ended with the announcement of Ashley Holloman selected as Outstanding Young Adult Patron and Asheton Medlin as National Youth Ambassador, both to serve on the 2024 National Youth Leadership Team. They received their sashes from Autumn Whitaker, ending her year on the team. Needless to say, we were beaming with pride for NC Grange that night!

Saturday morning started with several workshops for all ages including a leadership workshop for youth. Part of our group also spent the afternoon visiting Goat Island and venturing over the Rainbow Bridge into Canada for another beautiful view of Niagara Falls. It was definitely a memorable experience.

After Saturday night's celebration banquet to commemorate the week, everyone attended the final event, the Evening of Excellence, a showcase of talent from across the country. NC Grange youth Ryleigh Hartsell performed a beautiful lyrical dance performance in the talent showcase. Asheton Medlin and Taylor Rogers also performed their group sign-a-song to "I'm Soaring" from High School Musical, placing third in the national contest.

It was a wonderful trip for those who attended. Grange members enjoyed their time together celebrating accomplishments and supporting each other throughout the week. They also visited with old friends, made new ones, and are already looking forward to next year's convention in Iowa.



COMMUNITY

by : Anna Liles



I am Anna Liles the Community Service Director for the North Carolina Grange. I am finishing up my first year in this new role and have enjoyed meeting new people and learning more about our community service projects across the state.

Our project for the 2024 Family Conference in March will be to collect non-perishable food items and hygiene products for Martha's Mission Cupboard in Morehead City. They serve elderly citizens who are living far below the government poverty level such as the family whose breadwinner was injured on the job or stricken with illness; families who have sustained major medical bills and have to make a choice between eating, heating or paying bills; the mentally and or physically handicapped, unable to manage their resources; abused and abandoned wives and children; and able-bodied workers who are unable to work because of strike, plan layoff, fire or environmental hazards. I hope we can collect enough items to make a real difference in this area.

I had the privilege to attend the National Convention in Niagara Falls this year and was able to see the community service books that other Granges across the country submitted for judging. The judging for the books took over 10 hours, and I'm proud to say that our book from Ferguson Grange made it in the top 10! During the convention I learned that our neighbors to the north, Virginia, had every Grange in the state submit a community service book for judging! We had 4 this year, and I would like to encourage more NC Granges to make a community service book in 2024. I challenge all of our NC Granges to complete the community service report and submit their books for the State Convention in September. The application and guidelines will be found in the 2024 Program Guide, and I would like to see 15 or more reports this year. I know that our Granges are doing great work, and I look forward to seeing everything you're doing for your communities. Keep up the good work, Grangers!



James Bennett Associate Member

Todd Stoddard Associate Member

Nate Wrench Mingo Grange

Kenneth Edwards Mingo Grange

SAVE THE DATE

2024 Family
Conference

March 14-17

Atlantic Beach, NC

Registration in January!

KARLY DENNING | YOUTH OF THE YEAR

YOUTH
by : Jennie Gentry



Karly Denning was named the 2023 Grange Youth of the Year at a special awards luncheon during this year's State Grange Convention. Selected by the State Youth Committee, she was surprised with the honor in front of family and friends, and those in the Grange who know her can attest that she is well deserving of this distinction.

A member of Grantham Grange, Karly is the daughter of Timm Denning and Lori Denning of Grantham, NC. She is active in her local Grange, regularly attending meetings, events, and service projects. Karly is also serving her second year on the State Youth Leadership Team, is the current State Youth Steward, and served as last year's National Grange Youth Flora in Reno, NV. She has worked very hard the past few years to plan and lead activities for our youth program.

It is easy for me to remember Karly's first year of Grange Camp. She was a 12-year-old who wanted to try every activity, win every challenge, and become everyone's best friend. When reminiscing about her first year at camp, she will tell you that after that week, she was absolutely hooked on the Grange. Since then, she has grown into an incredible leader and friend in our organization.

Karly has also received several other awards in the Grange including the Most Outstanding Leader Superlative, the Grange Spirit Award, and the State Grange Youth Director's Award which is one of the top honors a youth can receive. She also participated as a member of our state's team for the National Parliamentary Proce-

dure Contest in 2022 helping her team win first place.

Although Karly stands out as a leader, her character, positive attitude, work ethic and willingness to serve are also what led the State Grange Youth Committee to select her as the recipient of this year's award. She truly does go out of her way to help others and to make sure all youth are involved and feeling welcomed. She shows endless enthusiasm for the Grange and is always willing to volunteer and serve. She is also a great role model for others and is well-respected and loved by her peers and all who work with her.

Outside of the Grange, Karly works, studies, and enjoys spending time with her family and friends. She has always wanted to go into a profession where she can help others and serve her community, therefore; she just completed her course work to become an EMT. She also plans to begin studies in law enforcement next year and hopes to become a K-9 officer.

When witnessing her hard work as a leader, her compassion for her fellow Grangers, and her love for this organization, it is very evident why Karly was selected as this year's Youth of the Year. In her words, "To me, the Grange isn't just an organization. It's a family that supports you and helps you grow as an individual. It gives you a sense of belonging and bonds of friendship that last a lifetime. I am forever thankful for my incredible Grange family." We congratulate Karly Denning on receiving this much deserved honor.





It has been very quiet on Jones Street since the North Carolina General Assembly adjourned in both chambers on October 25. They reconvened on November 29

but only for no vote sessions. Presently they are scheduled to convene again on December 20 to take up any business that may need deliberation.

As 2023 winds down, the election hype will certainly continue to escalate as candidates begin running their campaigns in full force in preparation for the 2024 North Carolina primaries on March 5 and then the General election on November 5. The period for filing was December 4-15. Below are the candidates for the Gubernatorial & Council of State races for the 2024 Primaries in North Carolina and their short bio.

(Article from WUNC 91.5 by Mitchell Northam. WUNC Capital Bureau Chief Colin Campbell also contributed to this story.)

North Carolina Gubernatorial Race Republicans Candidates

Dale Folwell

Before he was elected to the office of State Treasurer in 2017, Folwell worked in the state Division of Employment Security under former Gov. Pat McCrory, and before that was the state House Representative for North Carolina's 74th District from 2005 to 2013. He was reelected treasurer in 2020, fighting off a challenge from Democrat Ronnie Chatterji.

Bill Graham

A late entry into the race, the Salisbury-based attorney declared

his candidacy in mid-October. Graham previously ran for the position in 2008, losing to fellow Republican Pat McCrory. This time, Graham says he'll spend \$5 million of his own money, which could help him compete with a frontrunner like Robinson. Graham says he wants to cut taxes on food and make drug dealers face the death penalty.

Mark Robinson

Widely seen as the favorite to win the Republican nomination, Robinson became the first black person elected to the office of Lt. Gov. of North Carolina when he beat Yvonne Lewis Holley for the job in the 2020 election. A veteran of the Army Reserves and a former factory worker, Robinson was a political newcomer until 2018, when a video of him advocating for gun rights at a Greensboro City Council meeting went viral. Robinson has remained a loyal and vocal supporter of former President Donald Trump.

Andy Wells

A member of the North Carolina Board of Transportation and a former state legislature member, Wells is again throwing his hat into the ring for another statewide election, this time seeking the governorship. In 2020, he came in a distant second to Robinson in the Republican primary for lieutenant governor, garnering 14.5% of the vote in a crowded field. A real estate developer from Hickory, Wells served in the North Carolina state Senate from 2015 to 2020 and in the state House for a term before that.

(Former Congressman Mark Walker was in the race until dropping out in late October to run for his congressional seat

again. Jesse Thomas, a retired health care executive who led the Medicaid plan offered by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina, was also in this race, but dropped out to run for Secretary of State.)

North Carolina Gubernatorial Race Democrat Candidates

Michael Morgan

A second Democrat jumped in the race when Morgan, a former state Supreme Court Justice, announced his candidacy in early September. A native of New Bern who holds degrees from Duke and North Carolina Central universities, Morgan served on the state's highest court from 2017 until his recent resignation on Sept. 11, 2023. A former District Court Judge in Wake County, he has also served on the state Superior Court, worked in the North Carolina Department of Justice, and was the state assistant attorney general from 1983 to 1989.

Josh Stein

Stein is seen as the frontrunner for the Democratic nomination and, for a while, was the only member of the party running to succeed Cooper. After serving in the state Senate for seven years, Stein was elected as North Carolina's attorney general in 2016, then reelected in 2020. He won both races by slim margins; less than 1%. During his time as attorney general, Stein has sued the U.S. Postal Service, e-cigarette manufacturer JUUL, and he helped secure settlements from drug makers to combat against the opioid epidemic. Most recently, Stein threatened legal action against the NCAA over the eligibility of UNC-Chapel Hill football player Tez Walker. Stein was endorsed by Cooper in

August, and his campaign raised \$6 million in the first half of 2023.

North Carolina Gubernatorial Race Libertarian Candidates

Shannon Bray

After earning just 1.4% of the vote in North Carolina's 2022 general election for a U.S. Senate seat, Bray is back in another statewide race. Bray is no stranger to elections, but hasn't won one yet. In addition to the Senate race in 2022, he also unsuccessfully ran for Congress in 2019 and for the U.S. Senate in 2020. But in that 2020 race, in which Thom Tillis won reelection over Democratic challenger Cal Cunningham by a margin of just 95,633 votes, Bray garnered 171,571 votes. It was proof that, in tight races, the presence of a third-party candidate can have an impact.

Mike Ross

A businessman from Gaston County, Ross has never held elected office before in the state. According to his LinkedIn profile, he once worked for Wells Fargo, but in 2018 started his financial advising business "My Money Coach." He is the development coordinator for the Libertarian Party of North Carolina.

In addition to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, some of the most important races in North Carolina are the Council of State members. These seven positions fill a very important leadership role in our state. Below is the slate of candidates that have filed for those positions for the 2024 elections as well as a short candidate bio. (*WUNC 91.5*)

Treasurer

John Bradford (R)
Gabe Esparza (D)
Wesley Harris (D)

Dale Folwell is seeking the Republican nomination for governor, so this is an open race without an incumbent for the first time since 2017. Harris and Bradford are both state representatives, while Esparza is a newcomer, a former senior official at the U.S. Small Business Administration, and a former vice president at American Express.

Labor Commissioner

Luke Farley (R)
Jon Hardister (R)
Travis Wilson (R)
Braxton Winston (D)
Current labor commissioner Josh Dobson, a McDowell County Republican, announced last December that he would not seek re-election. Hardister aims to be like Dobson in going from being a state representative to serving in the Council of State. Winston is a Charlotte City Council member; Farley is a Raleigh-based attorney; and Wilson is a Union County Republican who previously ran for the board of commissioners there.

Auditor

Dave Boliek (R)
Jack Clark (R)
AJ Daoud (R)
Charles Dingee (R)
Jim Kee (R)
Louis Toledo (D)
Incumbent Democrat Beth Wood has been the state auditor since 2009 and several Republicans are aiming for her seat after she pled guilty to a hit-and-run in March. On Nov. 1, Wood said she would not seek re-election. Two days later, Toledo, a former assistant state auditor from western North Carolina, announced his candidacy. Boliek, a UNC-Chapel Hill Board of Trustees member, is the latest to join the race. Other candidates include Kee, a former Greensboro City Council member; Daoud, a

former candidate for state senate and secretary of state; and Clark, a CPA and legislative staffer.

Insurance Commissioner

Robert Brawley (R)
David Wheeler (D)
Wheeler has twice previously run unsuccessfully for state senate in District 47, losing in the general election both times to Ralph Hise. Brawley served in the state house from 2013 to 2015 and was briefly the chairman of the House Finance Committee. Two-term incumbent Mike Causey has not filed for re-election.

Secretary of State

Elaine Marshall (D – Incumbent)
Chad Brown (R)
Darren Eustance (R)
John Gouch (R)
Jesse Thomas (R)
Marshall has had this job since 1997 and is indeed seeking re-election. Should she win another term, she will serve under her sixth governor, having now been in office from Jim Hunt to Roy Cooper. Aiming to replace her are a trio of Republicans, two of which – Brown and Gouch – are from Gaston County. Eustance is the former chairman of the Wake County GOP. Thomas, a retired health care executive who led the Medicaid plan offered by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina, has never held elected office before, and switched to this race after briefly running for governor. He has also been involved with the North Carolina chapter of the Forward Party, which was founded by former U.S. presidential candidate Andrew Yang, and has been an outspoken critic of Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson.

Superintendent of Public Instruction

Catherine Truitt (R – Incumbent)
Katie Eddings (D)

Mo Green (D)

A former Johnston County teacher and education advisor to Gov. Pat McCrory, Truitt first assumed this office in 2021 and is seeking a second term. Challenging her are a pair of Democrats including Eddings, who has taught in Robeson and Lee counties, and Green, a former superintendent of Guilford County Schools.

Agriculture Commissioner

Steve Troxler (R - Incumbent)

Sarah Taber (D)

Troxler announced that he is seeking a sixth term in office. Taber is a crop scientist and podcaster from Fayetteville with a large Twitter following. She recently appeared beside North Carolina Democratic Party Chairwoman Anderson Clayton at a Bladen County event in October.

On the Hill

The chaos that was generated as a result of Congressman McCarthy being ousted by his counterparts seems to have calmed down since Congressman Mike Johnson (LA-04) took on his new role as Speaker of the House of Representatives. Below is the November wrap up, *From the Hill*, by National Legislative Director Burton Eller. It covers the stopgap funding bill, the Farm Bill Extension, the new poultry rule as well as the Medicare Multi-cancer Early Detection Screening Coverage Act which the NC Grange has lobbied for as well.

On November 17, a bipartisan Congress passed a stopgap funding bill that was signed by the President. The two-step continuing resolution funds government in two tranches, one until January 19 and the other until February 2. The first funds military construction, Veterans affairs, Agriculture, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and energy and water programs. The second funds the Department of Defense and nondefense social

programs. The legislation did not include emergency spending for the war in Ukraine, military aid to Israel, humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, Israel and Gaza, or additional security along the U.S.-Mexico border. That fight comes separately. The legislation also included a one-year extension of the 2018 farm bill which expired September 30.

Farm bill extended

The federal stopgap spending bill passed by Congress in mid-November included a one-year extension of the 2018 farm bill and provides funding for some relatively small programs that expired on September 30. The extension allows commodity and marketing loan programs such as Agriculture Risk Coverage, Price Loss Coverage and Dairy Margin Coverage to continue in effect for the 2024 crop year. Crop insurance is permanently funded and doesn't need to be reauthorized. Major conservation programs were funded through 2031 under the Inflation Reduction Act. The challenge will be to get the new farm bill done by July 2024. After that, the Senate and House are scheduled to be out except a few weeks between the Republican Convention in July and the November elections.

More protection for poultry growers

Contract growers have long complained that they are at the mercy of large poultry integrators with little recourse. USDA's new poultry rule aims to change that to increase contract transparency, give growers information they need to make wise investment decisions, and prevent grower discrimination in the industry. The poultry rule is among several USDA initiatives intended to address competition across the agriculture industry.

Grange urges Congress to pass multi-cancer screening

The National Grange as well

as the North Carolina Grange partnered with numerous health care advocates and patient groups in urging Congress to pass the Medicare Multi-cancer Early Detection Screening Coverage Act (H.R. 2407 and S. 2085). The legislation would require Medicare and Medicaid to reimburse patients to cover the screening for many additional types of cancers with a single blood draw. The MCED test targets the early detection of cancers which greatly improves treatment options and patient survival rates. National Grange's Burton Eller was included in the testimonials that accompanied the letter to Congress. The Acts now have support of a bipartisan majority of both the House and Senate.



NC JUNIORS TAKE ON NIAGARA FALLS

JUNIORS
by : Emily Hartsell



Did you know that Niagara Falls has moved 7 miles over the past 12,500 years and 75,750 gallons of water per second flow over the American and the Bridal Veil Falls? These are just some of the interesting facts that the Juniors from North Carolina and other states learned about while attending the 157th National Grange Convention in Niagara Falls, NY.

This year, five excited Juniors from NC attended the convention. Lucy Anderson represented NC Juniors as our State Ambassador; she ran against two Juniors from other states. Each Ambassador led a workshop on Friday, talking about their topic, corn. We learned that corn is in basically everything, not only in different types of food, but in medicine and even toothpaste. Lucy did an amazing job representing NC, and I am so very proud of her.

The Juniors cheered on Raegan Hartsell and Lucy during Grange Baseball, a trivia challenge. They were given a variety of Grange questions including tough ones about our history or simple ones such as the name of the National Junior Director. These girls did an amazing job answering the questions and moving around the bases. On Saturday evening during the awards presentation, Lucy was awarded 1st place in the competition, and Raegan was awarded second place. Way to go girls!

Our Juniors enjoyed many different activities during the convention. One of their favorites was the annual Costume Party. This year the theme was a Silent Disco. The Juniors didn't disappoint and came prepared with disco outfits for the event. The party definitely brought the 70's to 2023 in a way for this newer generation to enjoy. You walked into the room to complete silence, but the kids were all dancing to music that played through the headphones they wore, which was set up to three different stations allowing them to dance to the music they liked best. It was a blast for them to dance, and fun for the rest of us to watch!

On Saturday, the Juniors toured around Niagara Falls. The first stop, Cave of the Winds. Being up close to the falls was simply breath taking. The mist coming off the falls was sure to leave you drenched, so ponchos were provided. The next stop was Niagara Power Vista. We learned how water is pulled from the falls to help produce 2.6 million kilowatts of power. This is New York State's biggest electricity producer, providing power to NY as well as neighboring states.

Seeing these Juniors enjoy Grange outside of NC was just simply amazing. They learned more about the traditions on the national level. They also met new friends from different states, friendships that can last a lifetime. I am excited to see what these kids can do this upcoming year in our Junior program.

Junior Grangers are ages 5-13.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY!

by : Jimmy Gentry

For several years, NC Grange has offered grants of up to \$250.00 for K-12 students who are members of the organization. This program is designed to assist Grange families with educational expenses, such as field trips, band instruments, required athletic supplies, or supplies related to subject matter. It can also be used for school uniforms or FFA jackets. The grant cannot be used for private school tuition.

If approved, a check for \$250.00 will be sent to the school. If reimbursement is required, receipts and a description of the purchase must be submitted. A committee composed of the Youth Director, Junior Director and a member of the Board of Directors will review each application for approval.

Application forms may be obtained from the State Grange office. The application will include a description of the need along with costs involved. If reimbursement is being requested, a receipt from the school is required. Also, the local Grange President or Secretary must verify membership in the Grange for no less than 6 months.



*Merry Christmas
from the NC Grange*

