

GRANGE NEWS



*Helene Relief
State Convention
The State Fair*

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UPCOMING EVENTS

November 12-16	National Convention Bettendorf, IA
February 14-16	Winter Youth Conference Asheboro, NC
March 6-9	Family Conference Beaufort, NC
July 6-12	Grange Camp Columbia, NC
September 11-14	State Convention Charlotte, NC

STATE OFFICERS

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Vice President	David Allen
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Steward	Mark Hood
Assistant Steward	Jason Davis
Lady Asst. Steward	Crystal Allen
Chaplain	LaRue Tart
Treasurer	Julia Stack
Secretary	Barden Culbreth
Greeter	Joseph Beaman
Ceres	Dianne Hudson
Pomona	Sharon Ritchie
Flora	Wanda Crawford

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	Melanie Hudson
	John Crawford
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Vice President	David Allen
Secretary	Barden Culbreth
Treasurer	Julia Stack
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	Charles Forrester

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Coordinator	
Legislative Director	Laurie Barnhart
Youth/Young Adult Director	Jennie Gentry
Admin /Junior Director	Emily Hartsell
Community Service Director	Anna Liles
Events/Publications Director	Jessica Horton
Agriculture Programs	Dewitt Hardee
Coordinator	

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

Community is important! A large focus of our organization is local communities and the needs that exist there. Our local communities are changing, especially in those areas where rapid development is taking place. Still, I believe that an emphasis on how we can help meet needs that exist in communities is vital.

We are seeing a huge response from communities across the state and nation to assist communities in the mountains of North Carolina where so much devastation has occurred. There is no doubt that the response will need to be long-term because it will take some time to get those that lost everything back into homes. Most people are inherently good and want to be helpful. The outpouring of support for people that are hurting has been amazing. Here at the office, we have received contributions to the Disaster Fund from Grange members in other states. As of this writing we are collecting items to take to the Edneyville community where much damage was inflicted. Through this effort, we have received donated items from non-Grange members as well.

Unfortunately, we are experiencing a time of division in our country, and state. It is an election season, and we are bombarded with candidate ads, some of which we cannot trust to be true. Candidates speak horribly about each other publicly, to the extent that I worry about the influence that some of them are setting for our youth. I still believe that integrity is important and should be a part of the political process.

The good news is that in our local communities, we can come together working toward a common goal without division, and without political influence. There is a Christian song that I really like called “Come Just As You Are.” In our communities we are able to do this and it doesn’t matter what your background is, where you attend church, whether you are rich or poor. We are people – good people - working together to do something great. That has been the Grange philosophy for all of these years not only in the work that we do, but also in fellowship. We remain relevant and a force for good in North Carolina.



Cover image provided by John Hartsell during his work in western North Carolina following Hurricane Helene



Welcome to our newest Grange members! We are delighted to have you join us.

Brogden Grange #967

Virginia Levy

Grantham Grange #968

Tina Ardner
Michael Giddens
Michelle Giddens
Braston Giddens
Phil Howell
Vickie Howell
Raymond Smith
Andy Wingate
Sonja Wingate
Haley Wingate

Guilford Grange #1036

Diane Everhart

JoCo Grange #1304

Mary Massey
LC Smith
Helen Smith

Patterson Grange #616

Angela Kincaid
Wyatt McKnight

ALL 3 WILKES COUNTY GRANGES!



Wilkes County's three Granges, Ferguson, Little Mountain and Wilkes Community College, were well represented at the NC Grange's State Convention in Durham. Pictured left to right: Tony Jones, Nina and Mickie Hayes, Pat Colglazier, Frank Blevins, Sharon Underwood and Trace Chatham in Durham.

ARCADIA GRANGE

by : Kimberly Flowers

Members of Arcadia Grange set up an exhibitor booth at the Davidson County Agricultural Fair from September 16 – 21 to promote our Grange. We handed out assorted flower and vegetable seed packets along with garden gloves. We also held a drawing for our grand prize, a garden tool bundle, which was given away on the last night of the fair.

At our booth, we also distributed health care materials as part of the National Grange's Rural Life Initiative and gave out information about the State and National Grange. After the fair, I followed up with an email to all guests who signed up for a door prize to thank them for stopping by our booth. I also invited them to join us for a meeting to learn more about the Grange and provided links to the State and National Grange websites.



FERGUSON GRANGE by : Sharon Underwood

A large group of Ferguson Grange members took part in a tour of the Wig Bank of Caldwell County in August. Located in Lenoir, NC, this tour included an informative program on the history of this organization and the important work they do to help people who have lost their hair due to cancer. The tour allowed us to view a room displaying hundreds of wigs that those in need can choose from. They also offer port pillows, hats, scarves, care packages and much more. Our Grange also makes port pillows and gives financial donations to support this wonderful cause.



Several Ferguson Grange ladies recently completed a lovely quilt with matching pillowcase and doll to donate to the Ebenezer Christian Children's Home located in North Wilkesboro. The home provides a loving environment for children who have been removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect. The top of the quilt was pieced by the Wilkes Quilters, and our Grange members hand quilted it. It was made in memory of our beloved Grange member, Susan Freeman.



In September, Ferguson Grange's monthly program was on the historic town of Dula in Caldwell County. This interesting program was presented by our member David Baker. That same month, our Grange participated in the Appalachian Culture Festival at Whippoorwill Village by hosting an informative Grange booth. Our booth included a North Carolina agriculture game, prizes, crafts, plants,

and baked goods for sale. We also had folks sign a large Farmer Appreciation poster to be used for the Farmer Appreciation Day occurring on November 14.



New Initiative Aims to Boost Farm Safety Across Eastern North Carolina

By: Rhonda Jessup, Director of Public Relations
Jason Davis, Assistant Dean-School of Agriculture & Biological Sciences

Eastern North Carolina – Agriculture, one of the most hazardous occupations in the United States, is getting a much-needed safety overhaul through the launch of the Safe Farm Stewards Program. This groundbreaking initiative addresses the alarming rates of farm-related accidents and fatalities, providing farmers with essential tools and knowledge to make their workplaces safer.

A Dangerous Profession

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, farming remains one of the most dangerous professions, with a fatality rate of roughly 19 deaths per 100,000 workers as of 2021. In North Carolina, the numbers are particularly concerning. The North Carolina Farm Bureau reports over 1,000 accidents involving farm equipment and tractors between 2015 and 2019, with Sampson County ranking fourth in the state with approximately 33 reported incidents.

These statistics underscore the pressing need for enhanced safety measures in agriculture. Farmers and agricultural workers face numerous challenges, including market volatility, unpredictable weather, and high-stress levels, all contributing to an increased risk of accidents.

Safe Farm Stewards Program

A new initiative, the Safe Farm Stewards Program, has been launched in response to these challenges. This program results from a collaboration between the University of Kentucky, the University of Maryland, the Southeast Center for Agricultural Safety and Injury Prevention, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, and the University of Mount Olive School of Agriculture and Biological Sciences.

The federally funded Safe Farm Stewards Program aims to significantly improve farm safety. The program recruits students to conduct comprehensive safety reviews of farms in Eastern North Carolina. These students assess farm equipment and implements used in the past three years, identifying safety defects and potential hazards.

How It Works

Farms participating in the program receive a thorough safety

evaluation. Those scoring above 70% on their safety

review are awarded the title of Farm Safety Stewards and receive a metal sign that designates them as leaders in safe farming practices. This recognition highlights their commitment to safety and sets a benchmark for others in the community.

For farms not meeting the 70% threshold, the program offers guidance on making necessary repairs or discarding equipment deemed unsafe. This constructive approach ensures that all participants have the opportunity to improve and eventually achieve Farm Safety Steward status.

A Community Effort

The Safe Farm Stewards Program represents a vital step forward in promoting agricultural safety. By involving students in the evaluation process, the program fosters a new generation of safety-conscious farmers and agricultural professionals. The collaborative effort between universities and safety organizations further emphasizes the community's role in safeguarding its members.

University of Mount Olive Assistant Dean of the School of Agriculture and Biological Sciences Dr. Jason Davis emphasized the program's importance: "Our goal is to empower farmers with the knowledge and tools they need to prioritize safety. By working together, we can make a real difference in reducing farm-related accidents and ensuring a safer environment for everyone involved."

Get Involved

Farmers interested in participating in the Farm Safety Steward project or seeking more information about the program can visit Safe Farm Stewards or contact Dr. Jason Davis at RDavis@umo.edu.

The University of Mount Olive is a private institution rooted in the liberal arts tradition with defining Christian values. The University was founded by the Convention of Original Free Will Baptists. For more information, visit www.umo.edu



** Jason Davis is a member of Westbrook Grange in Sampson County. Westbrook Grange has worked to promote the Farm Safety Steward Campaign. Pictured is Kyle Smith, a Junior in Agribusiness at UMO.



STATE CONVENTION COMMUNITY SERVICE

Thank you, thank you, thank you! We collected items for the Ronald McDonald House (RMH) in Durham during our State Convention, and I want to thank all of our members and Granges across our great state for participating in this project. We collected items to help families who are staying at the RMH while their children receive treatment in the hospital. The RMH was very appreciative of the donations that we collected, which were delivered to their facilities during the convention. Stay tuned for our community service project for Family Conference, to be announced soon!



HURRICANE HELENE: SURVIVAL & RELIEF

by : Jennie Gentry

I wish I could articulate the whirlwind of emotions that consumed me while I watched the news on Friday, September 27. As footage from Hurricane Helene's wrath over Western North Carolina started trickling in, my heart completely broke. I felt helpless and found myself shedding tears as I saw pictures of some of my favorite places on earth completely destroyed.

I am a graduate of Western Carolina University and spent five amazing years living in Jackson County. Childhood trips with my family hiking beautiful places instilled in me a deep love for the mountains which has only grown deeper as years have passed. I have always felt at home, at peace, in Western NC and have often considered living there again. I know that many of you have similar fond memories of time spent in our mountains and share the same heartbroken feelings for our state.

One of the hardest parts of Helene's aftermath was the act of waiting. With cell towers, power, and internet down, it was excruciating waiting to hear back from loved ones. From texting to social media messaging, I frantically worked to check on dear friends and Grange members. It took days to hear back. My college roommates from Franklin, safe. Grange youth in Cullowhee, safe. Close college friends from Henderson County, safe. Former Grange youth from Burnsville, safe. Our family and farm in Wilkes County, safe. With each "safe" message that I received, a sense of relief washed over me.

Then came the stories of survival. A close college friend of mine in Fletcher lost her house when it was split in half after a massive tree fell on it. Had her young son been home, he would not be with us today; the tree fell on top of his bed. Another friend of mine spent the first 2 weeks after the hurricane hiking up and down the mountain near Morganton just to take baby formula and other supplies to families who were stuck. Two other dear friends lost everything, yet both were in their communities of Burnsville and Fairview working to help others in need.



We quickly got in touch with Wendy Henderson, President of Edneyville Grange in hard-hit Henderson County. After hearing that their members were safe, we worked to determine their community's needs. She spoke with local schools that were asking for warm clothing and Walmart gift cards. NC Grange put a plea out to our membership

and social media, and the donations started pouring in.

To offer a little perspective, Edneyville is a small, unincorporated town that sits just east of Hendersonville. Passing through the county is Chimney Rock Road, or Highway 64. A few miles east of Edneyville, this road meets Highway 74 in the town of Bat Cave, and Gerton is just north of there. Slightly south of Bat Cave down Highway 74 are Chimney Rock and Lake Lure in Rutherford County. All of these towns were hit so hard that large stretches of both highways were wiped out and closed, only to open nearly a month after the hurricane. Students from all of these towns attend schools in Edneyville and Hendersonville.

As we worked collecting items for families, we heard from teachers and principals how difficult it was getting in contact with their students. Lisa Souther, our 2024 State Educator of the Year, teaches at Edneyville Elementary School. Ten days after the storm, she described, "I just finally heard from my last classroom family today, and they're all safe. But there's trauma with all of us. Parents were writing me saying their children were worried about me and about their friends' safety. Our school was an emergency shelter for over a week. Our students in Bat Cave, Chimney Rock and Lake Lure were air lifted out of their homes by helicopter. They're probably having nightmares."

With kids and families in dire need, we filled an entire trailer full of clothing thanks to Grange members and friends. This first load was delivered on October 14 in Hendersonville where we met Wendy Henderson who recruited help to unload the supplies. A few weeks later, we returned with a truck load

of clothing and supplies that Chris Johnston, Michigan State Grange President, drove down to deliver. As monetary donations have been received from state and local Granges from across the country, we have been working to assess needs so that we can assist members and communities in the best way possible. We have been blown away by the generosity of our Grange friends across the nation.

Emily Hartsell and I recently visited Edneyville Grange to enjoy an evening with their members and determine more ways to assist their community. What we heard and saw was heartbreaking. As we drove down Highway 64 to Bat Cave, we were shocked at the devastation. In her email, Lisa had stated, "The devastation here is worse than the pictures and videos on Facebook." That's exactly what we experienced. We had no words as we tried processing what we saw. We also noticed that the community is very much still in shock, but they are working together to help each other get back on their feet.

More stories were shared during our visit. Grange member Linda Icard is the owner of Linda's Plants and Shrubs in Hendersonville. One of her business sites sits near North Clear Creek, which flooded, wiping out the entire operation at that location. She lost greenhouses and all their plants including their beautiful rose shrubs. Her house was also damaged by 13 inches of floodwater. Although half of the operation was destroyed, she is hopeful that she and her son will rebuild the business.

Mary Henry, also a member of Edneyville Grange, is now living with her sister because she cannot get to her damaged house. Mary was

home during the hurricane. She described the wind and rain as louder than anything she'd ever experienced. Her house sits further up the mountain with a dam that holds water for a pond on her property. The torrential rainfall broke the dam. As water poured down the mountain, her entire driveway was washed out leaving no way to access her house. Trees fell on her carport and yard, destroying both vehicles. A retired senior, Mary and a friend staying with her had to hike down the mountain on foot before meeting a local man who helped rescue them. She left with a small bag and the clothes on her back. She has not yet been able to return to her home. With the shifting of the landscape, a new, long driveway will have to be built up the back side of the mountain to access her house. She smiled, though, showing off the outfit she had borrowed from one of her daughters.

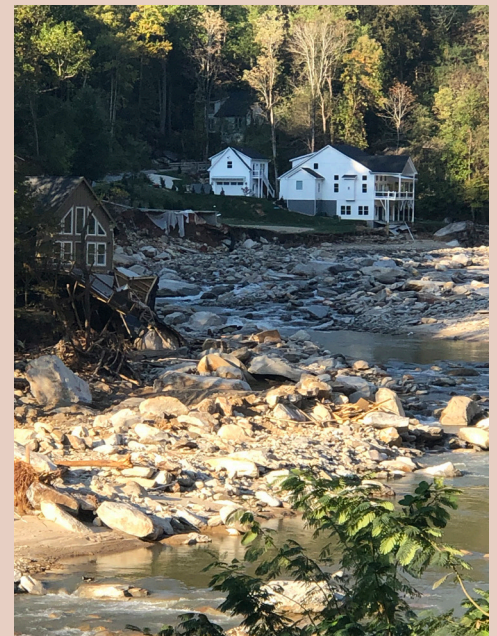
I was amazed at how positive these ladies are, even after such loss. They still found laughter in small things and described the support they've received from their community. Liz Enloe's basement experienced flooding, and work has already begun to repair the damage. However, when I mentioned our disaster relief fund with an offer to help, she brushed it off wanting others in need to be taken care of first. I was blown away by the strength, positivity and generosity of all these members and those from the community that we met despite the devastation and loss they have experienced.

Some of our members were deployed through their jobs to hard hit areas. John Hartsell, St. John's Grange, worked in Chimney Rock and Lake Lure for a week with the DOT quickly after the hurricane hit. He sent pictures of the devas-

tation he saw, but also showed signs of progress as roads were being repaired. Cole Settle was also sent to assist with law enforcement efforts.

There are more stories from several members who experienced property damage in other areas, and stories from people who have volunteered in WNC or have loved ones there. As we navigate through this difficult time, we need to remember that people are still in need and will be for a very long time. "It's just a lot here right now. Everyone's emotionally, physically and mentally drained, and it's going to take a long time to get some semblance of a new normal," stated Lisa Souther.

We thank everyone for your donations to assist with relief efforts. Let's continue to pray for all WNC communities; for safety, for needs to be met, for infrastructure, for warmth, and for peace through stress. North Carolinians are strong and resilient, and we have no doubt that our majestic mountains will survive and become more beautiful than ever.



Photos provided by : Jennie Gentry & John Hartsell



2024 STATE CONVENTION

BY: JESSICA HORTON

The North Carolina Grange held its annual State Convention in Durham, September 19-22, 2024. Grangers from the Carolinas and Florida gathered together at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel to fellowship and conduct the annual business of the Grange.

Prior to opening the convention, a special reception was held on Wednesday evening at the JC Raulston Arboretum in Raleigh near NC State University. The reception was held to honor our grant winners who are working to preserve farmland in our state and had subsequently joined the Grange. It was a lovely evening with wonderful food in a beautiful location!

Most Grangers arrived on Thursday to deliver contest entries and community service items. Officers also took part in 6th Degree practice with coordinator, Vinnie Duncan. Attendees then rested up for Friday's full day of convention activities. Friday morning, Grangers departed on a bus bound for the Poe Center for Health Education in Raleigh. The Poe Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to teaching youth about physical and mental health. They complete this goal through programming about nutrition, mental wellness, cooking, gardening and play by using their unique teaching spaces. They provide programming both on-site and virtually for those who cannot visit their location. Grangers were able to explore the facility and gain a thorough understanding of how the center helps youth.

After departing the Poe Center, Grangers traveled to the JC Raulston Arboretum for lunch in the garden. Members enjoyed a delicious meal before strolling through the beautiful gardens. Upon arriving back at the hotel, members gathered for our annual reception to honor our 2024 award recipients. Before the awards were presented, attendees were greeted by NC Commissioner of Agriculture, Steve Troxler, who commended the Grange and its members for all they do to serve communities and strengthen agriculture.

Award recipients from across the state gathered to be recognized for their hard work and dedication this year. Some of the standout awards included the Walker Fam-

ily, Grange Farm of the Year; Kathy Irvin, Granger of the Year; Ferguson Grange, 1st Place in Community Service; and Westbrook Grange, which was named Grange of the Year! In addition to a monetary prize, winners were also gifted a beautiful, wooden plaque crafted by Corriher Grange member, Carrie Brown. As the day began to wind down, members gathered Friday evening for the annual live auction of specialty and funny items. Funds raised go directly to the Disaster Relief Fund to help those in need after natural disasters in our state. This year \$2,231.50 was raised for the fund.

On Saturday morning, Garey Fox, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at NC State University, spoke at our annual breakfast. He shared his vision for the department and how he hopes to get more students into ag programs at the University. He also spent time after the event talking with several of our youth interested in entering the ag field. His wife and youngest son were also able to join us for breakfast.

Following breakfast, the Youth and Junior Grangers took their places to officially open the meeting for business. Youth President, Karly Denning, and Junior President, Lacy Liles, presided over the opening and did a fantastic job. They were both presented with certificates acknowledging their service as leaders this year. Following the opening, NC Grange President Jimmy Gentry presided over the business meeting, and Vice President David Allen worked through this year's resolutions with the delegates.







Saturday's Youth and Junior Lunch Banquet honored many of our outstanding young Grangers. The State Youth Leadership Team emceed the lunch, recounting their favorite memories from the year. State Youth Director Jennie Gentry and State Junior Director Emily Hartsell presented awards to recognize students, ages 5 to 20, for their service, leadership, character, and dedication to these programs. Included in the awards, Youth of the Year was presented to Taylor Rogers, and Junior of the Year was given to Avery Furr. After completing the afternoon's business meeting, members gathered for the exemplification of the 5th and 6th Degrees under the direction of Vinnie Duncan and David Allen.

The convention's annual memorial service was held on Sunday morning to honor those we lost over the past year. State Grange Chaplain LaRue Tart offered another beautiful worship service and ended our weekend together on a high note. It was a wonderful, productive weekend filled with laughs and accomplishments. We are looking forward to our 2025 Convention to be held in a new location, the Charlotte Hilton Airport, September 11-14. We look forward to seeing you there!



FATHER, HUSBAND, SON, NEIGHBOR & GRANGER

by : Mark Davis

John Richard Norwood has always been an outgoing, personable individual. When we first met him several years ago, he was a teenager who worked on the farm and held a part-time job at the local Tractor Supply. When walking in the store, you could see him eagerly greeting everyone with a huge smile on his face, always one of the first to offer assistance. He was the employee that never met a stranger. Then, he was off to NC State University to pursue his engineering degree where he was on the “tractor building team.” During his last year at State, he landed an internship with Duke Energy, which led to a permanent position after graduation. In his early years with Duke, John Richard was a Disaster Response Team Member. He went ahead of the linemen seeking out the fuel, meal and lodging stops as the group traveled to the locations where needed. On site, he was one of the engineers helping to restore power to those communities. With his recent promotion within Duke Energy, he was moved off the response team and no longer travels with the linemen.

When Hurricane Helene hit western NC and created so much devastation, John Richard was like a caged cat – frustrated at being at home, wanting to get back to the front line to assist those in such dire need. He prayed Friday night, the day the hurricane hit, asking the LORD to show him a way to help. When he woke up the very next morning, there was a large tree across the neighbor’s driveway. His immediate response was to get the tractor and chainsaw and start clearing that driveway. This gave him inspiration, and he thought, “Maybe my calling is to assist here at home in getting the farmers in Western NC supplies that they need like hay, fencing material, and other farm supplies that they lost.” John Richard took immediate action and called our local County Extension Livestock agent. They coordinated with NCDA staff at the Upper Piedmont Research Station. By late that same afternoon, less than 24 hours after the hurricane devastated Western NC, a Hay & Farm Supply Drive was set up for folks to bring their donations to the research farm the following day. John Richard was not waiting to be asked to do something – he was asking what he could do!

I received the notification about the hay drive by text that Saturday night. By Sunday morning, he already had a commitment of over 200 round bales of hay as well as volunteers that would come pick up the hay if the farmer was not able to bring it to the research farm. Our son, Jay, and I started loading the hay we were donating after we got home from church. When we arrived with the first load midafternoon, hay had already started coming in. The staff at the farm was there with tractors to unload the trailers as they arrived. When we got back with the second load, there were probably 150 to 175 rolls already delivered. They were unloading the trailers like a well-oiled machine, and by the time one trailer was unloaded, another was pulling in. All said and done, they collected approximately 230 round rolls and over 300 square bales on Sunday afternoon. After deliveries, the research station’s shop area was full of various types of posts, wire, other fencing supplies, hygiene products, paper products, pet food and many other things that the NCDA will distribute to our neighbors in Western NC.

I am delighted that we were able to participate in this effort, initiated by a caring dad, husband, son, neighbor, and member of the NC State Grange. He is a prime example of the heart and soul that we all should represent and strive for! Thank you, John Richard Norwood, for your caring heart and setting an example for your young children as well as us older folks to follow.



NEVER STOP LEARNING

I'm a retired teacher, and I often miss teaching and the students. I always told my students, "You never stop learning." Even Jesus, the Master, was a teacher. He told His followers, "Study to show yourself approved to God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth," (2 Timothy 2:15).

I found this list of Alphabet Scriptures on a children's video on Facebook. I found it to be an interesting and useful way to study and remember Bible verses. You can put your own version of favorites to change it, but either way, enjoy.

ALPHABET BIBLE VERSES

- A: Ask and it will be given to you. Matthew 7:7
B: Be kind and compassionate to one another. Ephesians 4:32
C: Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right. Ephesians 6:1
D: Don't be anxious about anything. Philippians 4:6
E: Every good and perfect gift is from above. James 1:17
F: Fear not for I am with you. Isaiah 41:10
G: God is our refuge and strength. Psalms 46:1
H: Honor your father and mother so that you may live long. Exodus 20:12
I: I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Psalms 139:14
J: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today and forever. Hebrews 13:8
K: Know that the Lord is God. Psalms 100:3
L: Love is patient, love is kind. 1 Corinthians 13:4
M: Make a joyful noise all the earth. Psalms 98:4
N: Nothing is impossible with God. Luke 1:37
O: O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name. Psalms 8: 1
P: Praise the Lord. How good it is to sing praises to our God. Psalms 147:1
Q: Quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger. James 1:19
R: Rejoice in the Lord. Again, I say rejoice. Philippians 4:4
S: Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne. Revelation 7:10
T: Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Proverbs 3:5
U: Under His wings you will find refuge. Psalms 91:4
V: Victory belongs to the Lord. Proverbs 21:31
W: We love the Lord because He first loved us. 1 John 4:19
X: Exalted be our God, the Rock is my Savior. 2 Samuel 22:47
Y: You are the Light of the world. Matthew 5:14
Z: Zion hears and rejoices. Psalms 97:8



Make Your Tailgate NC

Below is one of the delicious recipes featured in the NC Farmer's Market segment of CBS17's "On Carolina Soil" with Emily Wagner which highlighted using NC products to host a great tailgate. Find the episode at www.cbs17.com under *On Carolina Soil*.

Bacon Deviled Eggs

6 eggs

1/2 cup homemade mayo or store bought paleo mayo (I always make my own, recipe below)

2 teaspoons dijon mustard

1/4 tsp fine grain sea salt

2-3 slices nitrate free bacon

2 tbsp thinly sliced fresh chives or green onions

1/2 tsp smoked paprika

Instructions

To hard boil the eggs, place them in a large saucepan and cover with cold water about an inch above the eggs. Bring to a rolling boil, then turn off the heat and cover the saucepan. Let the eggs steam this way for 12-14 minutes, then run under cold water. Allow the eggs to cool for at least 15 minutes, then peel.

Meanwhile, cook the bacon in a skillet until crispy, then drain and crumble.

Once the eggs have cooled, slice each one in half lengthwise. Carefully remove the yolks and put them in a medium bowl. Set the egg white halves aside for the meantime. Mash the hard-boiled egg yolks with a fork, then add the mustard, mayo, salt, pepper, hot sauce and 1 tablespoon of chives and mix very well, until you have a thick, creamy filling for the whites.

Carefully spoon the yolk mixture into the egg white halves, about 1-2 tbsp per half or enough to overfill a little. Sprinkle the smoked paprika over all the eggs, then top with the crumbled bacon and more chopped chives. Serve right away, or cover tightly with plastic wrap and store in the fridge until serving. Enjoy!

YOUTH OF THE YEAR Taylor Rogers

YOUTH
by : Jennie Gentry



Taylor Rogers was named the 2024 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 Camp Grange, Taylor is the daughter of Jeremy and Chasidy Rogers of Vanceboro, NC. She is serving her second year on the State Youth Leadership Team and is the current State Youth Program Director. She has also served all year as State Grange Youth Ambassador and will represent NC at this year's National Grange Convention in Iowa. She has worked very hard the past few years to promote the Grange and to plan and lead activities for our youth program.

Taylor first heard about the Grange through her high school agriculture teacher and FFA advisor, Caroline (Tart) Warmack, who also grew up in our youth program. Hearing about Caroline's positive experiences in the Grange, along with how much one of her classmates had been enjoying the youth events, Taylor decided to attend Grange Camp. Since then, she has attended every Grange event she possibly can and has become a prominent leader in our youth program.

Taylor has received several other significant awards in the Grange. She's a two-time recipient of the State Grange Leadership Award and received the 2023 State Grange President's Award, one of the top honors a youth can receive in our program. She also received the Best All Around Superlative at Grange Camp this year, selected by her peers. Taylor's leadership, commitment to the Grange, and strong character have played a part in her selection for these awards.

Although Taylor 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 goes 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 enjoys helping new youth get involved in our program. She is also a great role model for others and is well-respected and loved by her peers and all who work with her.

Taylor is a sophomore at Western Carolina University where she is pursuing a degree in Communications. Outside of her studies, she holds employment, volunteers, and serves as the new coach for Franklin High School's Color Guard. She enjoys campus life, reading, spending time with family and friends, and doting on her dog, Teddy.

When seeing her hard work as a leader, her compassion for her fellow Grangers, and her love for this organization, it is very evident why Taylor was selected as this year's Youth of the Year. Taylor expressed her gratitude by saying, "Receiving this award means so much more than I can describe in words. Grange has given me a safe place to be my true self, and I hope I can continue helping other youth in the Grange to realize that they can do the same. I am so grateful to the Grange for helping me find people who love and appreciate me for me, and I cannot thank everyone enough for selecting me this award." We congratulate Taylor Rogers on receiving this much deserved honor.



CAPITOL NEWS

by : Laurie Barnhart



Western North Carolina was devastated by Hurricane Helene on September 27. It traveled from the Big Bend area of Florida to central Georgia with windspeeds and gusts above 100 mph, before hitting the Appalachian Mountains where it demolished roads, bridges, homes and businesses. It also tremendously affected agriculture including farms, livestock, apple orchards and more. The latest number of deaths is around 230 with many still missing and unaccounted for. Twenty-five counties in the western part of the state received disaster declarations. It is a crisis unlike anything North Carolina has ever seen.

The North Carolina General Assembly convened sporadically over the last few months to take up any new business; however, due to the devastating effects of Hurricane Helene, on October 9, the General Assembly convened to begin the process of disaster recovery efforts. On that same day, the Disaster Recovery Act was passed which replaced the previous version of House Bill 149. This Act, which required only a yes or no vote, passed chambers by 100% without any amendments. It was signed by Governor Cooper the next day.

In effect, the Disaster Recovery Act creates the Hurricane Helene and Potential Tropical Cyclone Funds to support disaster relief and recovery. It also permits flexibility measures and modifications for education, elections, environmental protocols, state employment benefits, rapid recovery loan program, transportation, tax deadlines, and health and public safety. \$273 million from this fund was appropriated as a “first step.” More funding for Hurricane Helene relief will be appropriated. Fortunately, North Carolina has \$4.75 billion in what is referred to as a “rainy day fund.” There are also additional funds in saving reserves for emergency response purposes.

The Disaster Recovery Act of 2024 includes:

- An extension of the statewide declaration of emergency until March 1, 2025.
- The creation of the Hurricane Helene Disaster Recovery Fund to be used to provide relief and assistance from the effects of Hurricane Helene.
- The creation of the Potential Tropical Cyclone #8 Disaster

Recovery Fund to provide relief and assistance from the effects of the storm in Brunswick and New Hanover Counties

- \$250 million to the Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management, to provide the state match for federal disaster assistance programs for state agencies and local governments. A portion of these funds are to be used to create a revolving loan program to assist local governments and state agencies with cash flow management while awaiting federal reimbursements.
- \$16 million to the Department of Public Instruction to supplement or replace lost compensation of school nutrition employees due to school closures resulting from Hurricane Helene.
- \$2 million to provide grants to the NC League of Municipalities, the NC Association of County Commissioners, and the NC Association of Regional Councils of Governments to provide technical assistance with local recovery funds.
- \$5 million to the State Board of Elections to assist with voter outreach and the administration of the upcoming election in the affected counties.

In addition to funding, the bill also makes a variety of regulatory changes to help address some of the challenges impacted communities are facing, including:

- Providing public school units (PSUs) calendar flexibility by granting them authority to excuse days missed for schools that closed in September or October due to weather.
- Increasing the amount of authorized remote instruction time for schools located in disaster-declared counties for the remainder of the school year.
- Extending the payment deadline for growth bonuses for principals by one month for those that are employed in PSUs in affected counties.
- Waiving the requirement for students enrolled in educator preparation programs to complete clinical internships if the requirement would impact the student’s ability to graduate in December 2024.
- Allowing a voter impacted by the disaster to return an absentee ballot to any county board of elections office and early voting site in addition to the State Board of Elections.



- Providing funding flexibility to local governments for wastewater or drinking water projects, allowing local governments to use those previously appropriated funds for beginning, resuming, or continuing to operate a drinking water or wastewater infrastructure project.
- Authorizing open burning without an air quality permit of storm-related debris originating from affected counties.
- Extending the term of loans made under the Rapid Recovery Loan Program up to 180 months for businesses located in affected counties.
- Waiving fees assessed by the Division of Motor Vehicles for drivers licenses, identification cards, titles, registrations, and late payments.
- Changing the six-month separation requirement for Teachers' and State Employee's Retirement System retirees to a one-month separation and applies to those returning in a position needed due to Hurricane Helene.
- Providing financial relief to certain taxpayers located in the counties affected by Hurricane Helene who would otherwise be required to file returns and make tax payments in the immediate wake of the recovery period.
- Extending from 7 to 21 working days the deadline for preliminary hearings related to post-release supervision and parole violations.
- Waiving certain mandatory standards for a license for child-care facilities in areas impacted by Hurricane Helene.
- Authorizing the Division of Health Service Regulation to extend by up to 60 days the duration of a provisional license issued to an adult care home or a family care home in an impacted area.

During the vote that unanimously passed HB149, legislators representing counties and districts in Western North Carolina spoke about the impact Hurricane Helene has had on their communities, sharing stories about the destruction, but also the inspiring statewide response. Legislative leadership made clear that this relief bill was just the first step in their plans to help the state recover. Governor Cooper signed HB 149 into law stating that, "Recovery for Western North Carolina will require unprecedented help from state and federal sources, and this legislation is a strong first step."

From the Hill

Congress has been on recess since September 27 to turn their focus on the upcoming election. They are scheduled to return November 12, although with the Hurricane Helene crisis, they could possibly convene before then. The most urgent needs are

already fully funded, however. Unfortunately, the Farm Bill, which has been long and unsuccessfully negotiated, has been a bone of contention between the two parties. They still have not reached a compromise. Farmers have worked diligently to get a new Farm Bill passed, especially those most impacted by commodity market declines. More than likely, another extension will be passed during the lame duck session after the November 5 elections. The farmers that are most impacted by this are those that depend on commodity title programs. (Excerpts are from the National Grange "View from the Hill.")



Be sure to check out The Grange Hall Podcast on Spotify, Apple Music, etc.

In Memoriam

<i>Richard White</i>	<i>Schley</i>
<i>Roy Wilkerson</i>	<i>Schley</i>

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

Psalms 118:28
* 50 Year Member



ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

I remember Mom taking us shopping for shoes when we were young. The salesman would bring out that silver contraption that we placed our foot upon to take our foot measurements for the correct size. Our measurements were all different as the contraption was adjusted. Just like a pair of shoes, one size will not fit all.

Our NC Grange Insurance agents are just like that shoe salesman. With a bit of inquiry to determine an individual's current and anticipated health needs, agents can direct that person towards the plan that will fit his or her needs the best. BlueCross BlueShield has an array of Individual Under65 plans as well as Medicare Advantage and Medicare Supplement plans offered in all 100 counties of North Carolina. Here are some of the highlights of the changes for 2025 in both market segments as we are in the midst of enrollment season for individual health insurance plans. This is going to be a great year to review your current plan to determine the best plan changes for you and the different plan options available in your area.

For the Under65 market, there are several changes. We continue to see consolidation of plan offerings and plan name changes per CMS regulations. There are also Off Marketplace options for individuals or families that are either not eligible or desire the subsidy offered and/or want to have insurance coverage for providers that are not in-network for the marketplace plans. For 2025, those with HSA eligible plans will need to consider these off-marketplace offerings. Our Blue-Cross BlueShield of NC marketplace plans will vary by region while at least one off-marketplace plan is offered statewide.

The Individual Medicare Insurance Segment will see some substantial changes for 2025, most significantly within the prescription drug coverage. For 2025, the "donut hole" will

disappear and the maximum out of pocket that the insured will spend for prescription drug coverage is \$2,000.00. This will include the Rx Deductible, if any, as well as the co-payments for prescription drugs. Based on the various plans, you may see that certain tiers have moved from a no deductible stage to a deductible being applied. This is an excellent year to review your current or anticipated prescription list to see that your prescriptions are within the plan formulary and what drug tiers they are assigned to. We can then help you determine which plan may be the best fit for your current and anticipated needs.

Of course, with this prescription drug change, the cause-and-effect principle applies to the insurance policies as well. Due to insurance carriers picking up the prescription drug cost previously paid by the insured when the insured fell into the donut hole, some extra benefits previously offered on the Medicare Advantage policies have reduced or changed. Overall, we did not see a significant reduction in these benefits, so we are very happy about that. The Medicare Advantage plans continue to have a focus on "well care" with benefits typically including extras such as vision, dental, hearing, over-the-counter allowances, and exercise programs.

With all of these changes, be sure to contact your local agent, or myself to find an agent in your area, so that we can place your foot upon that sizing tool and direct you to a plan that best fits your and your family's health insurance needs.

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NC Grange & The State Fair

by : Jessica Horton





Each October, North Carolina celebrates the fall season with the annual NC State Fair in Raleigh. The NC Grange hosts a booth each year in the Kerr Scott Building to promote our organization. However, this year's fair also held the Century Farm Reunion which the NC Grange is the primary sponsor. Held Monday morning at the Horse Complex, this special event occurs every four years to honor farms across our state that have been in the same families for 100 or more years.

This year's reunion brought over 2600 of our closest farm friends together to honor the many years of legacy farming in our state. This is the largest turnout the reunion has had since its start in 1970. Many Grange members were in attendance, and our staff loved getting to hug their necks and hand out goodies to those who made the trip. NC Grange President Jimmy Gentry, also a century farm owner, was invited to provide remarks during the presentations.

The application to be considered a century farm can be found on the NCDA website, ncagr.gov. Applications are accepted year-round, and requirements include continuous family ownership for 100 years or more with the current title held by a blood relative of the original owner, or a legally adopted child of the descendant. For questions about this program, contact Jackie Bullock at jackie.bullock@ncagr.gov.

NC Grange congratulates all of our state's century farm families. We are thankful for your continued stewardship of the land in our state. We also thank everyone who stopped by our booth to share the love of the Grange and learn about what we offer communities across our state. Staff and volunteers enjoyed working at our booth and gave away thousands of squishy cows, koozies, pencils, beach balls and chip clips! We look forward to continuing our support of the century farm program and the State Fair.



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