



the CONNECTICUT GRANGER

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Looking toward early spring



George Russell
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Let's all look for an early spring with Groundhog Day on February 2. Let's hope he doesn't see his shadow and we have an early spring.

By the time you read this article we will know if we have six more weeks of winter or not. But this is the time to plan our spring plant sales and rummage sales that have been such a success in the last couple of years for our Granges.

As you are reading this article, most of you will already know that Camp Berger has been sold. A letter was sent out in January stating that the Camp had been sold. This was a hard decision to make by your Board of Directors. Over the last 3+ years there's been a lot of discussion on what to do with the Camp. Your Board of Directors thought this would be in the best interest of all parties. The new owners have met all the requirements of the deed restrictions and the property will remain a facility for youth for many years to come. This sale has been approved by the Connecticut Attorney General's Office. I would like to thank Earl and Sandy Phillips for watching over the Camp for the past 3+ years and also Todd for going over there very time the security cameras went off.

Again this year, the Northeast Leaders' Conference, which was supposed to be combined with the Lecturers and the Youth has been canceled due to COVID-19. This conference was supposed to be hosted by the Maine State Grange during the last week of March.

As we see a surge in COVID cases

here in Connecticut, many of our Granges have returned to meeting on Zoom in January and February and also have canceled some of their fundraisers. Hopefully this will pass soon and we can get back to meeting in person and doing our all-important fundraisers.

Let's all hope we have an early spring. so we can get back to work. So, stay safe and healthy and hope to see you all soon.

A young American soldier fights his way to Berlin

Last Gasp for the Germans

The following is an article written about William "Bill" Gardiner and his involvement in World War II. Many of us know him from his year of service in the Grange as Deputy, General Deputy, Master of West Hartford Grange and a member of the Beecher Installing Team. He was husband to former National Grange CWA Director Betty Jane Gardiner.

While his Grange work was noteworthy, his life as a young soldier during World War II is even more noteworthy and this article is a rare glimpse into the early life of a Grange member that we might not have had otherwise.

We have not been able to find out the name of the publication this piece was written for but it was written by Michael P. Saunders, great nephew of Bill. It is a fascinating read and we hope you enjoy it. – Editor

On June 6, 1944 thousands of American Soldiers invaded Normandy during D-Day. The objective was to crush the Nazi forces that were occupying and oppressing most of Europe, and threatened to take over most of the world. American soldiers traveled far from home to fight and to kill in order to protect their country and their loved ones. American soldiers had to storm the heavily fortified beaches at Normandy, invade the German occupied territory, and fight their way to Berlin. One of the largest and bloodiest battles of the Atlantic theatre, the Battle of the Bulge, took place soon before the collapse of the Nazi forces. Every soldier had a responsibility

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Betty Jane & Bill Gardiner

Connecticut State Grange
A part of the National Grange
American Values. Hometown Roots



NEXT ISSUE . . . Articles Due February 15

Bill Gardiner

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and a duty and did their part to defeat the Axis powers. This is the story of one such American soldier named Bill Gardiner, my great uncle, and how he fought to protect us during his time in the service from 1942 to 1945.

Shortly before 1942, a 21 year old Bill Gardiner was living on South Street in Hartford. He was working at Pratt and Whitney at a job that he enjoyed. He was running a milling machine and was being paid 60 cents



A postcard image of Pratt & Whitney Aircraft in East Hartford during the World War II era.

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WW II Flying Fortress "Connecticut Granger"

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per hour, which was a comfortable income that afforded him to buy a new car. But for Bill and the rest of America, life would not remain this comfortable for long.

"The Army called me," said Gardiner, "Whether you volunteered or waited to be drafted it was the same thing. I was going to be going anyway; they just beat me to it." On three occasions Gardiner was excused from the drafting process because he was doing an important job at his factory, and the factory needed the manpower. After the third, says Gardiner, "I had to go in." Bill describes his drafting experience saying, "I went down to the draft board, and they asked me which service I would like to join. I chose the Army... Because I thought I'd see more."

Soon after being drafted, Bill Gardiner was sent to Fort Devens in Ayer, MA for basic training. There Gardiner was lucky in that he was able to come home every weekend during his 10 month basic training period. During basic training, Gardiner went to radio school, and underwent training to become a Combat Engineer.

"Then they shipped us out," said Gardiner. He described the emotions of himself and his comrades as anxious to go after all of their training. Gardiner left Fort Dix on New Year's Eve aboard the

Duchess of Richmond. "We called it the Roaches of Duchmand," says Gardiner. "We would wake up in the middle of the night and shake out our blanket of all the roaches." Ten days later Gardiner and his company, the 1103rd Combat Engineers, landed in England.

When asked what he did when he got to England, Gardiner replied "Date all the girls! What else is there?" In reality Gardiner had many duties including Guard Duty, Kitchen Patrol, Maintenance and Combat Drills. For 6 months, Gardiner's company was stationed within an English town inside apartment buildings, which allowed him opportunities to visit the town when he was off duty.

"Then we went over to France," said Gardiner. The next phase of his journey was to join the rest of the American Army in the Atlantic for the D-Day invasion of Normandy, France. "We left in a big boat at 2:00 in the morning," said Gardiner. "A little ways off shore the ship stopped and we got into landing crafts. We got orders to climb over the railings into these little boats bobbing around down in the water. I climbed over the railing and down this little rope ladder and when I got to the bottom there was no room for my feet." The landing craft had drifted away from the side of the ship and as Gardiner

Continued next page...

Continued from page two ...

waited for it to return the rest of his company was right above him trying to get down. "The whole Army was on my shoulders and on my head," said Gardiner.

June 9, 1942 was when his company landed on the beaches of Normandy. Gardiner described the ride in the landing craft and his experience during the beach landing saying "Just a few minutes... seemed like a lifetime. I thought we were gonna get killed. They had machine guns coming at us. We were lucky. We had to dodge all the shells and machine guns and all that good stuff. Some of the guys were in Jeeps, waterproof Jeeps, and ran them underwater. They drove off the boat, some just sank, and you could see them struggling to get to the surface. Some just drove from underwater up to the beach. We marched up the beach at 5 or 6 in the morning. The Navy was firing cannons, and the beach was pretty well cleared."

The 1103rd Company then marched to the new Ally occupied town of St. Mere Eglise in France about 6 or 8 miles from the beach. They hadn't slept for two days, and were facing sporadic combat along the way.

"Our Commanding Officer was Patton," said Gardiner. "With him we just went! There was no hesitation. Most of the time I was just ahead of the front lines." Gardiner later described his experiences seeing Patton: "I saw Patton many times. He was an S.O.B.!... The first time I saw him he was balling out a G.I. Every time after that we'd see his Jeep coming with his name on the front bumper. We had to salute him or his Jeep even if he wasn't in it. If you didn't, he'd ball the hell out of you. Then we'd turn around and pretend to be busy (picking up cigarette butts or something) until he left."

"The hedgerows held us up. They were just piles of dirt built hundreds of years ago, not very wide, but they were like a fence with trees and



A landing craft on D-Day in Normandy, France. - photo from USA Today

bushes growing out of them and they would go on for miles. We couldn't go through (because), the Germans were on the other side poppin' us off." Gardiner also describes how tanks were sometimes fitted with a large rotating blade that resembled an old push lawnmower that would till right through the hedgerows and create a path for the invading American troops.

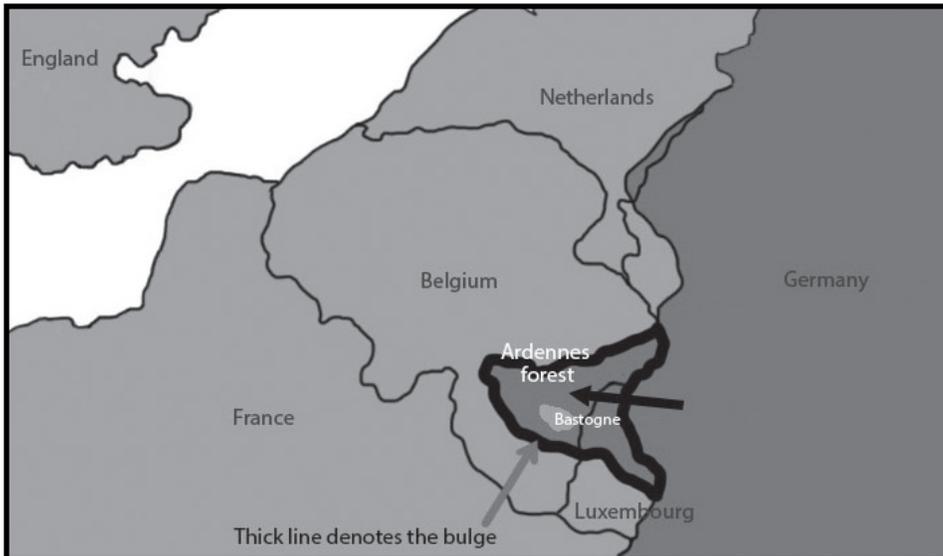
The 1103rd was part of S2 intelligence, and their duties included a variety of tasks. "We did everything," says Gardiner. "We would engineer building airfields and train tracks, and we destroyed the Germans. We had to know how to build and repair things right under fire." "We got the engineering training from the Army. I had a little experience. We had to code and decode. I had to go to radio school and learn Morse Code from German to English. We had runners and spies and secret words. Sometimes they (the secret words) would change a dozen times a day, and soldiers on patrol would have a hard time getting back into their unit because they wouldn't recognize the password. Combat engineers do everything (including) storming beaches, carrying rifles, and their part of the fighting. My outfit didn't have to do much infantry work. We concentrated on interpreting secret words and plans of the Germans, and coded and decoded information.

We did the secret work, and would report it back to the Commanding Officer."

Gardiner and the 1103rd spent two years in Europe traveling throughout six countries in total, including England, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and finally Germany. Gardiner was right in suspecting that he would see a lot by joining the Army. He said, "We stayed in different towns and different countries. Sometimes G.I.'s would get a pass and go into town but (most of the time) we had work to do. One of the towns was in Belgium. We were marching through town. We had to work, but we stopped for a break. It was winter time and it was cold. The people in the houses invited us into their homes to warm up and eat. One lady couldn't speak any English and I couldn't speak French. I asked her what she was cooking. She didn't know how to say turkey, so instead she said "gobble gobble!" and I understood that. The people all the way were very hospitable and very grateful. They got their country back."

Soon after visiting Belgium, the 1103rd would be placed in some of the heaviest action that they had ever seen. "It was a cold day in December, way below zero," said Gardiner. "We got called. We were about 25 miles from the Battle of the Bulge. We got orders to drop

Continued next page...



whatever we were doing and to immediately go to the battle.”

“My job was to break right through the German lines. We were ordered to capture or seek information, and code and decode it. I would get the information while the infantry was trying to fight. I’d be back, under a tank, interpreting code and writing it down. There were a bunch of us. We never had a casualty; not in our outfit. We were lucky. I’d see people with their heads blown off; their intestines taken out of their stomachs. Sometimes guys in tanks couldn’t see the bodies of the G.I.’s in front of them, and would squish them. I never saw it happen but I saw the results the next day.”

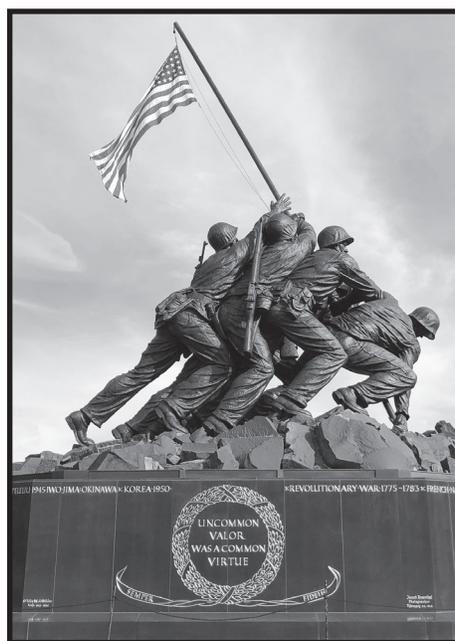
Bill and his company were involved in five major battles in total including the Battle of Normandy, the Battle of Northern France, Battle of the Rhineland, Battle of the Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge), and the Battle of Central Europe.

When asked about comradery between his fellow soldiers, Gardiner said, “It’s like now, some guys you like, and some guys you don’t like. I had a few buddies though.”

The Battle of the Bulge was “the last gasp for the Germans.” Afterward, Gardiner continued advancing toward Berlin with his company. They were only in Germany for a few days when they heard the war was over. The Allies

had won. “We were happy. More than happy. It was indescribable,” said Gardiner.

The 1103rd then traveled back to England, where they boarded the Queen Mary. “(On) the return home, the ship was loaded with G.I.’s. If a ship was supposed to have 3,000, she’d have 15,000. G.I.’s slept everywhere, on the deck, in the engine rooms; I slept in the engine room, it was very loud. We were all having fun ‘cause the war’s over and you’re comin’ home.” Bill Gardiner set sail from England aboard the Queen Mary on his birthday, November 22, 1945, and was home in America two days later.



Iwo Jima Memorial in Arlington, VA.

He said that it was the best birthday he ever had.

Bill Gardiner received his discharge from Fort Devens as an Army Corporal. “They give you a little speech, give you your discharge papers, and that’s it!” said Gardiner. He returned to his job at Pratt & Whitney for a brief time before becoming a door to door salesman.

The end of the war was bittersweet for him and his family though. A year and a half after Bill had joined the Army, his younger brother Jack had joined the Marines and was shipped off to the Pacific theatre. “My brother was killed at Iwo Jima,” said Bill. “He got killed, hot shelled. I still haven’t gotten over it.” Jack Gardiner had just turned 18 before he died at Iwo Jima. His name is engraved on the Iwo Jima Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery.

Fate seemed to have one last surprise for Bill. “My local church wanted to do something for my brother, so they formed a club called the Jack Gardiner Club. One night at a business meeting, this pretty girl came in and sat down, and I just had to meet her.” That pretty girl was Betty Preston. “After meeting her, I asked her if I could give her a ride home, and so I did,” and that was that.

“It was my reward for going to church,” said Betty Gardiner, putting a wide grin on Bill’s face.

Today (at the writing of this article) Bill Gardiner is 84 years old. He’s a retired door to door vacuum cleaner salesman, happily married for nearly 55 years, and enjoying life into his old age; an opportunity that many of his comrades never had.

If the Axis powers had won the war, the world would be a very different place today. We owe our freedom and prosperity today to the soldiers that paid dearly, sometimes with their lives, to keep us safe and free. And no soldiers deserve the credit more than Bill Gardiner of the 1103rd Combat Engineers, and Jack Gardiner of the U.S. Marines.

Celebrate & Promote Grange



Dave Roberts
State Lecturer
Riverton Grange No. 169
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As Lecturers, one of our goals is to provide relevant and timely programs for our members and guests. With that in mind, I wanted to share with you how my home Grange, Riverton Grange, recently celebrated our 114th Anniversary.

Each January, the Anniversary celebration at our Grange is coordinated by our Lecturer, Raine Pedersen, and our Family Activities Committee. Due to the weather and on-going pandemic, all our planning had to be thrown out of the window and our celebration this year turned out to be virtual.

Nevertheless, our event had some lessons learned that might help other Granges which I thought I would share with you.

First, we tried to reach out to members that normally don't come to Grange meetings. I personally had the opportunity to talk with two of our members who are now in their 80s, living out of state, but still proud members of our local Grange. Over the course of two conversations, I learned that this couple (both members of our Grange for over 50 years) had actually lived in an apartment over the Riverton General Store which formerly had been Rowley Hall where Riverton Grange met from 1908 to 1940. Without talking to this couple, this history might have been lost forever. In 1940, Riverton Grange purchased Munson Gristmill and converted it into our current Grange Hall.

Second, we tried to recognize our Past Masters/Presidents and Lecturers. It was great to reminisce about many of these folks and their service. It was interesting to note that when Past Master Shirley Moore was born in 1924, our Grange was only 16 years old (or as my kids

would say, 15 ½ years old)! Shirley is still active in our Grange, whether in-person or virtually on Zoom, and she still serves actively on the Family Activities Committee which she chaired for many years. Our current Grange Steward, Bob O'Connor, was born in 1930 when our Grange was just 22 years old. We also remembered Past President Peggy Prelli and her husband Past State Master Frank Prelli. Their children recently helped our Grange dedicate the Peggy & Frank Prelli Memorial Walkway providing handicapped accessibility into our Grange Hall so that all can partake in our well-known Grange hospitality.

Third, we tried to involve the local press and social media to publicize our anniversary. We were pleased to receive two nice articles

with photos.

Finally, we discussed our Grange's impactful community service projects over the years and our current focus on veterans, environment, and community leaders recognition.

Anniversary celebrations are a fun time for Granges to remember the past, honor the present, and look forward to the future. It is also a great time to share updates with others to help grow your local Grange presence. Riverton Grange Lecturer Raine Pedersen said she "truly enjoyed the meeting and remembering so many Grangers that helped make our Grange what it is today." Looking for an impactful Grange program? How about a Grange Anniversary/Birthday celebration! And remember, Connecticut State Grange has a contest to recognize successful celebrations.



Over 150 new toys valued at more than \$3,000 were collected for families served by Friendly Hands Food Bank in Torrington. Pictured are Winsted Lions Immed. Past President Joe Zibell, Barkhamsted Lions Sec. Jackie Martin and Barkhamsted Lions VP Lauren Howard.

Barkhamsted Lions Club partnered with Riverton Grange #169, Northwestern CT Cyber Lions Club and Northwest CT Cyber Leos Club to collect more than 150 new toys to donate to client families of Friendly Hands Food Bank.

The project was coordinated by Barkhamsted Lions Vice President Lauren Howard, Barkhamsted Lions Secretary Jackie Martin, and Barkhamsted Leo Natalee Roberts.

Each year during the holidays, the Barkhamsted Lions Club selects a local charity to support, in conjunction with their annual holiday

party, according to club president Dave Roberts.

This year the party was held at the Royal Coachman Tavern in Riverton, where more than 30 Lions and Leos enjoyed an appetizer brunch, sang Christmas carols, exchange gifts, and donated gifts for Friendly Hands.

"I was so pleased to see community groups working together to brighten the holidays for those in need," Roberts said. "Because of the non-profit's connection to overcoming hunger, the club was pleased to select Friendly Hands this year to support."

Notes from the State Office



Todd A. Gelineau
State Secretary
Winchester Grange #74
Secretary@ctstategrange.org

It's hard to believe we are already in the second month of 2022! Time is moving quickly and the only good part is spring will be here before we know it. We may not have had the snow and ice of previous years but in my mind the bitter cold is almost worse.

Thank you to all of the Granges and Secretaries who have responded to the mailing on Bonding. As of this writing, there are 10 Granges to be heard from. Please get your form and payment to me as soon as possible.

There continues to be confusion about what this insurance covers. This is fire or liability insurance. Basically bonding is insurance against theft of funds from your Grange. All of your officers and members are covered by the policy. For example, if a member were to embezzle \$10,000 from your Grange treasury, your Grange would be covered up to the amount of insurance your Grange purchases.

A mailing went out to any and all Granges who have not filed their annual reports with the State of Connecticut Secretary of State. Most Granges are only behind by one or two reports. However, there are some that are behind by many, many more. The State has a new website for filing annual reports. The CONCORD site has been eliminated and the State is strongly discouraging paper filing of these reports. Please let me know if you have any questions or difficulty in filing. Failure to keep up with these reports could result in the loss of your incorporation. This would be a very costly mistake.

Thank you to the Granges who have responded to the request for

Grange reports for the Journal of Proceedings. We have received a good number but there are many

more to go. We will proceed with the printing when the deadline passes, so please make sure your Grange is not omitted.

Until next time, stay warm and healthy!

Updates on 2022 programs



Dawn Percoski
Family Activities Dir.
Vernon Grange No. 52
CWA@ctstategrange.org

Hello everyone. Just when we thought we would be back to normal, or somewhat normal, we find ourselves having to be even more careful as to where we go and who we are with. Things seem to be shutting back down. But it's better to be safe and prepared than sorry.

I hope that you have started some of the projects and contests we have outlined in this year's package. I did include the pattern for the scrubbies that are really popular up at the Eastern States so you can ask your Chairman for it. They are in demand so if you can

make some I know that they would appreciate it. Also changed were 4 classifications changes for this year's Needlework contest. Class A: Afghans; Class H: Hook Latch and Class I: Quilted wall hanging have all had the dimensions changed. Class D: Baby set allows 3 of any items. For example you can make the sweater and 2 hats. I hope you all enjoy these changes and it will encourage you to try making something for our contest. Let's have a showing in every category!

For you Quilters out there, The National Quilt block contest for this year is the Wonky Star Quilt Bock Pattern. The pattern and entry forms will also be put up on the State Website for you. Just look for the Family Activities downloads section.

The Time is Now!

The **Grange Hall of Fame** is seeking new members!
Start preparing your submissions now for screening.
Inductees will be announced at the
156th Annual Session of the National Grange
in Sparks, Nevada in November!

Visit bit.ly/grangeHOF
for submission forms!





GLASTONBURY GRANGE #26

Corr: Ann & Dan Posuniak

Apr. 7: April Showers, 7:30 P.M., Ref. Marycharles Howe

May 1: "Semi-Annual Bakeless/ Foodless Sale"

Glastonbury Grange will have an "Ad" in the *Glastonbury Citizen* and the *River East* looking for new members. This will run for two weeks in mid-January and will be followed with a number of letters to residents in town inviting them to join the Grange. We are also putting a "display" in the Historical Society in the months of February, March and April. Hopefully these activities will generate a little interest and hopefully some new members.

We will be meeting in February, March and perhaps April on Zoom at 7:00 P.M. We are looking forward to being back in the Masonic Hall if not April, on May 5th for the Memorial Service. If we have responses with interest in some to join the Grange we will schedule a meeting in mid-March or early April to take them in.

SENEXET GRANGE #40

Corr: Diane Miller

Feb. 23: Health Check and Healthy Winter Meals

Our Grange has continued to meet in our hall. We had a very successful Christmas pie sale thanks to the help of many hands. We held our annual Christmas party with a Yankee Swap gift exchange. It was great to see some visitors from the community. The hall continues to be used by a local yoga group as well as a home school

group. The upstairs has become the meeting place for the local corn hole group on a two times a month schedule.

Plans for the next month include a collection of food for the local food bank and a local vendor craft fair. We have held some cooking sessions for the public. These will become more popular as the season continues.

We will be having a gathering of several Granges from neighboring Rhode Island and Massachusetts on Sunday Feb. 6. We have sent invitations to 13 Granges and are excited to hear back that many accepted the invitation.

A list of items has been prepared for the ways to keep our house in order. These will include cleaning, sorting, repairing and replacing. An inventory of supplies and craft items will be made so that we can go ahead and hold some sessions for the community to use these. It is exciting to see the public come into our hall to see what we are doing and how they can help and learn.

Our recycled feed bags made into shopping bags for sale has been popular.

We have decided to hold our regular meetings on the fourth Wednesday instead of the third Wednesday to accommodate other groups that meet on this date. We will also hold working sessions on the second Saturday of each month following a potluck lunch.

VERNON GRANGE #52

Corr: Cherie Robinson

Feb. 4: Eyes to the Skies

Mar. 4: On the Move

Again on Zoom in January, we revisited fairy tales and learned the history and importance of fairy tales

and folk tales; crossing geographic and cultural boundaries to deal with concerns relevant to all people, yet preserving traditions; in ways like the Grange as we support each other and our larger community through difficulties, celebrating the good times. Join us if you can, please contact Master Nancy Strong for meeting information.

N. STONINGTON COMM. GRANGE #138

Corr: Nancy R. Weissmuller

Feb. 11: Valentines

Feb. 26: Snow date for Feb. 11

A small but energetic group caroled around town on December 17. We ordinarily deliver fruit baskets at the same time; but due to help shortages at the store they were unable to get them ready in time. However, Master Robert Miner and his wife Cheree delivered them the next day. Our Christmas party was well attended, with fourteen youngsters receiving gifts from Santa and hearing the story "Yes, Virginia, There is A Santa Claus." They were each presented with a Santa hat and a sparkly ornament for their tree. The happy laughter during refreshments gave proof that the gifts were much appreciated. We brought enjoyment to many needy families in town with our donation of gift cards from WalMart.

We hold only one meeting a month in January and February with a snow date set for the fourth Friday in case of inclement weather on the second Friday. If you are in a visiting mood, please come and see us. And if this COVID thing will just go away next time we will tell you all about jolly January.

Redding Restoration

Redding Grange member Scott Morris stepped up and volunteered to create a new sign for Redding Grange. Heartfelt thanks to Scott for this kind donation of time and talent. Scott will use the old sign (pictured here with Redding Grange President Elizabeth Jensen) as inspiration for a custom made replacement.





Marketing versus Branding

Marketing and branding both fall under the umbrella of public relations. People often use the terms interchangeably, but in actuality, they are two different, yet important concepts. Let's take a look at the similarities and differences and how that applies to Granges.

We encounter brands every day. Coca Cola, McDonalds, Walmart, Ford and Chevrolet, and John Deere are all popular brands. You immediately recognize these brands and most likely use them in your daily lives. Every individual Grange is a unique brand. The Grange as a whole is a brand. Businesses are brands. Organizations are brands. The Grange, at its core, is a business. Brands are formed through the sum of all information regarding each business/organization.

Branding is the foundation of each business, organization and service, and reinforces how the public (often called your target audience) communicates with each business/organization. It strategically encompasses the values, qualities and mission, and if strong, allows for the business, organization and service to be successful both financially and affectively. It's the purpose a business exists. Branding is rooted in how the public interacts on an emotional level with business, organizations and services, and how people interpret what the organization "promises" to them.

Marketing is how businesses, organizations and services promote themselves and communicate. A support system in a sense to the brand. It is getting in front of customers and members through methods such as publicity, advertising, social media and more, thus enabling growth, establishing reliability, a familiarity and trust within communities. Marketing contributes to the building of the

brand, yet the brand itself is a larger entity than any specific marketing endeavor.

Branding is pull, marketing is push. An article by MarketingDonut.co.uk explains it well. "In essence, marketing is what you do to get your message or promise to customers, while your brand is how you keep the promise made through delivery to customers and colleagues."

For example, marketing at the Grange level may introduce local communities to the organization and its activities and events. Marketing catches the public eye and encourages that person to go to the Grange Fair, meeting, dinner, concert, etc. Marketing is influential. But it is the Grange brand that determines whether or not that same person will become a member, and continue their membership for years to come. Thus the term "brand loyalty."

Compare joining the Grange to how you purchase your vehicle. Are you a Ford person? A Chevy person?



Faith Quinlan
Membership Dir.
Winchester Grange #74
membership@ctstategrange.org

A Subaru person? Ask yourself why do you stick with one brand when purchasing your vehicles? A brand is built from many different pieces, but a positive experience and trust will ensure a life-long customer. Does your Grange encourage a positive experience and trust with your members? Ask any Golden Sheaf member why they have remained a member of the Grange for over 50 years, and the answer will most likely be based on their experiences and loyalty to the Grange.

The strongest brands understand the branding versus marketing difference, and craft their businesses and organizations based on positioning and creative marketing strategies. At the end of the day, the Grange as a brand gives your members an experience filled with value, knowledge, and benefits. Marketing your Grange promotes the organization and helps to grow your membership. Each Grange should take some time to evaluate their brand - and how they use marketing. Strengthening the Grange foundation from its core will lead to brand loyalty, and thus membership growth.

Drop us a line. We're here to help! E-mail: publicrelations@ctstategrange.org or information@ctstategrange.org.



Whether it is the virus, cold weather or a snowstorm, feel free to contact me to schedule a Grange meeting on the State Grange Zoom account. Whenever possible, please be sure to give a few days' notice so I have time to see the request and take action. If you know your meeting dates well in advance you can send me multiple dates at a time also.

I would also like to request you send invitations to meetings on your own Zoom accounts so I may share with the Board and committee leaders. One of the benefits of having meetings online is that we can attend meetings around the state. Thank you so much for your help and participation. You may reach out to me through either account: membership@ctstategrange.org or faithqmaus@gmail.com.

The information contained in each issue of The Connecticut Granger is for informational purposes only. The Connecticut Granger assumes no liability or responsibility for any inaccurate, delayed or incomplete information, nor for any actions taken in reliance thereon. The information contained about each individual, event or organization has been provided by such individual, event organizers or organization without verification by us. The opinion expressed in each article is the opinion of its author and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Connecticut Granger. Therefore, The Connecticut Granger carries no responsibility for the opinion expressed herein.



WINCHESTER GRANGE #74

Corr: Todd A. Gelineau

Feb. 8: My Funny Valentine; Ref. Sue Addison

Feb. 22: Yankee Doodle Dandy; Ref. Sandy Phillips

Mar. 8: The Wild Rover; Ref. Potluck

Mar. 22: CWA Program- Country Store, Ref. Ramona Fassio

Due to an abundance of caution Winchester Grange met virtually on Zoom in January with the spike in COVID cases so high. The first meeting in February will be back at the Grange hall. As always, members who wish to attend virtually can still do so by contacting us for the Zoom information. Please send an email to info@winchestergrange.org and we'll be happy to get you connected to the next meeting.

TAGHANNUCK GRANGE #100

Corr: Barbara Prindle

Feb. 10: Blacksmithing - Bill Palmer
Mar. 10: Hobbies - Mike Taylor

Our meetings are again virtual on Zoom until further notice. This is disappointing but does have a bright side. Our January meeting was supposed to be in person but was held on Zoom for various reasons with the main one being the up-tick of COVID in our area. Some of our members who we have not seen in a long time were able to join us as were visitors from other Granges. It was a great night with lots of catching up to do during the 7:00-7:30 social time before the regular meeting.

BRIDGEWATER GRANGE #153

Corr: Dean Perry

Monthly meetings are held on the second Wednesday at 7 P.M. in St. Mark's Church in Bridgewater. Meetings in 2021 were in-person

with some members using Zoom. Our January 22 meeting was all done with Zoom.

We participated in the trunk or treat Halloween event in Bridgewater. We set up a tent, had some spooky music and our members were dressed as witches, minions, judges and ghouls. We gave out candy to over two hundred children.

Five of our members went to Winchester Grange on Oct. 3 to participate in the Fifth Degree. Four of our members went to State Grange on Oct. 23 and received the Sixth Degree.

On Nov. 20 we had a takeout roast beef dinner at St. Mark's Church. On Nov. 21 & 22 four members made and delivered Thanksgiving baskets full of goodies to members and friends of the Grange. Many were shut-ins or in nursing homes.

December 3 we participated in the Bridgewater Christmas Tree lighting ceremony. We had two elves helping Santa. The next Wednesday, December 8th, we had our monthly meeting. Before the meeting we had a pizza party and after the meeting we had a Christmas gift exchange.

Our planned Chili Dinner takeout, on Jan. 15th, had to be canceled because of extreme cold. Some of our members will be eating a lot of chili this winter.

Our next big plan is to celebrate Hazel Pitcher's 100th birthday this coming March 28th. Hazel has been a long-time member of Bridgewater Grange. She was active in the Grange, Saint Mark's Church and the town Senior Center until the last two years.

RIVERTON GRANGE #169

Corr: Dave Roberts

In January 2022, Riverton Grange #169 celebrated its' 114th Anniversary since incorporating under the National (Patrons of *Continued next page ...*



Riverton Grange #169 recently celebrated their 114th anniversary with a virtual birthday cake at their Zoom meeting in December.

Continued from previous page ...

Husbandry) Grange umbrella in January 1908. Riverton Grange President Dave Roberts said on the occasion, "For 114th years, Riverton Grange members have been providing impactful service to the local community and our region at large. My family is so proud to be a member of Riverton Grange since a Roberts family member has belonged to Riverton Grange for all 114 years of its existence, starting with both my Great Grandparents who were charter members, then my

Grandmother, my Father and now my daughter."

Riverton Grange is one of 40 Granges in Connecticut promoting the environment, community service, and family activities. Riverton Grange first met over the Riverton General Store in Rowley Hall from 1908 through 1940, and then purchased the Munson Gristmill and converted it into a Grange Hall in 1940 where the 80+ members have been meeting ever since.

Due to the pandemic, our anniversary celebration event was

changed to a virtual event. One highlight of the event was during open discussion when attendees discussed how Riverton Grange was just 16 years old when current member (Past President) Shirley Moore was born and only 23 years old when current Steward Bob O'Connor was born. For 114 years, Riverton Grange has been providing impactful service to the community. In 2021, Riverton Grange installed the Peggy & Frank Prelli Memorial Walkway making the hall accessible to all to enjoy its well-known hospitality.

Hillstown Grange starts Gardening Series

Hillstown Grange is starting an 8 parts series of Growing Your Own for Beginning and Intermediate Gardeners. Any proceeds or donations will go to further the Hillstown Grange outreach program which we hope to diversify with DIY and homesteading skills as soon as we get beyond COVID.

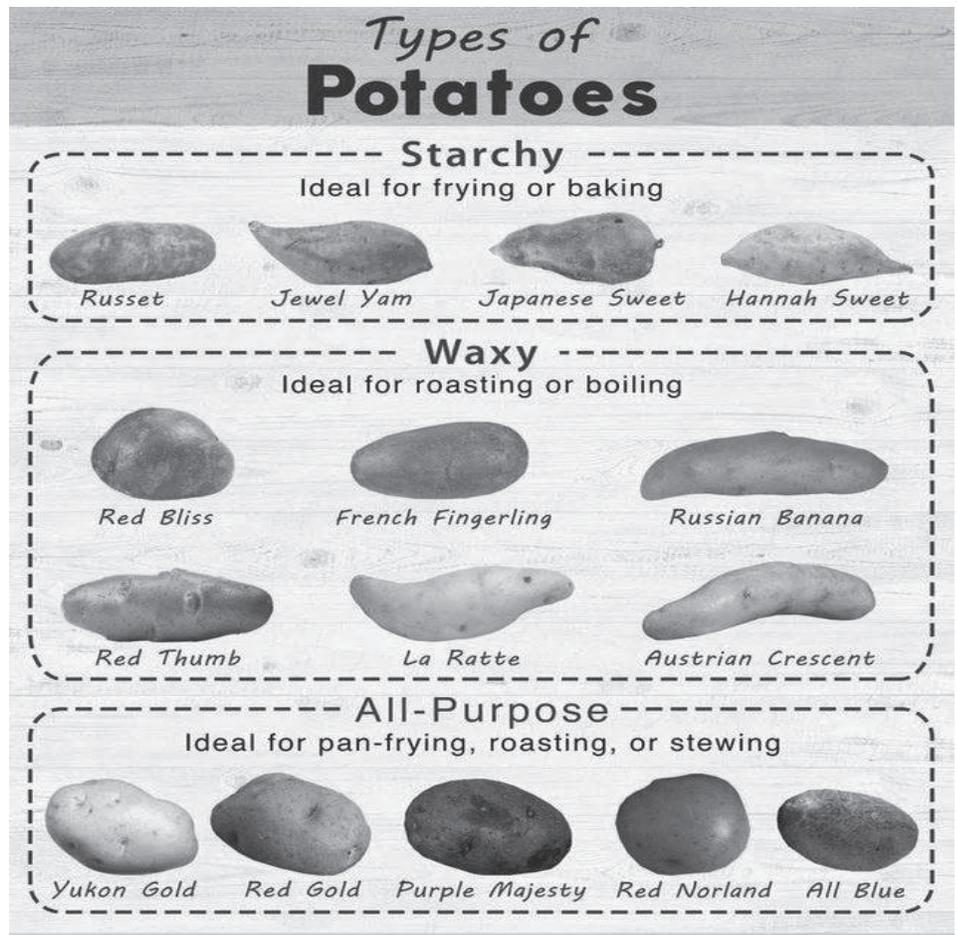
The Hillstown Grange, starting on February 1st, will be holding an 8 part course for Beginning and Intermediate Gardeners on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays in February, March, April and May from 7:00 pm. until 8:30 pm. Initially the first two presentations will be online via Zoom and then hopefully in March, they will also be live and in person at the hall on 617 Hills Street, East Hartford 06118. Please email me, daninct@yahoo.com if you would like to sit in on the presentations. I will then send you the link to the Zoom Meeting of the first presentation and also answer any questions you may have.

The series of presentations has the aim of preparing you to be successful and productive by walking you through the steps of siting and planning your garden, soil prep, the art of watering, what to grow, when to start growing them and the practices and methods to ensure a harvest. Many other topics and gardening methods will be covered, not in depth but enough to understand the difference and why one maybe better for you than

another. The presentations will last about 45 minutes to an hour with 30 minutes for questions, more if needed.

I am hoping most if not all, find the presentations of value and of educational merit because I am hoping that at the conclusion of the presentations you make a donation to the Hillstown Grange. I am hoping that you consider \$5 a presentation very reasonable. Perhaps instead

you decide that the Hillstown Grange is an organization you would like to be part of than in lieu of a donation perhaps a membership of \$50 would be a better choice. So if you would like to sit in on the 1st Presentation on February 1st, please contact me: Dan Gallagher daninct@yahoo.com or Frank Forrest at hillstowngrange@aol.com or 860-690-2845





NUTMEG POMONA #16

Corr: Joanne Cipriano

The next meeting of Nutmeg Pomona is not until March 27 with a rehearsal date of March 20th. Both at Cheshire Grange at 2 o'clock.

Good thing we are not meeting until then. - with the frigid weather we are having no one wants to leave their warm house unless necessary. Another good reason is that many of our officer are experiencing health problems. Lecturer Lois Evankow, (Lyme Grange) has been in the hospital and is now in Aaron Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation in Chester, Flora Pat Fischer and husband Ron (Beacon Valley Grange) are victims of Covid, Treasurer MaryAlyce Lee (Cheshire Grange) had surgery, Executive Committee George Ward (Harmony Grange) says " age 95 is catching up on him" and CWA Jane Miller (Cheshire Grange) has tested positive for Covid. This is all as I am typing this on January 14th. Let hope that by the time you are reading this all are recovered.

Our sympathies go out to Emily Alexander whose husband John was called home to the "Great Grange Above." The Alexanders are/were members of Cheshire Grange.

For now, stay warm and healthy and we will see you at Cheshire Grange on March 27th.

CHESHIRE GRANGE #23

Corr: A. Ruel Miller

Feb. 2: Winter Olympics

Feb. 16: Let me be your Valentine. 6 P.M. Box Supper

We had a good gathering for our Christmas open meeting and program last month. There is not a lot to report on at this point. We are exploring some options for fundraising as our treasury needs a big boost. We are concerned with the recent variant and its rapid spreading. Some Granges are going back to virtual meetings in light of this. We will be meeting soon to look at our Cheshire Grange Community Fair in late August.

Our sympathies go out to our Lecturer, Emily Alexander, on the loss of her husband John.

BEACON VALLEY GRANGE #103

Corr: Joanne Cipriano

Just when things have gotten back to normal, Covid hits again. Since the start of the new Grange year our attendance has been good and our Christmas Party fun with 17 attending. As I am typing this, all Grange activities for the month of January have been canceled due to Covid.

As for our December tag sale, the weatherman predicted a real stormy day.

Ron and Pat Fischer and Bob Sendewicz paid no heed and said the show must go on. Customers did come – the profit wasn't as good as usual, but our treasury now has more money in it.

Luckily for us, the scouts were having a meeting and when they arrived at the hall the furnace had malfunctioned and the pipes starting to freeze. Thanks to Frank Behlman who came to the rescue and called the repair person and now everything is back in order.

Our February meeting is on the 11th. Program "Say it With Music" – refreshments in charge of Pat and Ron Fischer. We hope by them, Pat and Ron will be feeling well having been tested positive for Covid.

Our next Open Mic is on February 19th. Time 6 to 9 p.m. We hope by then our hall will be open.

HARMONY GRANGE #92

Corr: George Ward

For meeting dates, please call



Gertrude Wilson, of Harmony Grange, recently celebrated her 101st birthday and 75 continuous years of Grange membership.

the Master or the Secretary.

Harmony Grange was saddened again in January. James (Jimmy) Clark from Monroe, a longtime truck driver for the former Stevenson Lumber Co., a resident of Monroe and a loyal and active member of Harmony Grange passed away. Harmony Grange has lost two excellent members within a period of two months.

Harmony Grange members are suffering the effects of the dark nights, cold weather, and staying safe from getting the Omicron strain of COVID for meetings. Let us hope that conditions will get better in the coming months as we welcome Spring. Spring cannot be too far away as seed catalogs are appearing in our mailboxes.

We also mourn the loss of Gertrude Wilson, a 75 year member of our Grange who celebrated her 101st birthday in November. This milestone was celebrated by a special article in the local *Patch* online news by Bill Bittar:

Gertrude Wilson joined Housatonic Grange that her parents were involved in when she was 16 years old growing up in Stratford. The Shelton resident is now the most senior member of Harmony Grange in Monroe.

"My Brother and Sister were members also," Wilson said Saturday, when she attended Harmony Grange's annual Agriculture Fair and Bake Sale.

“I think it’s a family organization where everybody works together to do community work with an agricultural background,” Wilson said. “Years ago, practically everybody was a farmer, but now it’s changed. But we still need farms to eat.

Years ago, she had married Robert Wilson, a farmer in Shelton, and joined the Far Mill River Grange in Huntington and that Grange later merged with Harmony Grange.

LYME GRANGE #147

Corr: Lois Evankow

Feb. 3: Antiques Roadshow

Mar. 3: Beware the Ides of March

Apr. 7: Looking forward to Easter

How lucky can you get? On our unusually warm evening in December, Lyme held their Dec. meeting, preceded by a most delicious potluck supper. Twenty-one people were in attendance. it was wonderful after all those months of isolation to socialize once again.

Our Fair was discussed at

great length. We were pleased that five potential members came and showed interest in Grange and the Fair. Roy and Betty Jane Harrington were here to enjoy our delicious meal and support our efforts.

Our Fair meetings are held the fourth Monday of the month at 7 P.M. in the Grange hall. Everyone is welcome.

Remember- wear masks, wash hands and stay well so we can continue the good work. Get those

shots and boosters!!!

HEMLOCK GRANGE #182

Corr: Maureen Sanborn

Feb. 11: Presidents

Feb. 25: Omitted, unless regular meeting is canceled.

Mar. 11: Surprise

Mar. 25: Omitted, unless regular meeting is canceled.

Coffee and refreshments will be served following the meetings.



In 2021, the CT Dept. of Agriculture, in collaboration with federal, state, and local partners, permanently protected 1,204 acres across 13 farms in the state, bringing the total number of farmland acres protected in perpetuity to 47,346.

A Tasty Natural Way to Enjoying Better Winter Health

by Thomas Sulier, Harmony Grange No. 92

With the winter cold and flu season bearing down on us, and with the cost of cold remedies and doctor’s visits ever spiraling upward, one might want to consider other ways to boost your immune system to avoid these pricey remedial efforts.

If we look in our refrigerators, we might find ways to increase our resistance to colds and flu, by eating fruits which are packed with immune supporting vitamins.

A typical apple has the equivalent antioxidant effect of approximately 1500 MG of vitamin C. Additional long term benefits of apples are they are loaded with bioflavonoids which help fend off heart disease and cancer.

The banana is packed with vitamin B6, manganese, vitamin C, potassium, protein, magnesium and folate. This combination of vitamins can help fend off wintertime blues, depression, stress and insomnia. Magnesium helps the body absorb calcium, and potassium helps prevent heart disease and high blood pressure.

Grapefruits are another excellent source for vitamin C and limonoids which help lower cholesterol. Furthermore, red grapefruit is packed with lycopene which is a cancer fighting substance.

Cranberries have the highest content of antioxidants of any other fruit. One serving of these tasty berries pack the equivalent of five servings of broccoli. Cranberries are natural probiotics which enhance the so-called gut



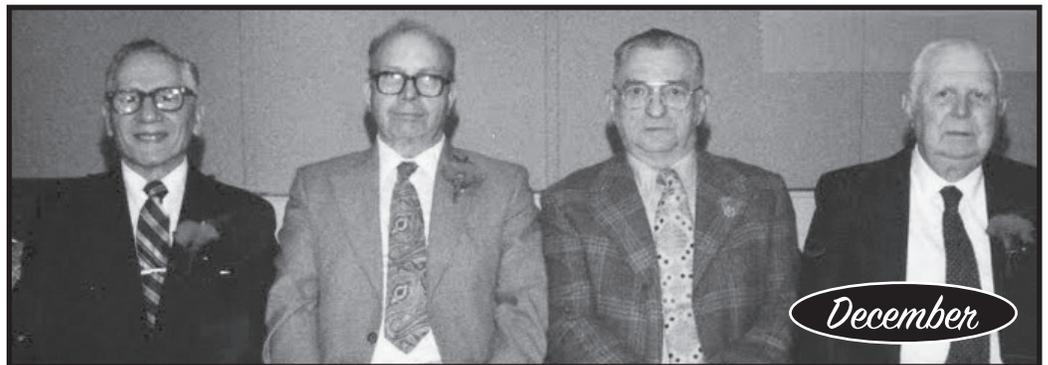
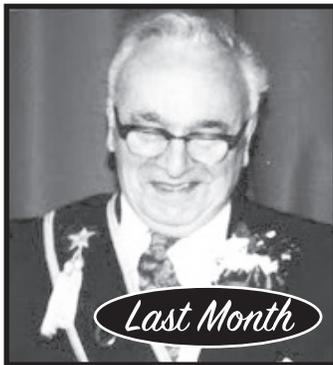
bacteria and protecting us from illnesses which originate with foods.

Lastly, if you stock papaya in your family’s fridge, you will have a source of 250% of the RDA of vitamin C which should help prevent or kick out any cold you might have. The mighty papaya also has beta carotene and vitamin E which help reduce inflammation throughout the body and ameliorating the effects of asthma.

By keeping an inventory of the fruits in your fridge, and consuming them regularly, you should find that the ravages of a typical winter on your health should be decreased markedly. Not only that, they are a tasty, natural way to keep your immune system functioning well and fending off flu viruses.

WINDOW TO THE PAST

Photographs are a treasured part of Grange history. Many of them, unfortunately, do not come neatly labeled on the back with names, dates, people or places. These photographs have a history to tell... but about whom or what? Please help us uncover the mystery of faces and places as we look through the Window to the Past. You can contact us by calling (860) 626-5074 or on the web by emailing: submissions@ctstategrange.org.



We heard from Irene Percoski -- "I think the man in the December picture in the light suit is Bob West, who was also a Master of Tolland at one time. We also heard from Joyce Jordan on the December Photo -- "They are all Past Masters of Tolland Grange. From Left to Right - Chet Magnami, Bob West, Joe Nedwieid, Harry LaBonte." She thinks it may have been taken at their Centennial Celebration in the 1980s.



Chocolate Cherry Candy Cake



February is the month of love, with Valentine's Day sitting right in the middle! Decadent desserts are perfect to share at a Grange meeting for refreshments. Here's a recipe for Chocolate Cherry Candy Cake from the Food Network that will satisfy that sweet tooth.

INGREDIENTS:

Chocolate Cake:

- 1 stick (8 tablespoons) unsalted butter, melted and cooled slightly, plus more for the pan
- 1 cup all-purpose flour (see Cook's Note), plus more for the pan
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup Dutch-process cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 cup buttermilk, at room temperature
- 1 large egg, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Cherry Mousse Filling:

- 1/4 cup well-drained good-quality cherries in syrup, such as Amarena or Luxardo, plus 2 tablespoons syrup
- One 1/4-ounce packet unflavored gelatin
- 4 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- 1/2 cup sour cream, at room temperature
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon almond extract

Chocolate Ganache:

- 8 ounces semisweet chocolate (50 to 60 percent cacao), finely chopped
- 3/4 cup heavy cream

INSTRUCTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Butter two 8-inch round cake pans, line the bottoms with parchment paper. Butter the parchment and dust with flour, tapping out excess.

Whisk the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking soda, baking powder and salt together in a large bowl. Whisk the melted butter, buttermilk, egg, vanilla and 1/2 cup water together in another bowl until smooth. Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients, whisking until just combined. Divide the batter between the prepared cake pans, smoothing the tops. Bake, rotating the pans halfway through cooking, until a toothpick inserted in the center of each cake comes out clean, about 25 minutes.

Let the cakes cool in the pans for 15 minutes, then turn them out onto a cooling rack set over a baking sheet. Discard the parchment paper and flip the cakes right side up again. Let the cakes cool completely.

Make the cherry filling: Quarter the cherries and transfer them to a medium bowl with the 2 tablespoons reserved syrup. Combine the gelatin with 1 tablespoon cold water in a small bowl and let stand for 5 minutes to soften. Heat the gelatin in the microwave until it melts completely, about 10 seconds, stirring to dissolve. Combine the gelatin, cream cheese, sour cream, sugar, salt and almond extract in

a food processor and process until smooth. Scrape the cream cheese mixture into the bowl containing the cherries and stir to combine. Refrigerate, checking every 5 minutes, until the filling is just set enough to spread, 5 to 15 minutes. (Do not let the filling firm up too much.)

Place one cake on a cake stand and pile the cherry filling in the center, spreading it in a thick layer almost to the edge. Top with the remaining cake, aligning the layers directly on top of each other so the cake does not lean. Refrigerate the assembled cake for 1 hour.

Meanwhile, make the chocolate ganache: Bring the cream to a simmer in a small saucepan then remove from the heat. Add the chocolate, shaking the pan gently to submerge it. Allow the pan to stand, off the heat, for 3 minutes to melt the chocolate. Whisk the ganache until smooth, then refrigerate until it is just thick enough to spread (like mayonnaise), about 15 minutes. (Do not let the ganache harden too much.)

Stir the ganache again and scoop it on top of the cake, spreading it over the top and sides. Refrigerate the cake until the ganache is set, at least 2 hours or overnight.

SOURCE: <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/food-network-kitchen/chocolate-cherry-candy-cake-3537802>

Legislatively Speaking

by Alma Graham, Legislative Director

I have been watching the Reapportionment Commissions and the Redistricting of both the State House and Senate districts as well as the Federal Congressional Districts. The legislature did not complete their redistricting recommendations by the statutory deadline so the project was sent on to a bipartisan Reapportionment Commission to adopt new district maps. This commission is really two, one for the house and one for the senate.

These commissions have successfully completed redistricting maps for both the Connecticut State House and Senate districts. There was a large population shift from the east to the west which required the shifting of districts. No House member was drawn out of their current seat, but several may face harder races due to the revisions. Wilton now has its own district where it was split before. Stamford picked up a seventh house seat. In the 52nd district in Northeast Connecticut the lines had to be redrawn due to a large loss in population. Inmates are not longer counted where they are imprisoned. My own residence is now back included in the same district as the rest of the town of Mansfield. In the previous map we were on a leg extending from the district covering Colchester.

The State Commission did not complete a final map for the Federal Congressional Districts by the November 30th deadline. This process has now moved to the Connecticut Supreme Court. The court appointed an independent person to draw up the maps and outlined parameters for the new map.

The court instructed this individual to both respect the existing districts yet ignore the political considerations in redrawing the district lines. He is not to consider either residency of incumbents or potential candidates as well as political data, such as party registration or election returns. The lines should remain compact and not violate town lines more than they already are. He is required to submit his congressional redistricting plan to the State Supreme Court on or before Jan 18th.

The challenge here again is the large loss of population in the Second Congressional District on the Eastern part for the state and a gain in lower Fairfield County. They don't have adjoining borders.

The Democratic and Republican leadership recently submitted proposals to the mediator. Both maps offer minimal changes to the present district lines. Both their proposed maps move district lines in towns that were previously spilt between districts.

Once a plan is drafted and made public, interested parties may suggest changes until Jan. 24. Then on Jan. 27th public hearings will be held with a deadline to establish the final maps of Feb. 15.

You can view the approved House and Senate maps on the Connecticut General Assembly website under the 2021 Redistricting Project - *C G A (ct.gov)*.

VIRTUAL

SOCIAL hour

7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Join us for a fun and casual social gathering. A brief program will be presented. Stop by and say Hello!



You're Invited to Connect!

Send an e-mail to information@ctstategrange.org or membership@ctstategrange.org for the Zoom Meeting Access Information

CONNECTICUT STATE GRANGE

zoom

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

FEBRUARY:
No Social Hour in February

MARCH:
"National Peanut Month Celebration"
Thursday, March 24
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

APRIL:
"Words of Wisdom: Grange Ritual"
Thursday, April 21
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

MAY:
"Take a Picture: Photography Tips & Tricks for Granges"
Thursday, May 26
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

JUNE:
Marketing your Grange on Facebook and Beyond
(Dual event with the Public Relations and Membership Committees)
Thursday, June 23
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

RAKISH

MARCH 12TH AT NORFIELD GRANGE






MAURA SHAWN SCANLIN AND CONOR HEARN

DINNER AT 6 - MUSIC AT 7
Tickets are \$50 and include
Bangers & Mash, Drinks, Concert
Proceeds to American Wanderer Foundation - Camp Scholarship Fund
FMI: Lyn@americanwanderer.com

100 Newfield Road, P.O. Box 3
Winchester Center, CT 06094

Address Service Requested



Charles W. Dimmick
State Chaplain

Cheshire Grange No. 23
chaplain@ctstategrange.org

Patience

I waited patiently for the LORD; he inclined to me and heard my cry.

Psalm 40:1

“God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.”

Reinhold Neibuhr

One thing almost all of us need, even if we don't realize it, or don't admit it, is more patience. I'm reminded of the woman who prayed “Lord, give me more patience, and give it to me right now!” I'll admit that I could use some more patience myself, but I'm getting much better at it than I used to be, with practice. And that is part of the secret to becoming more patient, practice it. I headed this article with Neibuhr's Serenity Prayer, because there is a close relationship between serenity and patience. The more we learn to accept the things we cannot change the more patient we become when the inevitable happens and we have to wait. I'm thinking not only about the more common ones, such as traffic lights and doctor's waiting rooms, but also the cases where we are stuck in a traffic jam, or any other instance when there is no alternative but to wait.

But waiting for all of these is easier to adjust to than waiting for the Lord to act when we feel we really need his intervention. This becomes more

difficult in part because we want instant gratification. Somehow, we feel that our perceived wants and needs are of utmost importance, and that God should take care of them “RIGHT NOW!”

In so doing, we are substituting our own judgment for God's judgment. We forget to put our faith and trust in God and wait patiently for him. God knows both our wants and our needs, and knows much better than we ever could what, in the long run, will be best for us. I know this is very hard for us; it means, among other things, admitting that we are not really in control of our lives. And God, in whom we trust, is not answering our prayers in accordance with our own plans and assumptions, but rather what in his

much greater wisdom is a greater good for us.

In Proverbs we read “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding”. Or in the words of the AAA slogan: “Let go and let God”.

In Memoriam

John Alexander
Cheshire Grange #23

Barbara Rawson
Senexet Grange #40

Gertrude Wilson, G.S.
Harmony Grange #92

“Well done, good and faithful servants.”



By Hank the Burro

Hello Grange Friends! The weather has been so cold, snowy too, and with COVID still sticking around, we haven't been out and about. We have been on many Zoom meetings - which is a great way to keep in touch! Here's to hoping that we can get out to meetings and events again soon! But in the meantime, send me your Zoom login info, and I might show up at your meeting!

Want to follow my adventures? Please visit my Facebook page, and then click the “Like” button to keep in touch. <http://www.Facebook.com/CTGrangeHanktheBurro>