



GRANGE COMMUNICATION HANDBOOK

+ *Workbook*

*A Public Relations Manual,
Style Book
and Graphic Standards Guide
for Leaders of our Order*

Revised
1ST EDITION



BY THE NATIONAL GRANGE COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

GRANGE COMMUNICATIONS HANDBOOK & WORKBOOK

A PUBLIC RELATIONS MANUAL, STYLE BOOK
AND GRAPHIC STANDARDS GUIDE
FOR LEADERS OF OUR ORDER

REVISED 1ST EDITION

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OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

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Introduction

The Grange Communications Handbook: A Public Relations Guide, Style Book and Graphic Standards Manual is a fully-updated handbook that is an essential read for every Grange leader. In it you will find a combination of information about public relations practices, including how-to guides and step-by-step task sheets for the construction of great communications materials, with detailed information about the use of terms, logos and fonts, in both our designed and printed material, and expectations for Grange publicity or public information chairpersons. This is an all-inclusive handbook for each Grange, large or small, that has nine chapters and several appendices with examples, checklists and more.

This book should serve as a practical guide for novice to expert Grange members seeking to increase awareness about our organization. This manual should be consulted when constructing any Grange communication. The policies, style guide and graphic standards outlined here supersede all other similar manuals issued at the local, Pomona and State Grange level, as well as previous editions of National Grange public relations, graphic standards and style guides.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THIS HANDBOOK?

Chapter 1 introduces fundamental details about communication, defines and provides discussion on the importance of public relations for the Grange, and introduces information about media relations and formats. Along with this chapter, Appendix A provides basic details about the Grange including a one-page history, good for use when introducing potential members to the Order. The Grange Declaration of Purposes is included in text and brochure form in Appendix B.

Chapter 2 consists of a discussion about branding, information about the general need for consistency throughout our printed products and an introduction to the concept of style. A primer on Associated Press Style and a list of commonly misspelled words is found in Appendix C. Appendix D is the Grange Style Addendum to be used by all Granges in all communications.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of internal, member-to-member communication methods and best practices. This chapter also touches on the record keeping and archiving of your Grange's activities, efforts and individual accomplishments.

Chapter 4 presents a basic guide to identifying and creating news events and delivering the Grange message to external audiences. Examples of tools of the trade, including press releases, media alerts and more are found in Appendix E, and a guide to creating brochures as well as thumbnail images of all National Grange brochures can be found in Appendix F. Also related to this chapter is the Grange Website and Electronic Social Media Code of Conduct found in Appendix G. Photo and model release forms are found

in Appendix H. Traditional and social media tools are discussed and the National Grange website program, available for free to all Granges for creation of websites, is introduced. A guide to creating and managing your Grange website and free Grange e-mail is found in Appendix I.

Chapter 5 is a basic introduction to the media, with information on how to establish a rapport with local media, entice journalists to cover your Grange activities, events, member accomplishments and more, make events media-friendly, interact with members of the media at your events, and more. You will also find a primer in response to negative media coverage and other tips. In addition to this chapter, Appendix J provides a guide to media interviews.

Chapter 6 introduces basic design principles and provides specifications for Grange graphic standards, including fonts, logo presentation, colors and more. Included with this book is a CD-ROM with the current Grange Graphics in several formats. There are also one-sheet descriptions of Graphic Standards available for copying and distribution in Appendix K.

Chapter 7 focuses on social networking and the importance of this new form of media for the Grange. It also includes a description of different social media outlets that are most commonly used. A member's section that includes a Grange-only social network is part of the improvements to the National Grange website. This platform is also introduced, and expectations for individual member's social media posts about the Grange, both in the Grange-only social network and on public social networks, are also discussed. References for this chapter can be found in Appendix L.

Chapter 8 turns our attention from the Publicity Chair's tools to the ways in which we can empower every member to strengthen the identity, brand and overall image of the Grange by preparing useful and positive comments for the traditional media and approaching neighbors, friends and even strangers about becoming Grange members. References for this chapter can be found in Appendix M, which includes information about elevator speeches and establishing social media profiles.

Chapter 9 introduces National Grange communications material, available for use at any level of the Grange, and includes directions on personalization or use of each product. Several promotional items can be purchased through the Grange store that assist in drawing attention to the Grange. Also, many of our items can now be personalized for your Grange and printed in small or large quantities as discussed in the chapter.

Prior to the appendices, you will find a useful glossary of terms used commonly in communication work. A Grange Communication Workbook is included after the appendices as the final element of this manual. The workbook allows local, Pomona and State Granges to fill in their own information as a quick reference guide and may be updated as often as necessary to reflect accuracy in that information. As designed, it will be a stand-alone directory that may be kept at the fingertips of everyone doing official Grange communication work.

Chapter 1:

Communication Basics for the Grange

Communication is fundamental to every organization. Without clear and effective communication, organizations of any type suffer tremendously. For the Grange, communication exists in many forms, for many audiences and for various reasons. While there is a heavy focus on public relations – an approach used by organizations to communicate in ways that result in a positive perception of that organization – using and understanding the material in this handbook is not just for those who have been tasked with the job of public information director in the Grange. In it you will find fundamental information that every Grange member should know in order to improve, protect and help grow the Grange.

This chapter will introduce a fundamental principle of communication, define public relations as a form of organizational communication, illustrate the importance of communications and public relations for all Granges and provide an introduction to mediums used to communicate.

THE FOREMOST “LAW” OF COMMUNICATION

“One cannot NOT communicate.” This law of communication comes from a body of work by scholar Paul Watzlawick. While it may sound odd when talking about communication for an organization like the Grange, it is a fundamental starting point we must accept in order to understand why a focus on communication is important. Often we think of communication as only spoken or written messages. We forget that much of our communication is actually nonverbal, like identification through branding – wearing a shirt or piece of jewelry with a logo. We even communicate a set of values or judgments when we choose to say nothing at all. Skeptical? Think of the last time you tried to talk to your significant other or a family member about something you disagreed on. If they were silent, you likely “got the message,” even without them saying a word.

The same is true when we choose not to speak about our organization. By not telling others about our events and our successes, we are devaluing the Grange. By failing to construct messages about the Grange for our external audience, many of whom we hope someday to become members of the Grange, we give credence to those who think negatively about us.

To put this law in greater context for our organization, we can first think about what it means to our audience – our members and the general public – if we do not talk openly,

consistently and positively about the Grange. Without a focus on communication in all forms, be it internal Grange newsletters or external speeches, press releases about events or status updates on Grange Facebook pages, we are still saying something.

WHAT IS PUBLIC RELATIONS?

It's important for us to define public relations, identify strategies of public relations agents and understand the role of the publicity chair in your Grange. From this knowledge, we can begin to understand how public relations can be implemented for our Grange every day.

Public relations is about communicating a consistent message that helps to build knowledge and identity for an organization, product, service or individual. Often, public relations and its practitioners get a bad reputation as “spin doctors” or liars. In fact, public relations professionals, and our Grange publicity chairs, are expected to manage the reputation of their client (in this case, the Grange) in an ethical manner. PR involves improving the public knowledge of and positive opinion of the client. Public relations also seeks to influence public behavior – in our case, persuading people to support, actively engage in the activities of or become members of our Grange.

Public relations is a planned and ongoing activity. Good public relations professionals have a playbook, schedule and several interconnected goals. They understand their organization or client, they are consistent with their messaging and delivery, they are personable, reliable, responsive and always forward-thinking. Public relations professionals, and our Grange Publicity Chairs, must have an excellent grasp of the English language and grammar rules, understand and be comfortable with modern technology and have a basic understanding of public relations and marketing best practices. Publicity Chairs must know who their members are and must also know or get to know the players of local media. They must communicate with the public and our members in multiple ways and must always be positive in their presentation of the Grange.

WHY IS PUBLIC RELATIONS IMPORTANT FOR THE GRANGE?

Since our founding in 1867, the National Grange has been widely recognized nationally and in countless communities across the United States. Though the organization is still quite active, the country's communications media has greatly expanded, and many other special interest groups and social organizations have risen to compete for the public's attention. Because of this, the role of the Grange Publicity Chairperson has never been more important to the success of our organization.

In our early days, word-of-mouth, flyers, public displays, local newspapers and personal letters were the primary mediums by which the Grange spread its message. Today, the number of mediums has exponentially increased, and that dramatic growth in communications mediums has made way for more opportunities to share what your Grange has accomplished. Externally, this will help spread the word of our organization to pro-

spective members, magnify our voice on a local, state and national stage and create an even greater sense of goodwill for your Grange within your community. Internally, great communication will help build pride in membership and lead to an even more successful Grange.

In this case, publicity begins at home. Read on to learn ways to transform your Grange from the inside out in order to better market our organization to the media and to the world.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN, BRUSH UP AND TAKE INVENTORY

Effective communication for our Granges, both internal and external, depends on good writing and good equipment. Anyone can communicate for the Grange, but it is important for everyone who does to create messages that are error free. This means knowing about our organization as well as presenting pieces that are professional. You don't have to buy software or hardware that costs thousands of dollars. You don't have to hold a Ph.D. in English. You do, however, have to brush up on grammar, spelling and punctuation rules. You must be familiar with the basics of Grange history and present structure, policy and efforts. You must have a few simple pieces of technology in order to complete projects and get our message to the public.

Public relations material that is hand-written will almost certainly end up in the trash of your local media outlet. Furthermore, material that is hard to understand because of poor construction and grammar will also be tossed aside. Make sure you or the people you choose to represent the Grange have access to a computer, will take the time to type material in a consistent, media-friendly format, will use the internet, have at their disposal a quality digital camera – something that used to cost several hundreds of dollars but can now be less than \$100 in most cases – and that that camera can take video as well. Remember that communicating can and should be a team sport. The same person who volunteers to send written communication to your local newspaper or television station may not necessarily be the one who writes it. The person who writes it may not be the one who takes photos or videos for traditional and social media. None of these people have to be your Grange's chosen "primary source" – or person with whom the media interact to get quotes or who gives speeches on behalf of the organization.

MAIL ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

As you proceed to put together your communications plan, you will find more and more often that you need access to e-mail in order to quickly and effectively get your message out. Many Granges and Grange members have already established free e-mail accounts that they use for Grange business regularly. We know this because we receive e-mails all the time from addresses like "fluffyGranger" or "imagranger." While these are wonderful personal e-mails, using them for official Grange communications is discouraged.

The National Grange has established a single e-mail address for each Grange and recommend that it should be used for all official communications and should be regularly checked for messages from potential members or media. This should be the primary contact e-mail for a Grange so no matter what changes any Grange undergoes, there is always a standard point of contact for anyone seeking to communicate with the Grange. Information about this program and how to log into your Grange-provided e-mail is found in Appendix J.

These are also the best e-mail addresses for establishing social media profiles because notices of changes for accounts and alerts related to communication from other social media users can come directly to the e-mail and be immediately answered. To make it easy, you may consider forwarding the e-mails to a personal account you check often, but turn off forwarding if you are no longer the point of contact for the Grange.

The National Grange will send the e-mail address and initial password for each to your Grange. If you have any problems with the account, you can contact the National Grange Information Technology (IT) Department. The IT Department can reset passwords, turn on or off forwarding and much more. The National Grange cannot be responsible for checking your Grange e-mail account, so a trustworthy person who is connected to the Internet should be charged with handling all communications to and from this account.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR CHAPTER 1

In order to aid Grange members in providing a clear, accurate and consistent message, some materials have been included in Appendix A that may be useful as a refresher for members or to introduce potential members or media to our organization. You will find a copy of the one-page history of Grange success from 1867 to the present as well as the Declaration of Purposes brochure and a fast-fact sheet about the Grange.

Any or all of these materials would be appropriate to include in a media kit that will be discussed in Chapter 4. All of these materials are also available in digital form on the Grange Communication Resource CD included with this handbook

SHARE YOUR SUCCESS

For members and Granges who have taken the time to focus on public relations, the benefits are clear. Still, some members are reluctant to commit the time and energy. It's important that we share our successes, our failures and our newest ideas so that others may avoid pitfalls and reap the rewards of positive communications. We encourage everyone to share their stories with the National Grange Communications Department through e-mail or through the National Grange Communications Department Discussion Board on the members' section on the National Grange website.

Chapter 2:

Ingredients for Successful Communications

“Be Prepared!” The Boy Scouts of America have been using this tagline to give audiences, in just two words, a sense of the organization’s mission and values for decades. Because of the tagline, we picture boys getting instruction and mentorship that will lead them to be better men, ready to take on life and the world. The Boy Scouts understand the need to embrace branding, to tell the public what they do and what they bring to the lives of their members. So, too, must the Grange.

This chapter opens up the discussion about branding – the presentation of the idea or image of a specific product or service that consumers connect with by identifying the name, logo, slogan, or design of the organization who owns the idea or image – the “brand” – and how the Grange, like all organizations, must create a strong brand for many positive rewards. Special attention will be given to the use of local logos, taglines or slogans and branding efforts as well as the interconnected nature of branding and our ongoing trademark protection efforts. You will also learn about the need for consistency throughout our entire spectrum of messaging and find an introduction on the concept of style. The Grange Style Book is referenced and can be found as Appendix D of this handbook.

OUR BRAND

When we think of brands, most often we think of a label or a sign indicating ownership. We don’t often connect our organization with something as corporate or possessive as branding, but in fact, every organization, public figure, business and entity needs to be concerned with and understand the concept of branding and brand management.

For the Grange, the concept of branding has most often been discussed in regards to our trademark battles. We fight for the right of our members and our organization to use and ultimately own the name “Grange.” But the reason behind our efforts is at the very core of marketing and public relations: it is to strengthen and solidify our good name and reputation to the public.

A brand is defined by the American Marketing Association as the “name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller’s good or service as distinct from those of other sellers.” In this case, the Grange is the seller. Our goods are those items we make and sell often to fund our programs, community ventures, and other services. Further, our goods can be defined as the benefits our members enjoy, such as fellowship and legislative action.

Our seven-sided shield logo, a registered trademark, is part of our brand, as is our name. Just like McDonalds, Coca-Cola or the Philadelphia Phillies, our brand also includes the consistency in the use of that logo and name expressed in our typeface, or font, the colors associated with that design and our overall tone in messaging.

WHY IS BRANDING IMPORTANT?

In 1867, there were few community outreach and service groups. Most community service was tied to churches and major organizations. The Grange's name, especially in rural America, was at the forefront of people's minds when they thought of a community service organization, a body of citizens interested in public affairs and legislative activity, and a place to be educated and entertained. Today, this describes many groups in one way or another all throughout the United States. Having a consistent and easily identified brand assists us in all facets of our organization from our own promotions and choices in programming to membership recruitment and requests for donations and assistance.

Further, we have all heard of individuals or small groups assuming the identity of a reputable organization to further their own interests – political, financial or otherwise. It's important for public to know they are giving their time and money to the long-established, highly reputable Grange.

RECENT GRANGE BRANDING EFFORTS

A few simple words can be powerful. Words can connect an audience with a brand immediately and transmit a bulk of information, such as values and identity, in just a second. These consistently used short statements are called taglines or slogans. These statements are often so powerful that without any other prompt consumers can identify the brand with which it is associated and can discuss their overall sentiment toward the product or service.

Taglines or slogans also assist in branding efforts. They distill the meaning of a big idea into a message that is easy to say, easy to understand, and easy to remember. All of these efforts, however, require a consistent use in order to be effective. While brands may, over time, evolve and change their image or taglines – such as McDonald's that has changed its tagline from, "You deserve a break today" to the current iteration, "I'm lovin' it" – any evolution must continue to reflect the mission and identity of the organization and must

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Can you identify the brands for each of these taglines or slogans?

- A. *"Just do it!"*
- B. *"I'm lovin' it."*
- C. *"M'm, M'm, Good."*
- D. *"Don't leave home without it."*
- E. *"Good to the last drop."*

A. Nike. B. McDonalds. C. Campbell's Soup.
D. American Express. E. Maxwell House.

help to foster goodwill and recognition among its audience.

In 2011, National Grange Master Ed Luttrell announced at the 145th Annual Convention a new tagline and, ultimately, a cohesive new message and identity for the Grange:

American Values. Hometown Roots.

Along with this simple, four-word tagline, new images have become part of our standard library. These images all support the visual and emotional image of an organization standing for the hardworking American with strong family values and a deep sense of community who serves others, loves their country and is a good steward of the American Dream.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR LOCAL BRANDING EFFORTS

All marketing and branding experts will tell you, using more than one tagline is confusing for the audience. “American Values. Hometown Roots.” was chosen because we feel it is reflective of the entire organization. Because of this, we feel confident that every Grange can use the tagline as part of their communication strategy and on their products in order to strengthen our overall brand, make us easily identifiable and better understood by the outside audience and promote a greater sense of unity within our fraternity.

We highly discourage the use of any other slogan or tagline, even if it was previously a tagline used by National Grange on any new printed or digital communication by Granges. If a Grange chooses to use another tagline, the National Grange will not provide brochures, websites or other products with its use. Individual Granges will be responsible for the production of such materials. However, because the “American Values. Hometown Roots.” tagline appears on most of our products, including membership, E-membership, Declaration of Purposes, Four-Step Recruiting Guides and other products, we hope you will also use this tagline in your promotion of the Grange. This adds a layer of consistency, something essential to strengthening our identity and our trademark.

Individual convention and event slogans or titles are still encouraged. Each year, the National Grange will continue to provide a slogan and logo to regions hosting the National Convention for marketing of that session. Grange Month materials will follow the National Grange standards and include the “American Values. Hometown Roots.” tagline through the course of its use, something that should aid in promotion of the awareness of the Grange and events each April.

LET’S GET TOGETHER: A PLUG FOR CONSISTENCY

Consistency is a core concept in branding and in public relations. Organizations require consistent use of logos, taglines and products in order to enhance their appearance of professionalism and protect their brand or trademark. While the Grange is organized in such a way that allows freedom in many aspects for local chapters, there are certain rules that are found in the bylaws of the organization that every chapter must follow.

Groups that use outdated, skewed, discolored, misshapen or other inconsistent logos, fonts, facts or other pieces of their entire communication puzzle will find that they are less sought after by potential members and often dismissed by media outlets. Every one of us, often unconsciously, seeks a certain level of consistency in order to believe in and support organizations. If a Grange uses their own logo or tagline, they will confuse the audience – “Am I giving money or time to the real organization or a scam group?” or “These people are really in the dark ages.” – and often unintentionally push them away.

A PRIMER ON STYLE

In regards to public relations, style is a set of rules or standards for language and presentation expected to ensure accuracy, understanding and order. Specifically, style deals with definitions, language, punctuation, capitalization, abbreviations, and so much more.

Most people are familiar with the MLA Style for research projects or reports. For media professionals, the set of rules followed are found in the Associated Press Stylebook. Any public relations or public information director for the Grange should have a copy of the AP Stylebook at their disposal. There are many editions as the Stylebook is updated almost yearly, but any recent edition will give you the basics.

In the AP Stylebook, you will find guidelines on spelling, grammar, punctuation and usage of words. It's not a dictionary. The Stylebook is a reference directory for journalists and public relations agents that offers limited explanation on terms, helps you to determine correct word choice, gives rules for the way news outlets write addresses and numbers, and so much more. While you don't have to commit the book to memory, there are certain very helpful entries for anyone trying to draw media attention to or create media for the Grange. It is highly recommended that internal Grange documents, such as newsletters, and external documents, such as web entries, press releases and media kits, follow the Stylebook rules in order to enhance our image, exhibit our professionalism and increase likelihood of coverage.

Most organizations and news outlets have addendums to the AP Stylebook that include proper usage of terms related to their organization and fact entries to ensure accuracy in writing. The Grange is no different. The Grange Style guide includes the proper use of the title Master for internal documents and President for external release, the capitalization rules for elements of our order and more. It can be found as Appendix D of this handbook.

Chapter 3:

Benefits of Talking to Ourselves

In order to get the job done, public information directors for the Grange, like any public relations professional, have many tools at their disposal. Each tool has its own unique audiences, expected tone and overall benefits. Most public relations professionals will tell you that like the repair of an engine, no one tool can do the entire job. However, all the publicity, the attention to “the little things,” and all the service projects in the world wouldn’t hold Granges together if members didn’t have fun doing what they do.

Public information directors must help the Master and the members stay informed and make their Grange experience enjoyable and permeating throughout their lives. In our fast-paced society, it is easy to forget our commitments to the Grange and other organizations. Multiple forms of communication from the Grange to members will lessen the busy world effect. This, in a nutshell, is internal or member-to-member public relations, the focus of this chapter. In it, you will find an overview of internal, member-to-member communication methods and best practices. This chapter also touches on the record keeping and archiving of your Grange’s activities, efforts and individual accomplishments.

COMMUNICATING WITHIN

For Grange public information directors, a balance must be struck between talking to your members and about your members to a larger audience. Communication materials are great ways to keep your members active and engaged. Each item you produce for your members should be informative and strengthen their connection with the Grange and one another.

Members have a sense of the greatness of our organization. They also understand the terms and rituals of our Order. For this reason, it is appropriate to use traditional Grange terms, such as Master, in your member-to-member documents.

While you can speak more directly and openly about Grange issues in these documents, we encourage you to approach each internal document with a positive outlook. If you are writing a letter about an upcoming fundraiser, starting with a sentence like, “As most of you know, our Grange is almost broke,” is discouraging. While this may be accurate, a better way to phrase this type of letter may be to encourage participation in the fundraiser; “Add to our coffers in order to enhance our ability to continue the great work in our community.” The approach makes all the difference.

CONSTRUCTING A MEMBER DIRECTORY

In order to do your best work, it is imperative that you have an up-to-date member directory. This should not only include the name, mailing and e-mail address, phone number and years of service for each member of your Grange, but also some personal notes such as the names of their children, grandchildren and spouse, whether they are members, birthdays, major accomplishments, areas of interest and expertise and much more. This will be a very handy guide for you and your information team when producing internal and external communication documents.

Often Granges have something like this available in a book form, such as an address book or notebook. It is highly recommended that you make it a priority to digitize this information for ease of transfer and use. Microsoft Excel is a wonderful database program that is available on most computers.

METHODS FOR INFORMING AND ENGAGING MEMBERS

There are numerous member-to-member communication methods, but some of the most often used are Grange newsletters, Grange mailings, flyers and appeal letters. All of these documents should carry a Grange logo and conform to Grange style as discussed in Chapter 2 and expressed in detail in the Grange Style Book Addendum found in Appendix D and the Grange Graphic Standards that will be introduced in Chapter 5 and are fully illustrated in Appendix K.

Newsletters

Many Granges already have newsletters, however, those that do not can realize many benefits from creating such a publication. Newsletters are some of the best tools to keep your members informed and enthusiastic about the Grange, and they can be as simple as a one-page document or a full-scale newspaper or magazine.

There are several great reasons to have a Grange newsletter at any level, including awareness of events, fundraisers, member education, projects, member accomplishments or losses and more. Newsletters, along with all other member-to-member communication tools, are proven to increase retention. If you currently send multiple mailings and letters per year to your members, this can often save money for the Grange. You can use the newsletter as a platform to educate your members about community issues and initiatives as well as local, Pomona, State and National Grange programs, contests, legislative activities and more.

While this is considered an internal document, the public will often see it and other printed material as well. Members can use the newsletter to promote the Grange. This should be a positive publication, highlighting the activities, fellowship and accomplishments of your Grange and your members. The details you offer and the tone of your contents – showing pride in the organization, action, service to community and commitment to one another as Brothers and Sisters – can add significantly to the base of knowledge prospective members have about the Grange and show them why they should join.

Annual Reports, Master's Letters and Other Official Mailings

All Grange mailings should come on Grange letterhead and in a Grange envelope. This is professional and immediately signifies its importance to the receiver. With all the junk mail we receive, letters that aren't clearly marked can often mistakenly be thrown away.

Each year, the Master of your Grange should produce some member-centric letter that addresses what the Grange has achieved, how many members you have, how many new members signed up in that year, some of your priority projects, any contests, winners, representatives to State or National session and more. This may be included in your newsletter, but could be sent separately to members for their review. This letter allows members to reflect on success and prepare for future projects. It also gives the Master a way to encourage members to participate in specific projects, to engage more on the State or National level and much more.

Granges may also send other official mailings, such as the announcement of a specific scholarship, contest, legislative initiative, event, benefit or program. Any of these can also be included in the newsletter, but updates or specific member-only information can be provided in letters.

Grange Events

Remember, your meetings and events are also forums for communication. You can take a moment to acknowledge a member's recent accomplishment during a meeting, or work with the Master of the Grange to prepare motivating and entertaining speeches for members before or after service events, fundraisers and much more. If we put emphasis on these "everyday" opportunities for communication in our Grange, we greatly add to the value of member experience.

Cards and Letters

Not all communication has to be formal. In fact, much of what we do to make members feel connected to their Grange family are small acts of kindness, things that can often be forgotten in this fast-paced day and age. A simple 'get well' card for the member who recently underwent surgery, a sympathy card for one who has lost a relative, a 'missing you' card for the member who hasn't been at meetings recently are all ways to keep in touch and show you care about them as a Brother or Sister in the Grange.

We encourage you to look at the stock of cards available from the Grange Store. Sympathy, Get Well and blank greeting cards with Grange logos are excellent stock for you to keep and pull out when necessary. Many other cards will be coming soon, including congratulations, missing you and happy birthday.

In addition to cards, hand-drafted letters for the member who is serving their country, has moved but remains on your rolls, is suffering a hardship or has made a difference for the community or the Grange are all great opportunities to remain connected. Often as the public information director, you can initiate a letter-writing circle or encourage members to connect in this very personal way.

Care Packages

A National Grange Youth Director has told the story many times: she moved away for college and could no longer attend her Grange regularly. She began receiving regular care packages, including home baked goods and notes from her Grange Brothers and Sisters. While she was a devoted member, there is no telling if she would have been as committed to the Grange after four years away. Instead, when she returned from college, she was even more active in the Grange and is now one of its leaders on the national level. She has credited those care packages, along with great programming and other opportunities she experienced while in the Grange as a youth member, as something that will always be illustrative of the type of family we are and the wonders of Grange membership.

Service men and women, members who have recently moved to assisted living or nursing home facilities, members who are moving into their first home or apartment or going through other transitions can be served well by a Grange care package. Your Grange can choose to include baked goods, notes, Grange magnets or stickers and so much more. You may want to recruit someone to your team as the member outreach or sunshine deputy for this job. They can also be charged with remembering birthdays and special events for members, like the anniversary of a lost loved one, in order to enhance the member experience for everyone in your Grange.

A Special Note on Making New Members Feel Welcome

New members are often excited but nervous. They want to become involved in our organization because something that we do or some benefit appealed to them, but that may be lost among learning ritual, meeting new people, being asked to commit to meeting times and dates, and other things that may take them out of their comfort zone. It is important that we communicate regularly with new members to make them feel at ease with their decision to join the Grange and become actively engaged and excited to participate and share the joy of their Grange membership with others.

Make sure someone from your team takes the time to learn what attracted the new member to the Grange. Find out more about them and try to build a relationship between them and other members, especially those that are enthusiastic and would make good mentors. Provide past issues of your newsletter and make sure to send them a card from the Grange welcoming them. Tell them about contests they might like, service projects they can lend their skills to and initiatives that might strike a cord with them. Also, make sure you encourage them to sign up for any State and National Grange publications and benefits they are interested in, tell them to set up a social profile and invite them to log onto the National Grange website to interact with members from across the country. Remember what made you love the Grange and share it with them.

Chapter 4:

Spreading the Message of the Grange

While informing members is a key responsibility for leaders of any Grange, attracting the attention and introducing members of your community to the Grange is just as important, if not more so. Many of the events Granges hold or take part in each year are newsworthy when pitched to the media in the correct way. Even when traditional media outlets, such as newspapers, television and radio don't cover your event, new media like websites and social networking sites can be just as or even more effective.

With the exception of celebrities and high-profile people, businesses and organizations, no one can expect media coverage without working for it. Very rarely does a simple phone call, hand-written message or flyer in the local grocery store pique the interest of media. Even in the smallest communities, reporters are flooded with news and information. Sorting through all of the information to find the stories that readers most want and need is a complex process. To aid reporters, and to reach out to your neighbors on your own, you must understand a bit more about both the media landscape and the tools that will attract attention.

In this chapter, you will find a basic guide to identifying and creating news events in order to deliver the Grange message to external audiences. A discussion about the different approach and some notes on language and style changes for external communication is also included, as well as a guide for working with media outlets and journalists. Also, several tools of the trade are introduced, with examples found in Appendix E.

A CHANGING MEDIA LANDSCAPE

A decade ago, the aspiration of all organizations was to get coverage in their local media in order to let people know about events, initiatives and accomplishments. Today, that is still a goal, but it is not the only way to promote your Grange to the public. The media landscape has changed drastically in the past few years, with social media such as Facebook and Twitter, blogs and YouTube vying with traditional media outlets for the public attention. While most people still see traditional media, such as newspapers, TV and radio, as important and trustworthy sources of information, new media is becoming a major player in the game. Further, we have always worked to develop products, such as brochures and letters to the editor, in which we can craft our own message and image, but today we have even more resources to do so, including websites and social media.

These Grange-authored media products are sometimes even more effective because they take our message right into the living room of members, prospective members, journalists and the public at large. They are often free, take minimal effort to create and have broad dissemination. In this section, you can learn more about the usefulness and capabilities of different media, along with the boundaries and expectations related to each.

ONE-WAY COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Materials that are created to inform people about the Grange or Grange events but do not offer a way for the audience to respond immediately are considered one-way communication devices. While these can create conversation, raise awareness and interest and help define the Grange in the public mind, there is little room for follow-up. You have one shot: either they like it or they don't. If the material appeals to the public, they will seek you out to learn more about the Grange, but if it doesn't, you may never know if they heard your message at all.

To make these the most effective resources possible, the materials must be succinct, audience-centric and very well constructed. They must look professional, interesting and easy to digest. Color is a big plus, as are high-quality photos, white space, appealing layout and impeccable grammar and spelling.

Grange Brochures

Organizations use brochures to convey messages and information to an audience that is well defined. These are important tools to spark community interest in the Grange and our programming and events. An attractive brochure can stimulate membership growth and even generate contributions to your organization. Each member should work to distribute these brochures to people interested in learning about the Grange. Brochures should also be displayed at local businesses and passed out at community events. They should be given to people who attend your events and available for use by your town halls and welcome centers.

Not every brochure fits every message, and the target audience who receives our brochures should see what benefits we offer and our programming for them as something they need and want. This is the reason the National Grange offers several different brochures. The following brochures are available for all Granges:

- Individual/Family Membership
- Grange Youth
- Junior Grange
- Member Benefits
- E-Membership
- Four-Step Recruiting Brochure
- Declaration of Purposes
- Trademark and Licensing with the Grange

The National Grange has always designed and printed brochures for local, Pomona and

State Grange use. Many Granges want material with their own name and information included in order to best speak directly to their defined audience. Because of this, many Granges made their own brochures with a local focus. However, this approach often led to the distribution of material that was inconsistent with our branding and message, as discussed in Chapter 2, and had poor reproduction quality.

The National Grange will no longer be able to provide brochures to Granges at no cost; however, we are still committed to meeting the needs of every Grange in the country. In order to do so, and to provide clear, attractive, consistent, professional brochures, National Grange has secured an agreement with Staples that will allow all Granges to personalize brochures designed by the National Grange to conform with Grange standards. Through the Staples program, local Granges can choose images and add information that they feel best reflect and interest their local audience. This move will assist local Granges with providing professional products for prospective members at no cost for design.

Currently, four brochures are available for customization through this program: the Individual/Family Membership, Grange Youth and Junior Grange brochures along with the Grange Benefits brochure. For each of the membership brochures, local, Pomona and State Granges will be able to add their name, their contact information, and specific details about local projects and achievements in variable text fields. They will be able to choose from a number of different photos to find the one most representative of their Grange or community and because of the agreement, will be able to purchase small or large quantities at minimal cost. Granges with specific benefits available to their members in addition to those listed in the National Grange Member Benefits Brochure may contact the National Grange Communications Department to discuss additions and changes in layout or design to accommodate their information, or they may produce their own Grange-specific benefits brochure based off of the template available through the Staples program.

Some of our brochures are designed in such a way that most Granges will not want to or should not customize them, such as the Four-Step Recruiting Brochure, Trademark and Licensing with the Grange, E-Membership and Declaration of Purposes brochures. In these cases, brochures are available for purchase through the Staples site or the Grange Store, but Granges will not be able to change photos or text on them.

Special Grange-Specific Brochures

Local Granges are encouraged to create their own brochures for specific events, programs or celebrations. Because of their small size and the ability to create them quickly with free or inexpensive computer programs, brochures can be extremely useful tools to give information to a target audience for any of these local, Pomona or State Grange programs or brochures.

If you are planning a service event for your community or soliciting support for a program, brochures are effective tools to inform those you feel will be most interested in participating. Those who donate or get involved in the program should also receive our designed membership brochures that inform them about the other things Grange mem-

bers do and stand for as they might consider membership at this time.

When designing a brochure, consider what information you want to present. Define the mission of the publication and determine what are critical pieces of information you want to include. Make sure you find someone comfortable with computer programs that can be used to design your brochure and pick quality photos for use that will enhance the look of the final product. Determine how much information you must present, what information is the most important and how it should be organized both for logical flow and for reader-friendly design.

Most brochures are designed to print on a standard letter-sized sheet of paper – the 8 ½” by 11” size. They are “landscape” oriented, meaning they are wider than they are high and often folded twice, just like letters, to create a total of six panels. A detailed explanation of how to use the most common word processing program for computers – Microsoft Word – to create brochures can be found in Appendix F.

The National Grange also offers assistance to any Grange looking to create an event or program specific brochure. Granges seeking assistance should contact the Communications Department several weeks in advance of their event and should provide all written content for the brochure via e-mail. The National Grange can provide photographs if you do not have quality images available for use. Granges are responsible for giving final approval and printing these brochures. The National Grange can give you some suggestions for cost-effective printing options and work with printers to help you complete your project.

Flyers and Posters

Well-designed flyers and posters can be very useful to attract attention to your Grange. Both flyers and posters are used to give a general audience a small amount of information in a short amount of time. They should include the time, date, place, cost and a short description and purpose of an event. For general promotional flyers, bullet points or quick lines of description are appropriate.

A serious downfall to flyers and posters is the lack of portability for the audience. Most people see flyers or posters, and before they’ve gotten to their car or destination, they’ve forgotten what they’ve read. For that reason, incorporating your web address or a QR code into the flyer or poster so smartphone users can immediately visit the website you’ve directed the audience to will often serve as a great memory aide.

QR Code

A short version of the term Quick Reader code; this 3-D barcode often square with blocks of white and black, can allow smartphone users to immediately go to a specified website, send a specific text message to a designated recipient, “like” something you’ve directed the code to on Facebook, call a linked phone number, save contact information and more into their phone, and many other quick functions. Free QR code generators can be found online and offer anyone the opportunity to modernize their print products by making them interactive.

When designing both flyers and posters, consider what catches attention. Large short headlines, such as OPEN HOUSE, highlighted features, such as a star with the words “Free pancakes,” or “Free cooking demonstration!” and of course, great pictures, graphics or other visual elements, are all key to getting people on the go to notice your material.

The National Grange offers several pre-designed templates through the Staples program that should allow local, Pomona and State Granges to create professional, eye-catching posters at a low rate. In order to take advantage of the designs and savings, log onto the National Grange website, enter the Members area and click on Promoting the Grange to follow through to the shopping and design center.

Exhibits

Every town in the country has some event where organizations and businesses can set up a display. Often these are available for free or at a reduced rate for nonprofit organizations. These are excellent public information tools that your Grange should take advantage of.

Your Grange should think ahead, plan what big events they can be a part of, and prepare a display that will capture the attention of the public. You don't have to spend a ton of money to have a really professional looking display, but your Grange should make an investment in a banner, a display board and several brochures to provide more information to those who stop by.

Feel free to contact the National Grange Communications Department for information on display boards and possible special printing rates. The department may also be able to assist you in designing specific material for your exhibit. Make sure to contact the department early and provide as many details as possible, including the size of space you will have, in order to determine what will work best for your Grange.

Make sure to visibly display the Grange logo and your Grange name. Have on hand information about your meeting time, date and place. Consider using rip cards to gather information from interested individuals. Wear Grange attire when staffing the booth or exhibit and have an elevator speech prepared. Use many of the tools in this kit to prepare to be a Grange ambassador.

Grange Comic Book – “A Grange Story: Finding My Place”

In 2011, the National Grange produced a 20-page comic book, printed on newsprint, about our organization. It features a “city mouse” that feels disconnected and wants to do something to help her community. She finds the Grange, becomes a member, gets involved in service and legislative projects and ultimately reflects on how great it has been for her life. She then sets out to recruit her mother and get her to start a Grange in her hometown.

This is a unique item that can assist you in introducing community members to the Grange. While brochures tell the highlights, this story is told from the perspective of a new member and shows some of the actions, friendships and opportunities prospective members are likely to find in the Grange.

The comic book is designed to appeal to all ages, though 18 to 35 year olds are most likely to connect with the main character. This is an excellent product to add to any display, can be included with dictionaries given to children as part of the Words for Thirds program, and can be handed out at large events.

These are available through the Grange store. If you are interested in ordering a large quantity, you can personalize the back cover with specific contact information for your Grange preprinted on the book. For smaller quantities, we recommend purchasing large white mailing labels and putting the contact information for your Grange as well as the time, date and place of meetings.

TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Communication mediums that include and encourage feedback systems are considered two-way tools. Some of these are familiar to Grange public information directors, while some are new or untested. Using a variety of both one-way and two-way tools can be very rewarding. While encouraging support or awareness of the organization using one tool, you can solicit direct involvement in the Grange using another. Look for opportunities to make contact with external audiences in various and complimentary ways. The following are tools that should be used to enhance the presence of your Grange in the community.

The effectiveness of several communication tools you create to call attention to your Grange are at the mercy of others. These tools can, but don't always, produce feedback. Tools submitted for review and publication or airtime may be wonderful but still miss the mark for inclusion in media space. In this case, beggars can't be choosers. When we compete with many other organizations and individuals to have our voice heard in the small window of free space or airtime, often we are disappointed by the results. Since we are not paying for it, we are not guaranteed that our messages reach their intended audiences when using tools such as letters to the editor, publicity photos, op-eds and public service announcements.

A few ways to ensure at least a fighting chance to make it to light are to construct clear, concise, well-constructed pieces of communication. Use the best possible tools when creating photos, video or audio releases. Make sure to follow standard rules of grammar, spelling and punctuation for written pieces. Speak clearly, with conviction and in an educated manner for audio and video clips. Look presentable in photos and video. With any of these forms of communication, you are becoming a public face of the Grange and should take that responsibility and honor very seriously.

For any attempt to lure media, consider going outside the box if appropriate. An example is submitting a photo of someone blowing out candles for their combined 100th birthday and 75th year as a Grange member celebratory dinner rather than a photo of a few family members and friends smiling and looking at the camera as they're gathered around the birthday person/award winner. Action makes photos much more appealing. Use high quality, digital equipment when taking photos and recording video or audio. If it doesn't

look professional, it won't be used.

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor are extremely useful tools in any public information officer's arsenal. These allow you to speak directly to readers of a publication and eliminate the need for a reporter to speak for you. The two most common styles of letters to the editor are the "thank you," in which someone shows appreciation for an act of kindness, support or other good deed and the "response letter." In response or rebuttal letters, you can add support for or speak out against something previously printed or covered in that publication. While many people take this as an opportunity to attack the publication or be negative, it is important for official Grange communications to remain positive and present facts in a calm and thoughtful way. Make sure your letter is clear and to the point. Have an opinion and back it up with facts and, if applicable, a short personal anecdote. Typically, these letters are no more than 300 words and should stick to a specific point.

Make sure to scan the news and feature pages regularly to find opportunities to remind your community about our great organization. Often, you can respond to an article that is not specifically about the Grange by providing a "Grange" point of view in a quick bite.

Submit the letter as soon as possible. Don't wait months after you've read something of interest before writing to the editor. The more timely your comments, the more likely they will be printed. Also, if you've received community support for a project or fundraiser, make sure to submit a thank you in the local press. This will create goodwill and may prompt some last-minute donations or new members.

Letters to the editor must be signed and include contact information in order for the publication to verify them for submission. While you may ask to remain anonymous, we highly discourage this. The Grange is something to be proud of and if the contents of your letter are things you feel you cannot be associated with saying, often they are things Grange members would discourage you from writing for public consumption. Follow the publication's specific rules for submission. Remember most publications prefer letters submitted electronically and will put a much higher priority on printing these instead of hand-written ones they must transcribe.

Take the opportunity to invite interested parties to visit a Grange meeting and learn more about becoming a Grange member. You don't have to tell them everything about the organization in your letter to the editor, but your writing can give readers an insight into the character, values, benefits and activities of the organization.

Finally, like most of the other tools listed in this handbook, take the time to repurpose this for new media. Post your Letter to the Editor on your Grange website. If it does run, promote it through your social network by mentioning it in a post or linking to it. If the letter itself is in response to a specific article, feel free to post it in the comments under the article online if your letter to the editor does not run in that publication within 10 days of submission. Find ways to use a version of that letter to the editor in your internal communications as well.

Op-Eds

Opinion-editorials are excellent tools for any Grange who wishes to affect opinion on a topic or issue. These are authored by you and submitted for consideration to a publication, much like letters to the editor. However, what distinguishes op-eds from letters to the editor is that they are a longer piece, typically about 750 words, in which the author advocates from the outset a specific point of view, and often includes a call to action.

This is a key persuasive communication tool for your Grange, and like every other communication product, you must rely on facts and produce high-quality writing in order to expect your op-ed to run. You should also anticipate counterarguments or readers' questions and work information into the op-ed that would answer them.

Just like letters to the editor, inspiration for op-eds can come from reading the news regularly. For example, if you see an article detailing development in rural broadband plans, you could easily use it as a launching pad for your op-ed that details the Grange's support for rural broadband expansion, what the Grange has done locally, at the state and national level, in support of rural broadband access and why it is important for people in your community – members and nonmembers – to whom the Grange gives a voice.

Submit op-eds to the editor of your target publication in the form of an e-mail. Make sure to first address the editor, introduce yourself as a member of the Grange, including your title if applicable, and give the editor some reason to believe this is a well-supported piece of writing. In order to do this, you can note the Grange represents rural America and agriculture, and give a statistic about the breadth of agriculture in your area or you can indicate the number of either local or State Grange members if you feel it is impressive. Tell them you've included in the e-mail an op-ed for their consideration, that you look forward to confirming anything they would like in order for it to be published in an upcoming edition and thank them for their time.

Remember that these are great pieces that your members will love to read in traditional media or through your website or internal communications. Reprint the op-ed in your newsletter, link to it through your online profiles and sites, and keep several copies that can be laminated or otherwise matted to become part of Grange displays.

Publicity Photos

Publicity photos are images that you have produced specifically to relay a message about your Grange, its events or values. These can be as simple as a good headshot of your officers or as advanced as an aerial shot of many Grange members working on a large-scale community service project. In any case, these photos are extremely helpful in garnering attention for your Grange because pictures can be worth a thousand words.

Like many communication products in this new digital age, high quality photos are expected because it's become affordable and accessible for general users. Further, these aren't just to submit to traditional media anymore. In fact, today traditional media outlets will never use most publicity photos. Instead, your Grange will use these as part of your website, social media profiles, internal and external documents, such as newsletters and

brochures, and so much more. No matter the intended use, photos should always be sharp, well composed, and large so that they can be repurposed for anything from a small web image to a banner-size image and beyond. Photos should also show action – people doing something interesting. Photos of people shaking hands or standing in a line are boring and add little to the appeal of a story for rebroadcast or print. However, they do have a place on your website or archives for historical purposes.

Before taking your first photo, make sure you inform your subjects that they will appear in your photos and that you will be using these as publicity, displaying them on your website and social media profiles as well as distributing them to the media. Unlike photojournalists who appear at your public events and have certain rights to document these events without explicit permission by every person in the photo, if you plan to use your photos for any commercial purpose or as part of a Grange publication, advertisement or other public display, you should get permission from your subjects. The National Grange has provided a photo release form, found as Appendix H of this handbook, for your use. You can adapt it for specific events or include your Grange name. You should keep a copy of this signed document on file.

When submitting photos to news outlets, always check photography requirements first. Almost all media outlets will require digital photos because the quality of reproduction is much higher. They can also be e-mailed to the editor, a big plus on tight deadlines. If you are able to submit a printed photo, don't assume the media outlet will return it. Some newspapers will return photos, if you ask, but this is extra work and isn't routine. They may also require you to pay postage.

Before submitting a digital photo, make sure you find out the newspaper's preferred resolution (Usually 150 or 300 dots per inch, called dpi) and graphic-file format (.tiff, .jpg, .bmp, etc.). 72 dpi images pulled off the web are not appropriate for print. They will print small and blurry.

Every photo must be credited and include a caption. You must tell the editor who took the photo and include a description, names of anyone in the photo, the location, date and time of the event. Before you take a photo, however, make sure you have permission from everyone in it to submit it for publication in the media. This should also be done for any photos you plan to use on your Grange website or social media sites.

Find ways to use these photos, whether as part of Grange displays or in your hall. When the community sees their neighbors or friends enjoying Grange events or programs, they are more likely to want to be a part of our organization.

Public Service Announcements

Network television stations and all radio stations are considered public utilities. As such, they are required to provide at least some public service, often translated into the broadcasting of public service announcements, or PSAs. PSAs are non-commercial advertisements on radio or television that are broadcast for the public good.

In the past, nonprofit, community organizations relied heavily on and expected sta-

tions to air PSAs with good faith. However, as the Federal Communication Commission has moved towards deregulation, broadcasters are now left almost entirely to set their own standard for the appropriate amount and direction of public service. Because of this, often PSAs will be played during off-peak viewing or listening hours; short PSAs, about 15-seconds in length, will be broadcast; broadcasters can pick and choose what charities, health and safety issues are important to them and play only PSAs related to these areas of interest. Further, many stations have adopted a community calendar format into their regular programming cycle, eliminating traditional PSAs in the process. While this is good for Granges to know – and use to their advantage – it does slightly dampen the potential effect of this tool of persuasion for the Grange communicator.

Just like with any other type of media outreach, it is important that you determine who is responsible for PSA scheduling at your local TV and radio stations. Work directly with this person to learn more about getting your PSA on air. Make sure to thank them and the station for airing the product as this written note acknowledging their orientation toward public service programming is something they can put in legally required documents about their station. It will also greatly increase the chances that you will land airtime again.

There are still some markets where PSAs are well received, such as nonprofit, noncommercial radio stations, often established by colleges and run by students and faculty. With a quick phone call to the station, you should be able to find out how to submit your PSA and any other requirements the station has for airing materials. Also, you may be able to cross-connect by scheduling a time to come on air during a talk-radio program to promote a Grange event, activity or general membership.

Even though getting PSAs on air is becoming more difficult, thanks to the Internet, there are more venues for your announcements than ever before. No matter your success with the traditional media, make sure your product finds an audience. Use a video or audio PSA on your website, social networking page or at your events. Ask if it can be aired or even acted out before local theatre shows, read over Little League speaker systems, or used in other nontraditional venues. The more people hear about your Grange, the more our organization grows!

For Granges that attempt PSAs, there is one main tip for increasing the likelihood it will air: make sure not to sound self-serving. Remember, the PSA is ultimately about the public good, and while the Grange may do good for the public, ads that exclusively encourage membership do not meet the standard for suitable PSAs.

Free and Paid Good Will Advertising

In print media, public service advertisements are rare because newspapers can easily fill any available space with more news. If you wish to produce a public service advertisement to run in your local newspaper, it may be wise to first contact the Advertising Department to find out if the newspaper accepts unpaid ads from local nonprofit groups. If you hold a nonprofit EIN, tell the ad director you will write a letter stating they donated ad space for your organization, and list the value of the ad space at their highest one-time publication rate so the company may use the letter for tax deduction purposes. It is almost unheard of for a newspaper or magazine to accept a free ad and offer to design it free of charge, so

you will have to plan accordingly.

If the newspaper does accept free ads, immediately begin working with them to determine the date they expect the ad to be submitted, the size of the ad, if it will appear in black and white or color, how they expect you to get the file to them and in what format. Make sure to create an eye-catching ad that conveys your message in a few simple words. Design the ad to have no smaller than about 8-point font so readers don't need magnifying glasses to see what you've said. Make sure to write a thank you to the Advertising Department and publisher for including your ad after it has run.

If you are or are not successful in securing ad space in gratis, consider purchasing a paid ad space. Be sure to request a reduced ad rate for nonprofit organizations. Any advertisements that thank the community or donors will build goodwill and raise the profile of your Grange. A large, annual thank you ad to the community is a great way to tell your Grange's story in your own words without the editorial middleman. In it you can write a short story about your Grange's activities, successes and investments in your hometown over the past year. You can also include a membership application or other information about joining the Grange in the ad.

TOOLS SPECIFICALLY CREATED TO GARNER MEDIA ATTENTION

If you've used most of the tools previously discussed in this chapter, you should find it much easier to get media attention. Still, there is work to be done in order to court journalists to cover your Grange, your events and your programs.

Before we get started on specific tools, it's important to note that the appearance of these materials is a major factor in a journalist's initial reaction to them. Materials that come in front of media professionals are judged immediately by their design and adherence to accepted standards. Examples of many of the tools included in this chapter can be found in Appendix E. It is imperative that you prepare material for media distribution that is accurate, interesting, timely, constructed correctly and written well.

Press Releases

A press release is one of the most standard forms of public relations materials available to any public information director. Press releases convey specific information to the media from your Grange that is intended for distribution to a larger audience. When constructed well, a press release can become the core of a news story, allowing the information you wanted the public to know to be seen and given added weight through media distribution. Before it goes to the public however, press releases first are sent to gatekeepers – journalists and editors who have been trained to identify and report accurately and fairly on news in their communities. Of course, just as with the other communication tools we discussed, the traditional media are not the only sources of distribution for your press releases, which has narrowed the role of gatekeepers in society.

Today, press releases can be posted on your website, and should be written clearly and in a way that the public is used to reading them – therefore, modeled after news

BOILERPLATE

A boilerplate is a paragraph that contains a short description and mission of your organization and should appear consistently at the end of every press release for your Grange. The National Grange boilerplate reads:

Established in 1867, The National Grange, a non-partisan, nonprofit fraternal organization, is the oldest agricultural and rural community service organization. With more than 2,100 local chapters, the Grange has evolved into the nation's leading rural advocacy organization and a major benefactor to local communities. There are more than 160,000 members across the United States. For more information on the National Grange, visit our website at www.nationalgrange.org.

Local Granges should personalize their boilerplate to include information on when the Grange was chartered, some of the major initiatives or focus of the Grange and your website address for more information.

articles. They can also be distributed for free through press release services. We recommend PRLog.com, a free service that allows you several releases a day, includes your contact information and logo, and will publish the press release in a way that will appear in search engine results for the general public.

Because you can, and should, use press releases in a variety of ways to help promote your Grange, it is important to produce high quality pieces from the start. You should limit the text of these releases to between 500 and 750 words, or two typed, double spaced pages including letterhead, contact information and boilerplate.

A good press release will grab a reader, reporter or a radio/television producer's attention, while a bad one will be ignored or thrown into the trash. If your story is interesting, you will raise public awareness and get the coverage you want, but you must make sure the pitch tells the reporter or reader "This is something people should know about and will want to read."

Too often reporters receive press releases with no news value. Granges can take a lot of time to construct a press release but fail to have it read widely or get coverage because they have not presented the information in a way that makes readers, reporters and editors excited.

Granges are also guilty of not issuing press releases often enough. Many of the programs and projects we undertake are of interest to the media and media consumers. We don't want to waste time telling stories that will never be covered or missing opportunities to attract media

attention. Therefore, it is important to understand what makes information newsworthy. You can learn more about this in Chapter 5.

There are several types of releases that can be used to tell your Grange's story to the public often. To find more opportunities to tell your Grange story, think about "hooks" you can use to get the attention of the media and the public. Here are just a few common hooks:

- Use a news event as a springboard
- Celebrate an anniversary
- Take nominations for or give an award or honor or hold a contest

- Appear before public bodies or pass a resolution
- Host an event or debate
- Announce the results of your election or the election or appointment of a Grange member to a national committee or as representative to a non-Grange panel or board because of their involvement with the Grange
 - Prepare and deliver a speech of significance, especially related to social conditions or current events
 - Announce a joint project with another organization or media outlet
 - Conduct or release findings on a survey, report or analysis
 - Tie-in with a holiday – ex. the Grange celebrates the Fourth of July by restoring park benches to original red, white and blue colors or hosts an apple pie contest

After you identify a piece of information as newsworthy, you must gather the information needed to create a press release. In this case, you must act like a journalist – getting quotes, digging for facts and constructing a story worth the public’s attention. Once you gather all your information, it’s time to write.

Press releases require a specific style of construction known as inverted pyramid. Inverted pyramid writing requires the most important information to come at the top of the story while the lesser details appear at the bottom of the story. In our fast-paced world, readers often only make it to the second or third paragraph before they move on to another story. Journalists and editors are the same way. Give them the most important information first, and then follow it with some quotes and other details so they may mine the release for extra pieces of information when preparing to construct their own story.

Writing for the media or a web audience is different from essay writing or other more traditional written communication in many ways. Here are some of the biggest differences:

- For press releases, use only one space after your periods.
- Never use exclamation points – it seems as if you are yelling at the audience.
- Typically, each paragraph is only one sentence long.
- Avoid terribly lengthy sentences.
- Make sure to use the last name of a person on second reference unless you have

TIMELINESS OF RELEASES

Remember that news is deadline driven and must be timely. Make sure to plan ahead for your press release. Get information and quotes in advance when possible and have the release ready to send either before the event as an EMBARGOED copy or directly after the event ends. If you are working on a release about your stance on something, make sure it arrives on editors’ desks quickly following news coverage of the topic. If you do this, you will have a much higher chance of being included in stories. Press releases that are days, weeks or months after an event are ineffective. They tell a reporter or editor that what you’ve announced is not that important to you or that you’re not a relevant information source.

several people in the same story with the last name. In this case, identify them in all references by their full name.

- When quoting someone, use the “name said” construction – eg. “Without the Grange’s support, this project would never have been completed,” Smith said.
- Remember that punctuation appears inside quotes.

Now that you know how press release writing differs from other written communication, you should learn more about the most important element of any press release: the lead. The lead is the first paragraph of a release that answers several of the most important questions: who, what, when, where, why and how. You must engage the reader immediately or they are likely to move on without going further than your first sentence. Everything else in your story works to support and expand upon your lead.

After getting the readers’ attention through a strong lead, reinforce the message with facts. Focus on how the news will have an impact on your community and its citizens. As you write each sentence, consider its importance to the readers’ understanding of the entire story and if it is of interest to the general audience.

To strengthen your release, add a quote from the appropriate representative of your Grange. If your news involves a second organization or a beneficiary, a quote from them adds necessary balance. Quotes also help journalists to identify a contact for potential interviews. Finally, they add a great deal of credibility to your release. While quotes are necessary and important, be careful not to include too many. Also, keep the number of sources quoted to three or less – one is necessary, two is good, three can easily be a crowd and so on.

A quick note about quotes:

- Quotes should be interesting. “This was fun” is not a good quote. “I’ll never miss another Grange event” is an excellent quote.
- Quotes must have attribution.
- Quotes are the only place in the press release where you can explicitly state an opinion.
- Quotes that include a lot of slang, jargon or other unfamiliar terms should be explained or excluded.
- Quotes must be exact. While you can write full words for those often spliced by regional dialect, you cannot change a quote to be more appealing. If you feel the quote is inappropriate or would reflect poorly on the subject, paraphrase it instead. Ex. Grange Master Smith said, “Our Grange hadda put up dat fence because it ain’t no good to have kids playin’ games der in da street.” You could change this to read: “Our Grange had to put up that fence because it ain’t no good to have kids playing games there in the street,” but this still isn’t a great representation of our organization or the Master. Instead, you can paraphrase by writing: President Smith said the Grange undertook the fencing project because members often saw children playing in the street and felt it was unsafe.
- As your Grange’s public information director, you can suggest something for your members to say for press releases or when journalists request an interview. This often

“**Q**uotes are important because they are the only time where opinions can be included in a press release or news story directly. Remember, news stories are supposed to be a report of impartial facts, so you should never write something like “The Grange completed this wonderful project that will benefit the city.” You can, however, write the same thing when you attribute it to someone who has said it, therefore making it a quote.”

allows you to help construct good quotes for your press release.

As you continue through construction of your press release, always look at the presentation of your facts. Make sure you’re writing or editing them in a way that the story reads from the most to least important details. Remember that you don’t have to tell everything, but do provide enough material that your release would make a good story that can stand alone without follow-up by reporters or readers.

Make sure to finish strong. Consider closing with a profound quote. Do not introduce new facts at the end that you should elaborate on.

Finally, make sure you present your story in a specific way to look professional, by adhering to some specific guidelines for press releases. Media outlets expect you will provide them with the relevant information in a consistent and concise manner so they can quickly decide if they’re willing to invest the resources into coverage.

After you’re finished with the story and have added all the standard elements of a press release, go back and give it a headline. When you construct your headline, make sure it sells the story. Editors faced with a desk full of press releases look for something to grab their attention, so the first words they read should make them want to read more. Be exciting and brief, not dull and long-winded.

All press releases should appear on Grange letterhead and include a phone number and/or e-mail for your Grange contact just below the letterhead at the right of the release. Under the contact information, to the left, you should write either “FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE” or “EMBARGO UNTIL (time, date).”

Media Alerts

Media alerts are one of the simplest tools in the public relations toolkit. They are single page documents that outline with bullets the important information reporters need in order to cover an event. They answer the questions “WHO,” “WHAT,” “WHEN,” “WHERE,” and “WHY” quickly.

Media alerts should look similar to press releases at the top. They should appear on Grange letterhead and include contact information just below. They should always be titled MEDIA ALERT and then directly answer the most important questions in short phrases or sentences. This can be difficult, for example, with the “WHY,” so make sure to

boil it down. For example, if your Grange were hosting a fundraiser for a local agriculture education group, a good “WHY” would be: “The Grange has been a long-time supporter of agriculture education. This fundraiser will benefit hundreds of local students in order for them to learn where their food comes from and more about the careers in agriculture.” This tells a reporter that your Grange has a specific interest in agriculture education beyond the standard philanthropic gesture. A reporter knows he or she can make any event preview story or article about the event much more interesting when they have a group with a vested interest in what they’re involved in.

Feature Pieces and Pitches

Feature stories are often called fluff pieces, but serve as a valuable tool for any public relations campaign. These stories are usually good reads at any time and often focus on the more personal or historical aspects of an organization. They tell a story, emotionally connect the reader to the organization in a way news pieces often cannot, and provide specific insight into the character of the individuals or entire organization in focus.

While features are different from news releases, they still must hold up to a basic standard of being newsworthy. Why would someone want to read a long story about a program your Grange has started? Sure, they like to know what their neighbors are doing within their community, but they also want to feel like it connects to a larger social issue or that they have learned something new.

Feature stories are often longer than traditional news. For television, these typically are at least 60-second stories, while newspapers will often allow between 20 and 40 inches of copy space, or about 550-2,000 words. They often expect sidebars, or additional short pieces, between 100 and 250 words, that give more detail about a specific aspect of the story or provides an opposing or complementary view of a similar program, project or issue.

When considering a feature piece, find something that is touching. Did your Grange members knit and donate scarves for local elementary kids last year after someone said many children who waited for the bus near them were improperly dressed for winter? Did your Grange provide a scholarship for someone who will be the first generation student to attend college? While neither of these may make the traditional big headlines, they are both great leads for feature stories. They connect the audience to someone’s plight, to a larger social issue, or just provide a feel-good moment for media consumers who are burned out on bad news. Tell the story!

Look for ways to provide a more personal message about your Grange through feature pieces, however, understand that most news organizations won’t run something just as you’ve written it. Many weekly newspapers and local or specialty websites will take direct copy, but larger newspapers, and all television and radio stations interpret your story or write their own. Of course, these feature stories are a great addition to your local Grange website and can add a lot of value to your media kit.

If you’re not sure how to construct a feature, or just don’t have the time to do so, consider instead “pitching” a feature story idea to editors or reporters at these outlets. To

pitch a story, you can send a short e-mail or make a quick phone call. However, the best way to pitch something to the media is to provide a one-page document that includes contact information for anyone you know who will strengthen the story with a note as to their role or an insight into the personal story they can tell. Remember, features are about human interest. Tell the story in a way that compels the reporter to want to write or cover the feature for the audience to read or view.

Media Kits

Media kits contain a combination of materials produced by the Grange that give reporters and editors a holistic sense of not only an event, but also the entire organization. These kits are take-away items provided to media members so they may prompt other stories or reference in future articles. The media kit is an all-in-one reference guide for any media member on deadline or searching for a new story.

While the contents of media kits vary, there are a few standard elements. First, make sure to provide all of the material in a folder, called a “shell” by public relations practitioners. We recommend using a Grange folder, available through the Grange Store, so that it looks professional and can be easily identified by media members who store this on their desk or in files.

The entire kit should work together to tell a seamless and cohesive story. Because of this, all the contents within the kit should support the message, both in tone, angle and style. Consistency is key with this product. You should use the same fonts and graphics throughout the kit.

There are two specific types of kits you will likely put together. The first is an event-driven kit that includes details about the event and a bit of background information about it and the Grange – both your local chapter and the National Grange. There is also the promotional media kit, which includes a great deal of information about the Grange, including brochures, backgrounders on major campaigns, events or successes, short biographies on the major officers of your Grange and the National Grange, reprinted news articles about your Grange and National Grange and other relevant items of interest.

There is a method to the madness in the layout of your media kit. In the right hand pocket, you should include time-sensitive news information like a press release and fact sheet about the event or campaign and specific statements from a Grange spokesperson related to the event or topic. In the left hand pocket, you should include background and organizational materials such as visual materials, biographical information, backgrounders, position papers, feature stories or news clippings. If you have a business card, attach it or include it in the shell.

Media kits now include some digital material. We highly recommend you include a CD-ROM with professional headshots and digital biographies of your Grange officials, the professional headshots of our National Master, as well as his biography, photos related to your event and the official Grange logo. These will all be useful to journalists when constructing their stories for different mediums and allows you greater control in the final product. This CD should be slipped into the right hand pocket of your shell.

If you are mailing the media kit to a journalist who couldn't attend an event, enclose a cover letter detailing the contents of the kit and why the event, project, campaign or organization deserves coverage. These cover letters should, of course, appear on Grange letterhead. Remember, journalists, especially at small media outlets, are often juggling many stories. The easier you make it for them to quickly and accurately construct a story about your Grange, the more likely you are to get great coverage again and again.

News/Press Conferences

Press conferences are events specifically designed to provide media with information from an organization's point of view. These are special occasion events when you have a clear, informed and highly newsworthy issue that you wish to promote. News conferences often allow you to garner prime media coverage, such as the evening news, because they are timed in such a way that the topic ties in with a current hot issue and your event provides a local angle reporters seek.

These are not easy events - you can't just put a speaker in front of a podium, invite a few folks from the media and call it a press conference. Instead, these events should be well-planned, visually appealing for photojournalists and TV reporters, and highly organized.

News conferences are great tools because you can provide more information than in a press release, op-ed or any other tool so far discussed. However, you will still lean on several of the tools discussed as takeaways from the event, such as media kits, and tools to be discussed such as text copies of speeches. Also, you should incorporate things such as banners identifying the organization and Grange pins into the decorations and attire for members at the event.

A great and sometimes stressful part of the press conference is its interactive nature. Because you're in front of reporters, you can answer questions and stress points you might not otherwise have a chance to make. However, you must maintain a consistent message and not be baited into areas where you are not familiar or that are overly partisan.

In order to plan a news conference, first identify your issue and define your position. Then consider where you can hold such an event that is visually stimulating and relevant, such as holding a press conference about rural postal closings outside a rural postal office. Identify your best speakers and consider bringing in allies from other organizations to show broader support for your position. Make sure everyone's aware of the event, its purpose and your expectations. Make sure you won't be competing for media attention with large events. Finally, alert the press. Use media alerts, make phone calls, send e-mail, and provide an EMBARGOED press release at least a day before the event to the media that includes some quotes from the prepared speeches of your participants and other background information that shows the event is worth coverage.

A best-practice piece of advice for a press conference is to have one person in the audience and/or a moderator for a panel who will signal participants if they are getting off-script or responding in a way that is against the organization's mission or policy. This will reduce the likelihood that members will become flustered or misspeak in such a way that

backfires for the cause and the organization.

SELF-MANAGED TOOLS

Two decades ago, this chapter would have ended here. For the most part, individuals did not control their own media and information destiny beyond brochures, flyers and the occasional inclusion of a letter to the editor in their local paper.

Today, thanks to the Internet, new media has come on the scene that has changed the media landscape and reality as we know it. Young and old, poor and rich can all use the power of the web to have their voice heard. For organizations like the Grange, the good guys with little budgets, this is an innovation that cannot be dismissed.

We must become more web-savvy, create our own messages and allow them to be heard by as many people as we can. Most of the tools available for public relations directors in relation to social media are free and fairly easy to use. Thanks to a National Grange program being offered for the first time in 2012, once hard-to-manage and costly websites are also free.

Grange Websites

While not all of your members may embrace the Internet, it is important that your Grange have a website. Many Granges across the country already have their own websites with varying degrees of complexity and information.

All Grange websites are subjected to the guidelines of the Grange Website and Electronic Social Media Code of Conduct adopted by the National Grange Executive Committee on Feb. 25, 2011. This code of conduct can be found as Appendix G of this handbook. Every member of the Grange should be aware of this code of conduct, and as your Grange's public information director, you should distribute copies to any member with access to your website and with personal or Grange-related social media access.

Many Granges have found it difficult to establish websites either because they are too difficult to create and update or too expensive to operate. While there are several free options available to the public, the National Grange has made it a priority for all Granges to have free websites that are professionally designed and fit within our overall brand.

In early 2012, the National Grange established a free website program that allows every Grange at every level to have a mini-website hosted on the grange.org domain. These websites allow Granges to update their own information, post their own photos and events, and provide details about their meeting times, their halls and much more. Each site has the correct Grange logo with the registered trademark, is designed with the Grange color palette and includes the tagline, "American Values. Hometown Roots."

A website and e-mail guide will be available to all Granges through the National Grange site and can be found in this handbook as Appendix I. Online, the guide can be found by creating a login and password to the Members' side of the site and accessing the Downloadable Files. The National Grange Information Technology and Communications depart-

ments will update this regularly in order to provide a full step-by-step guide to updating and using your individual Grange websites.

Initially, managing your own website may seem a bit daunting. Don't worry. Follow along with the guide in Appendix I, and you will be navigating your site like a professional in no time.

One of the best things that you can do to entice people to keep coming back to your site is to consistently update it with new posts, pages, and media. If you host a fun event, write a post about it the next day, and upload any pictures or videos from the event onto your site to show everyone how fun it was. When others see how excited people are at Grange events, they will become curious and possibly attend your next event.

The manual in Appendix I will give you a solid understanding of how to use your website to promote the Grange. This is an amazing tool that allows you to connect with people anywhere in the world. Experiment with the program, create a website that truly reflects how you feel about your Grange and make sure that people frequent your site by constantly updating it with positive news about the Grange.

If you currently have a website and wish to continue using it rather than the predesigned, free site created by the National Grange, you can contact the Information Technology office at 888-4-GRANGE ext. 101 to provide us with your current website address. By the end of 2012, all Granges are expected to choose to maintain their National Grange provided site or request the National Grange to route visitors directly to your local, Pomona or State Grange maintained site. If you request redirection to your own site, the website must comply to National Grange standards as outlined in the code of conduct.

Regular upkeep of any Grange held website is highly encouraged. Out-of-date information gives the impression of an out-of-date organization not interested in informing its members or larger community.

You may be concerned with the technical part of having a website. This is where a little ingenuity and a quick look around at the skills and needs of your Grange family might help. You may be able to find a Grange member who would be happy to help create and maintain a website. Remember, many teens and young adults grew up with computers and the Internet and have some skills in simple web posting and editing. Also, younger members of your Grange may be looking for ways to fulfill required community service hours for their school or pad their resume or college applications.

Make sure to promote your site. Community members will often bookmark and frequently visit the sites of organizations or groups that hold events and service projects so they can stay informed. People want to know what's going on in that building down the road. Use your website to give them a peek inside and entice them to join you!

Social Media for Granges and Members

With the explosion of social media sites, it's impossible to create any guide to communication without talking about the types of sites and users as well as the benefits and drawbacks of social media use by and for the Grange. First, what is social media? This is media that is user-created and shared, that appears on the web or web-based mobile applications. Social media sites allow people to have different levels of connection with people who may be as close as next door or as far as

halfway around the world without ever leaving the comfort of their living room or putting down their mobile device.

Users create profiles for specific sites and generate content that is linked to them as the authors. Almost every social networking site is free and fairly easy to use, even for the novice web-user. In Chapter 8, you can learn more about social media, how to create profiles, best practices and users guidelines and much more. Remember that all Grange social media profiles and posts by Grange members should adhere to the code of conduct found in Appendix G.

Facebook is the most common of all social networks, with more than 800 million users in early 2012. YouTube is one of the most visited websites in the world, averaging more than 4 billion videos viewed on the internet-based video on demand service every day at the beginning of 2012. Both these, and other sites, are expected to grow in popularity as more and more people across the globe become Internet users each day.

Journalists are becoming very social media savvy and most have profiles on social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook. Often they use these sites to get ideas for articles or contact potential sources. Because of this, it is important to be positive in your posts – both in your official Grange posts and any posts on your personal social media profiles related to the Grange. Imagine a reporter reading something like: “Grange was boring tonight. Only 5 members showed. This is the sixth month in a row! Don’t know how long we can stay alive if this continues.” What a scoop! The local Grange is likely to close is an easy leap for any journalist and a great story for their portfolio, but not for our organization.

Finally, as part of the new National Grange website, you will find a Grange-only social network. This site allows users to post pictures, updates, information and more. It will allow us to have greater member-to-member communication in a forum that is open only to Grange members. To become a part of our online Grange community, visit www.NationalGrange.org and click on Members. Create a login and password and begin to use the network to talk with members across the country. Create groups, link to your Grange and use this as a forum for many other Grange-related activities.

Blogs

Blogs are online journals consisting of posts, or entries. A good blog revolves around a central theme or subject – something built in when you create a blog for your Grange. Blogs should contain personal perspective, opinions or commentary, not just recap news. This allows you a forum to introduce readers to issues in terms of Grange perspective and policy.

You can create several blogs, all of which focus on different issues. You may create a blog dealing just with legislative issues and resolutions. In this, you can talk about Grange policy in relation to current events locally, in your state or in the U.S. as a whole. You can create another blog dealing just with Grange happenings, especially related to community service or programming events. If you create more than one blog, you should promote them as complimentary to one another in order for those interested in Grange

information to get a full sense of the organization.

Blog entries are normally between 250 and 1,000 words. They allow you much more flexibility in expressing views than the typical social media forums that are constrained to a few hundred characters. You can include relevant photos and link to original source material, such as articles that appeared in traditional media outlets to give readers more background information. As with all public communication, writers should focus on accuracy, consistency, excellent grammar and clear writing.

You should promote new posts through your other social media accounts. Consider posting the title or a short sentence promoting new entries on your Facebook or Twitter accounts and link to the blog entry.

Using the individual Grange pages created through the National Grange website, you can host blogs. You can also sign up for free accounts through services such as Word Press and Blogger. More information about establishing blogs can be found in Chapter 8, which focuses specifically on social media.

Podcasts and V-logs

Podcasts are audio-based reports, often constructed like interviews or event coverage that you would hear on radio or television broadcasts. These are recorded digitally and distributed through websites, iTunes or other online forums. They may also be included as part of the publicity CD in media kits.

V-logs are video blog entries, a blend of the written blog and the podcast in that they provide viewers information and commentary. These are not as popular as blogs or podcasts, but can work well in some instances. Specifically, you can create a V-log to include on your website. Much like a television reporter, you can cover an event or program, offer voice over or just interview subjects and allow the public to hear the Grange perspective in a new way.

Speeches

Prepared speeches are one of the oldest forms of communications in your toolkit. Each year our National Master presents two speeches – one for the internal audience and one for the public – at National Convention that deal with policy, state of the organization and more. Often, local Grange Masters do not present similar speeches, but can be called up on to do so in settings other than a typical Grange meeting.

Speeches can come in the form of testimony or planned presentations. Being part of a panel discussion or forum or being asked to speak on short notice are also possible venues for public communication for any Grange leader. These should all be taken seriously and should positively and accurately reflect the organization and our policies.

We highly encourage you to record speeches and broadcast them through V-logs or podcasts for those who were unable to attend. You can also include the full text of these speeches on your website, in the notes of your Facebook page, as part of your media kit or in a variety of other ways.

DON'T LET YOUR OPTIONS OVERWHELM YOU

It's easy to become overwhelmed by all the outlets, tools and tricks available to provide the public with information about your Grange. Remember, you don't have to do this alone. In fact, most Granges will find that having a public information team is extraordinarily helpful. Combine your resources, play on your strengths and prioritize in order to be the most effective messengers for the Grange you can be.

Remember that you can always contact your State Grange and the National Grange office for assistance. However, you must commit the time and effort locally in order to guarantee success. When seeking assistance, make sure you have done your homework – prepared all the necessary facts, quotes and information about the event or issue. Also, using information you find in Chapter 5 related to building a rapport with local media, have a primary press list ready before you recruit assistance.

Chapter 5:

Understanding Media + Journalists

Understanding how the media works, what makes news and how to make the news is of utmost importance for any state or local community Grange. Favorable media exposure means recognition in the community, acknowledgement of Grange activities, services and accomplishments and a higher profile of your Grange among potential members.

Most people understand the importance—and competition—of media coverage, but understanding it and knowing how to use media coverage as a tool are two different things. So, how does your Grange get into the news? The key to media coverage can be simply explained as a two-step process: developing the right story and delivering it to the right media.

Any story that appears before an editor or journalist must have a news hook. In this chapter, you will learn more about news values that make stories attractive to the media. You will also learn that although all media outlets search out and welcome all types of news stories, television, radio and print each have their own unique qualities that will affect their interest in your story. Background work is also important, so you will be introduced to methods to build relationships with media professionals and understand their job. You will read more about how to interact with media and be a liaison for your Grange to the media before, during and after events and times when you seek issue coverage. At the end of the chapter, you will find a discussion about how to handle unfavorable publicity.

WHAT MAKES A STORY NEWS?

When we discuss news, most often we understand it in terms of what has happened very recently. Because of this, you may believe anything you do in your Grange is newsworthy because you just made a decision, planned an event or gave an award. You may also think there are few things other than events that deserve coverage by the media. Both of these assumptions are false. Many things make a story newsworthy, although timeliness is one of the key factors for any story.

The elements that make a story newsworthy are called news values, or basically a set of criteria that attaches simple facts to an interesting story the public wants to know. Each piece of information should touch on multiple news values in order to be considered newsworthy. When pitching a story to the media, make sure to touch on each news value it addresses in order to see greater success with coverage. This concept is also useful when reporting directly to your audience through social or self-controlled media such as blog entries and website posts.

The most common news values of any story that attracts attention are: timeliness, proximity, prominence, magnitude, consequence, relevance, human interest, conflict and the out of the ordinary or bizarre.

Timeliness

By definition, news is something new or fresh for the readers. Events that happen today should be covered by the media outlet today, or a press release just before or after the event should convey the details about the event. This is the same with a reaction piece where Grange members may weigh in on an ongoing topic that appears in the news. Some news seems to be repeated over and over. These are often called developing stories. Developing stories include fresh bits, sometimes very small, in a larger, ongoing story. For example, your Grange may offer a statement related to the Governor's initiative announced the day before, stating Grange policy and including comment by local, Pomona or State Grange officials or members that are in line with Grange policy.

Proximity

Most media are first and foremost interested in stories with a local angle. This doesn't require that a story originates in your community, but it is of interest to those in your area and has a local hook. In our previous example, the Governor's initiative likely did not originate in your town, but the reaction you provide the media shows local sentiment and is of interest to the media. A good tip is to continuously read and watch your local media outlets to understand the types of stories that they are covering and get to know your local reporters and anchors.

Prominence

Information about anything that is well known, including people, places, organizations or events, are more newsworthy than information about unknowns. In the previous example, a Governor's initiative is also newsworthy because it comes from a well-known public figure. If your local grocery clerk proposed the same initiative or idea, it wouldn't be newsworthy. A way to use this in your favor, if your Grange is not well known, is to include people of prominence in your events. For example, invite a political figure to speak or judge an event or participate in a service project.

Magnitude

This refers directly to the scale of the issue. In our previous example, a Governor's initiative affecting every member of your community and state has a much higher magnitude than one that affects only a small subset of the population. In the case of the Grange, a program or project that benefits the entire community, such as a free community health care screening fair, is more newsworthy than one that only affects Grange members, such as a hall renovation for a Grange that does not rent their facility to the public.

Consequence

Similar to magnitude, consequence looks at the effect something will have on people. Most often the effect discussed is negative or potentially negative, however, consequence

can also refer to a positive outcome. If the previously discussed Governor's initiative would require an increase in taxes to fund, this is a consequence. In Grange terms, hosting a public debate between candidates includes the element of consequence.

Conflict

At the heart of any good story is the element of conflict. Even in the most positive of stories, you can identify conflict. A story about Grange members creating a community garden at a homeless shelter by definition includes the element of conflict in that there are those who are without homes or food, something that conflicts with our idea of minimum quality of life. The aforementioned debate between candidates would have inherent conflict, as would the story about the Governor's announced initiative.

Human Interest

People like to read about one another. They especially like stories of triumph, perseverance, courage and compassion. These stories play on emotion and allow readers or viewers to connect with their humanity and with their neighbors. Add personal elements to your stories when you can. For example, if your Grange offers a \$50 college scholarship annually, this can hardly be considered news when college tuition and costs average about \$17,500 a year. In this case, find ways to tell the story about the student who receives the award, and mention the award as a secondary fact. Get quotes from your Grange officials about the merit of the student rather than how the Grange is assisting them because most readers, journalists and editors will scoff at the idea that \$50 would make or break the student's chances of attending college.

Out of the Ordinary/Bizarre

Stories about things that are uncommon attract readers' attention and are some of the most widely distributed. People like to laugh, shake their heads, or otherwise react to their news. If you involve a candidate in an event for charity and they become a dunk tank participant, for example, make sure to include this. It's something people wouldn't expect or see everyday and therefore news.

How is my Grange newsworthy?

Having trouble coming up with a reason the media should cover your Grange? Ask yourself questions like:

What are you doing that no other organization in your area is?

What skills, background or accomplishments of your members can you emphasize to show relevance?

What information should the public know in order to become involved in the Grange or to further your Grange's goals?

What are timely issues your Grange can or is addressing in policy, programming or events?

WHAT'S THE RIGHT MEDIUM FOR YOUR MESSAGE?

Once you have decided on a story, it is time to target specific media outlets. Ask yourself which methods of coverage would be most effective for your story; will newspapers

coverage be enough; and would the story work better with the moving images of television? Some stories offer very little in terms of visual appeal or sound bites. The election of new officers, for example, is a great story to send to print media, but there is little to see or hear, so they are not of great interest to TV or radio journalists. To better understand the differences of mediums, let's look at the strengths and weaknesses of each.

Print

What makes the print media unique is its ability to provide in-depth commentary by publishing longer news articles. Basically, print publications provide the most important details of a story, whereas radio and television only provide the snapshots or the fast facts of a story.

Radio

Radio may not be a first choice when it comes to news coverage but when speed counts, radio, just like television, has the advantage of being able to produce and air a broadcast report minutes after news breaks. When radio is not covering breaking news, it gets most of its news stories from local, regional and national print publications. Another advantage of radio is that morning-drive and rush hour shows often have large followings and loyal listeners.

Television

Television's strength is its ability to blend pictures with storytelling to create a compelling and visual broadcast. It also can produce and air breaking news stories moments after they occur, as well as extend across boundaries by covering news in other states and countries while bringing live broadcasts from those areas to its local viewers. When considering television as a medium for coverage, locations must be selected with accessibility, lighting and grouping considerations in mind. Make sure that there is a Grange logo predominantly displayed, especially near a podium or area where a speaker will stand. Remember, with TV and radio you will have to give your important comments and information in a concise way so that they can be used as a "sound bite." Sound bites are typically something compelling said in 8 to 15 seconds.

You should also know that newspapers could be your best allies when seeking broader coverage. Always send your press releases to print media because television and radio stations sometime pick up stories from print publications and send out news crews to further investigate the story for broadcast.

If you are primarily looking for inclusion in social calendars, send your announcement to all media outlets in your area. As discussed in Chapter 5, most media have some sort of community calendar, so even if you don't get a full story, your event will be announced to the public.

While your local media should always be included in the distribution list, sometimes you may find stories that will have broader interest. If your Grange has comments on the aforementioned Governor's initiative, you should send your press release to political publications and media outlets in the state as well as outlets located in the state capital. If you

are working on a unique project or program, consider working with the Communications Department of the National Grange to get a press release out to national media markets. The Communications Department can work to position the event or program in a way that strikes at trends or larger social issues and can carry greater weight when received by national media.

Remember that there are niche media outlets, including websites and magazines that focus on things such as crafts, politics and education, that may also be interested in a story about a local Grange's activities. Again, these should be constructed in a way that illustrates a larger trend so the outlet feels it would appeal to a broad, non-geographically oriented audience.

BUILDING MEDIA RELATIONSHIPS

The first step in developing an effective PR program is to conduct a media survey. Consider what forms of media reach your desired audience and make a list. Newspapers, magazines, radio stations, television stations, and local websites are examples. Take that list and gather the names of their respective reporters, editors, and news directors to contact for story ideas. Most libraries have media directories that list every daily and weekly newspaper. Similar directories for various regions, states or provinces, and nations can be found on the World Wide Web. Collect addresses, phone and fax numbers, e-mail addresses, and useful information such as publication deadlines.

Establishing Rapport

While journalists are fairly straight forward, it never hurts to learn a bit about them. Do they have a favorite hobby such as fishing or reading? Do they have a family? Are they a graduate of a college with a great sports program? Good journalists try to learn little things about their sources in order to build goodwill and get better quotes and scoops and put them in files called sourcebooks. Similarly, you should take a few minutes to learn things about journalists you work with and put the information in your Media Directory.

You can begin to create your own using the Workbook enclosed with this handbook. Next time you speak with the journalist who is not on deadline, take a minute to allow them to be human and discuss their interests or common ground. Telling them their team looked great in a game, that you heard about a great fishing location or asking how their family is doing goes a long way. You'll become a person they want to hear from rather than someone who makes contact in order to get their message out. The more you genuinely invest in the journalists you work with,

Respect from the first handshake

Just like on job interviews, a handshake can tell a lot about a person. While it seems silly, take a moment to brush up on giving a good handshake. Don't offer your hand or take their hand like a limp fish; be firm but don't overpower the person. Remember that women expect you to shake their hand as well as men as it is a sign of respect.

the less your pitches will feel like cheap, self-serving tips and more like good ideas that may have enough meat for a story.

Once you've built a rapport, you will have a greater ability to draw attention and make suggestions, requests or give brief input. In this case, consider sending a brief e-mail to call attention to Grange policy regarding an issue in the news, and suggest the journalist contact your Grange's Master or the national office for comment. Invite the journalist to visit a meeting where they might get some story ideas. Ask the journalist if their outlet holds "editorial boards," interviews with individuals or small groups in which several journalists and/or editors from the outlet ask questions and develop stories or keep comments in their files for later. These are great ways to illustrate the breadth of the Grange mission, from community service to legislative activities and advocacy.

PREPARING FOR COVERAGE

Even before your first pitch, arrange to meet with the journalists and directors of local newspapers, radio, and television stations in your area, and introduce them to the Grange or your goals for the year. During your visit, ask how can you better serve the news professionals in your area. Find out how they want news from your Grange given to them. Do they prefer telephone calls in advance of your meeting or event? Do they prefer mail, fax, or e-mail when being contacted? What are their deadlines? Do they take submitted photos or only reproduce or broadcast their own images? The more you know, the more effective you will be for the Grange and less bothersome you will be to journalists.

Get the basic shell and contents of your media kit, as described in Chapter 4, together. Put brochures, backgrounders and biographies in the folder and create a folder on your computer that includes Grange graphics, a photo of your Grange officials as well as the Word document or PDF of their biography, and other relevant information that would be included on any media kit resource CD-ROM. Be well prepared so that you're not rushed when you host an event or otherwise seek coverage.

WORKING WITH THE NEWS MEDIA

First, you must understand that the easier you make the job of the busy journalist, the more often they will offer you coverage. Most journalists are juggling multiple stories and hate interruptions. Because of this, e-mail is the preferred method for information both for editors and journalists. Editors can print the information or forward it to the reporters for coverage. Journalists can get back to you between events or interviews.

Further, when you send an e-mail, make sure to check for a response frequently. If you don't check e-mail often or don't have access, be clear in your e-mail that the best way to reach you is by phone, and provide a number or multiple numbers at which you are always available. Nothing is worse than opening a line of communication but not following through. You must be available or the reporter will drop the story or move on to another source, and you will lose a great opportunity for exposure. Being unavailable will also

quickly reduce your stock at any media outlet for future coverage.

In your e-mail, make sure to address the editor or reporter by name, if at all possible. If you are sending information to a list of people, use the BCC line rather than TO or CC. BCC stands for blind carbon copy and will show the recipient only their name. They will not see who else you sent the information to.

Be brief. Tell the journalist what you're contacting them for, show in your first sentence or two why this is interesting for coverage, and tell them how best to contact you. If you have established a personal rapport, feel free to include a brief personal note, but don't ramble.

If you have an attachment, consider adding the text below your signature in case the journalist is on the move and cannot download what you've sent or if your software is incompatible. Include a link to a website with more details if applicable, but make sure the site looks professional.

If you must call, respect deadlines and time constraints of journalists. Be prepared, keep your conversation brief and remember that your conversation cannot be referred to later. You may find yourself repeating information again or getting a request for something you've already told them. This does not mean the journalist wasn't listening, but it's easy to misplace notes or fail to remember something you've already said on the phone.

FOLLOWING UP WITH THE MEDIA

It is always helpful to follow-up with a media call a few days after sending out press releases. Be specific when calling. Ask if the reporter or producer received your press release and whether or not you could have two minutes of his or her time to explain the contents of it.

Do not forget to tailor your pitch to the specific media. If they're unsure, ask them if they'd like to come to a meeting or get more information about the Grange so they can see if there is a story worth covering. If the reporter or producer says they are not interested in the story, then no means no. Don't push. Thank them for their time and move on to another call.

MAKE YOUR EVENTS MEDIA FRIENDLY

As public information director, you are your Grange's media liaison. Whenever a reporter appears to cover an activity, you should place yourself at his or her disposal and assist in any way you can, answering questions, pointing out those who should also be interviewed and providing any information they might need in order to positively portray the event and organization.

One rookie mistake is to be too assertive. Most journalists have good instincts and good intentions. They know where there is a story, when they can find a good angle and

“It is not the responsibility of the journalist to make you or the Grange look good. It is your responsibility to be an appropriate, respectful, and inviting representative of our Order.”

what they need in order for people to read, watch or listen to their piece. Remember they want to appeal to their audience and will work to produce the best piece possible, so walking them through every step and interview is often more irritating and time consuming for the journalist than helpful.

Prepare your members for coverage. Make sure they all know what the event or program is about, why the Grange is involved and why it is important to them and the community. You are responsible for helping them craft the message that the journalist will take to the public.

EVERYTHING'S FAIR GAME

In any case, journalists are by nature good record keepers. Editors require proof of quotes that are controversial or confusing. They also require them if the accuracy is questioned by the source. For this reason, journalists will take notes and often use an audio recorder when interviewing you. In most states, people are required to inform the other party or parties that they are being recorded. This is not the case in every state.

For Grange purposes, we expect that nothing you say would be “off the record,” or unfit to print. You are representing the organization, so contradicting our policy, speaking ill of any political candidate or otherwise saying something that you would not like broadcasted should never be an issue. Remember, if you say something controversial or in a way that is unexpected, it increases the news value of the story and is more likely to find its way to print or air, so know what you want to say and what you should avoid. It is not the responsibility of the journalist to make you or the Grange look good. It is your responsibility to be an appropriate, respectful, and inviting representative of our Order.

HOW TO HANDLE UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY

Bad publicity can be just around the corner for even the best-run, most successful organization. It takes only one disgruntled community member to go to a newspaper, one aggrieved member to post something on the Internet or one unforeseen incident to occur and suddenly your organization's reputation is endangered.

In the case of the Grange, more often than not bad publicity comes when members talk about a shrinking organization, disinterest in the Grange or other negative comparisons to “better days.” While it is true that we have fewer members today than at some times in our past, the organization is still thriving and relevant, and we are starting new Granges,

Little Things That Make Your Reputation

Upholding a positive reputation for your Grange should be a priority. This is a responsibility you share with your members and leaders. Further, if you take this responsibility seriously, you will find your Grange garnering more coverage, new members and general interest in our organization. Media outlets are more likely to find you and those you interact with are more likely to mention you in conversations, on social media sites and in their own media interviews. All of this improves the image of your Grange. Here are a few suggested steps to shine:

- Extend genuine hospitality to every guest who attends a meeting or event
- Write thank-you letters to speakers and all those who contribute time, effort, or money to Grange activities. Present a certificate of appreciation if appropriate.
 - Extend invitations to editors, station managers, mayors, school superintendents, and other public officials to visit meetings to get acquainted with your members
 - Write letters of congratulations to newly elected leaders of other service, civic, church, and community groups in your area.
 - Send letters of appreciation to local public officials who perform their duties in an outstanding manner.
 - Extend support to worthy community efforts such as the Red Cross blood bank, Salvation Army shelter, etc.

revitalizing Granges and bringing in new members everyday. Moreover, every social organization like the Grange is facing similar decline in membership from their glory days. Most journalists will not seize on the fact that your Grange or the National Grange has fewer members today than at other times in our past, but if they do, it likely comes after a member has said this. Journalists who do ask such questions can easily be reminded that like the Masons, Elks, Lions, bowling leagues and gun clubs, we are competing with a much faster-paced life in which many people have little disposable time or income or focus more attention on entertainment in their home than outside of it.

WHEN MEMBERS GO NEGATIVE

Often when members talk to journalists, visitors or neighbors in terms of the shrinkage or lack of interest in our organization, it's a sign that they are disconnected or dissatisfied. It is also a sign that they may not be willing to think outside the box or connect with and introduce the public to the Grange.

Like in any group, Grange members can become insular and cliquy. As a public information director, this is not your biggest concern, but consider working with your lecturer, membership chair and Master, or other members of your Grange leadership team, to talk about introducing new programming, a greater emphasis on membership gains and posi-

tive messaging to your Grange. A single new member or a slight change in your programming or community service focus can bring new life and a positive change to any Grange.

If your Grange faces a crisis, such as an injury at an event or negative backlash from another organization, it is important to deal directly with the issue. Public information directors should work with their Grange Master and other officials to have a plan in place before any such crisis occurs. Consider what your mission is, what positive things you bring to your members and community, how you handled the situation and will continue to handle or stem a similar issue in the future.

A few rules for dealing with negative publicity or crisis situations:

- **FIRST AND FOREMOST:** Refer any questions to the Master or appropriate and designated spokesperson for your Grange.
- **DON'T** avoid reporters' questions or ask the media to suppress the story. The media will report the story because it is news.
- **DO** assist reporters in getting all the facts so the story will be fair and balanced. Be sure of your information — never provide conjecture just because the media has a need for information.
- **DON'T** speak before you have the facts or place blame elsewhere when you know you share blame in an incident. Put the public's interest first, be open and honest, and cooperate with the media.
- **DO** assess what happened and improve your crisis communications plan in case something negative happens in the future.
- If the story involves a personal injury, there is only one aspect you should refuse to discuss — the question of whether your Grange was negligent or at fault.

If properly handled, an unfavorable incident can be turned into a public relations asset. If you provide the facts quickly and accurately, the press will appreciate your help, and these contacts can lead to a closer working relationship in the future. After a crisis, emphasizing positive stories such as improved practices and community involvement will help to restore your reputation in the longer term.

GETTING PAST 'NO'

Don't get discouraged if your story does not run or is rejected. News of a higher priority could have filled all available space or airtime that day. You may also have submitted a story very similar to one previously run or something that just doesn't "play" in that market. Don't write off the media outlet or journalist. Look at what is covered and craft your next release or alert to capture attention.

Also, don't be disappointed if your release is rewritten. This doesn't mean you presented the journalist with something that isn't well written or appropriate. Journalists must make changes in order to "byline" or author pieces, something that is often counted weekly in order to show their productivity. They also change stories to attract more attention, sometimes broadening the scope so that it ties in with recent news or trends in a way that

you may not have thought of. Also, due to space limitations, it is common for only a small portion of your story to be used – that is why it is crucial to include the most important information in your story up-front, because the rest may be cut. See more about writing a good press release in inverted pyramid style in Chapter 4.

If you continue to have problems getting coverage, see if there is another journalist at the outlet who covers nonprofit, community organizations, politics, local news, agriculture or other beats – areas of specialty and emphasis – that would be a better choice for your material. Contact an editor and ask how your news should be submitted for consideration of coverage. Ask if you can visit the newsroom and speak to a journalist about the Grange so that you have a contact for releases. Finally, if none of these are well received, focus your efforts on other outlets and let competition play out in your favor. Remember, if one outlet gets attention by their audience for covering the Grange, others are sure to follow.

Chapter 6:

Basic Design Principles and Standards

The first impression of an organization is often conveyed by its verbal and visual communication. The impression is strongest when those communications are positive, unified and consistent. With this in mind, certain design rules must be in place in any organization that help answer the questions: Who are we? What do we do? How do we communicate our mission, vision and goals to the world? How can we be unified and easily identifiable in a complex world?

Presenting uniform and consistent communication material helps answer these questions for members, potential members and the general public. These standards honor our past, substantiate our present and secure our future. It will also help us maintain the integrity, purpose, image, vision and brand of the Grange and will allow us to endure.

All of this, however, requires that you as local, Pomona or State Grange public information directors, Masters, officials or members do your part. While the National Grange respects the uniqueness of every individual Grange, the standards outlined in this manual are the tie that binds all Granges together in the common cause of building and advancing our organization. By adhering to the verbal standards as outlined in Chapter 2 and presented in full in Appendix D, as well as the visual standards outlined in this chapter and illustrated in full in Appendix K, you will ensure our consistent image is presented to the public. There must be a commitment by every member to adhere to and keep a watchful eye out for breaches of the style and graphic standards outlined in this handbook.

TRADEMARK PROTECTION

Before we dive directly into design principles and graphic standards, it's important to discuss specifically our trademark and the use of proprietary marks in order to continue our success when faced with those who infringe upon the Grange name. We have spent more than a million dollars in the last five years alone defending our good name, but maintaining our consistent identity and specific use of our name and logo are imperative, so that money has not gone to waste.

In 1876, Grange leaders filed for and received trademark protection for the name GRANGE. Today, the National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry holds trademarks for the following:

- GRANGE
- NATIONAL GRANGE
- NATIONAL GRANGE OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY
- The National Grange P of H logo
- The Junior Grange and Grange Youth logos
- THE GRANGE FOUNDATION
- VIEW FROM THE HILL
- Several other logos and taglines previously used by the National Grange

Authorized users of the Grange trademarks, such as employees, affiliates, Grange members, local Granges, etc., must be acquainted with and educated as to the rights and obligations that arise from trademark ownership. It is important to become familiar with these trademark usage guidelines and to learn to identify and report suspected misuse to the National Grange Trademark Protection and Brand Management Director by calling the National office at (202) 628-3507 so that such instances can be brought to the attention of our legal trademark counsel. An example of a past instance of enforcement actions we undertook on the Grange's behalf to protect its rights in the Grange Trademarks was to prevent the use of the mark GRANGE PRODUCTS.

LOGOS

The National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry Logo is a registered trademark and as such requires specific use guidelines. First, the logo may not be altered from its original colors or designated colors as outlined below. Second, the logo should be sized proportionally as to eliminate issues of improper skewing.

All uses of the Grange Logo shall conform exactly to the requirements, description and specifications established and authorized by the National Grange and shall be used on or in connection with Grange goods and services only in a manner approved in writing by the Washington, D.C., office or as permitted by the most recent edition of the National Grange Digest of Laws.

The Grange Logos should not be used on or in connection with any goods or services which, in the sole opinion of the National Grange, consist of or comprise of immoral, deceptive or scandalous matters, or matters that may disparage, falsely suggest a connection with people, institutions, beliefs or national symbols, or bring them into contempt or disrepute.

UNACCEPTABLE/OBSOLETE LOGOS AND TAGLINES

There have been a number of logos for the Grange and specific Grange products throughout our history. Today, the seven-sided P of H logo is the only one that should be used on any Grange products. Similarly, taglines such as Building Communities and Imagine the Possibilities are out of date and should not be used.

All specifics on logo and tagline usage are outlined in Appendix K of this handbook. All

uses should conform to these standards.

SIMPLE DESIGN PRINCIPLES

If you would like to design something on your own, be it a flyer, brochure, webpage or anything else, there are a few principles that you must adhere to, in order to effectively get your message across. By following these guidelines, you will be able to create a page that will draw the reader in, is easy to navigate and understand, and is pleasing to the eye.

Positioning

When choosing where to place a picture, block of text, logo, header or anything else on a page, you must keep in mind that you are creating a relationship between that item and the objects around it. Because of this, you do not want to insert a picture next to a block of text that has nothing to do with it. This will make your page seem disorganized and difficult to read. To prevent this, only group items together that are related, only leave equal amounts of white space between items that are related, and avoid having too many separate elements on a page. By doing this, you will allow the reader to quickly find all relevant information to their topic without confusion or distraction.

Alignment

If you have a well-organized document, any reader will intuitively be able to browse through all of the information without getting lost. One way to make sure that all of the information on your page flows well and is clearly connected where it should be is to maintain consistent alignment with related elements. When you align the elements of a section together, you are creating a visual connection that aids the reader in processing all of the information of that section. While this may seem trivial, it can make a huge difference in whether or not your page is actually read. Alignment makes the text easy to follow and read. Using multiple alignments for text, such as centered and left aligned, in one layout should be avoided, as this will destroy the continuity and clarity you are striving for. If you would like to see a good example of effective alignment, visit CNN's website, www.cnn.com.

Consistency

There are certain items that should remain consistent throughout your entire project in order to create a sense of unity and organization. This consistency can be created in a number of different ways, but the overarching idea behind it is the repetition of visual elements. These elements include, but are not limited to, color, background, layout, images, graphics, lines, font, spacial relationships, etc. By making all of your headers the same font, size, and color, repeating the front page graphic, or having a table of contents on every page of a website, your project will feel unified, and your reader will feel comfortable on any page.

Contrast

Contrast is what pulls and guides the reader's eye to the page. To be effective, contrast must be bold. This can be achieved using colors, lines, shapes, sizes, fonts, thickness, etc. By using bolder and bigger font for a headline, you allow readers to browse through your document quicker and find the information they need. Remember, contrast must be bold, therefore creating multiple elements that are too similar, such as grey text against a white background, is ineffective and will deter readers from your page.

PROGRAMS

There are many design programs on the market today, which can make choosing one seem like an intimidating task. While we understand that this software can be very expensive and you may not be prepared to make such a large investment in it, here are a few of the more popular programs: Dreamweaver (especially useful for web designing and writing code), Acrobat (ideal for proposals, legal documents, project binders, etc.), Photoshop (useful for editing images), Illustrator (similar to Photoshop), InDesign (the choice for graphic designers working with layouts). Regardless of whether you choose to utilize one of these programs, it is important for you to be familiar with some of the terms relevant to design:

Bleed – When an illustration or image is designed to run off the page

Bolt – Any folded edge of a section other than the binding/spine fold

Bulk – The relative thickness of a sheet or sheets

CMYK – Abbreviation for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black, used in four-color process printing. Combined they approximate colors in the spectrum

EPS – Also known as Encapsulated PostScript, EPS is a file format often used for images generated in object-oriented drawing applications, like Illustrator, and also for scanned images

Extent – The complete number of pages in a printed work

Feet/Foot Margin – The white area at the bottom of a page between the type area and the trimmed edge

Flush Left/Right – Type that aligns vertically to the left or right

Footer – Recurring information at the foot of a page, often repeating the title, subject matter, or heading

Full Color – Interchangeable term for four-color process (CMYK)

Gutter – The margin closest to the spine of the publication

Impose/Imposition – The arrangement of pages to fit the press being used and to provide the correct margins such that when the sheet is folded after presswork, the pages appear in their correct sequence

JPEG – One of several compression methods for storing images. In some applications quality can be set on a scale from high to low. Resaving JPEGs recompresses the file, losing further data

Page Markup – The organization of text and graphics into the desired design and format

Proof – The representation on paper of the final printed product. This can be used for color reproduction checking or purely for positional purposes

Range – To cause type or illustration to line up on or to a certain point, either vertically or horizontally

Runaround – To lay out type on a page whereby the line beginnings and endings follow the shape of an illustration

Scale – To calculate the percentage of enlargement or reduction of an image

TIFF – A high-quality file format for images, especially photographs, that is ideal for print production purposes

Trapping – The technique of slightly overlapping one image on an adjacent one thereby preventing unsightly small white gaps between the two

Chapter 7:

Social Media for Social Organizations

As defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, social media is a “form of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos).”

Social media grants Internet users the opportunity to interact with each other using a dedicated forum or site. Popular social media outlets include: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Blogger and LinkedIn. Using one or all of these sites, users can send out notices, chat, upload video and pictures, update personal information, share their views and opinions, and many other things.

Although initially intended for social interaction, in recent years social media has become a vital tool used by businesses and companies worldwide to communicate with consumers and help maintain a positive image for their brand. Social media is now the preferred marketing outlet for businesses and organizations everywhere. If used properly, social media can be an excellent tool to help grow your Grange and stay connected with members.

In this chapter, you will be introduced to the benefits of social media, learn who uses social media and how we can use it to grow the Grange. This chapter provides a primer on the strengths of specific social media sites and how to optimize these sites. This chapter also introduces the Grange-only social network created through the National Grange website. This chapter references Appendix G, the Grange Website and Electronic Social Media Code of Conduct. Also, a social media guide can be found in Appendix L that details how to create accounts on some of the most popular social media sites.

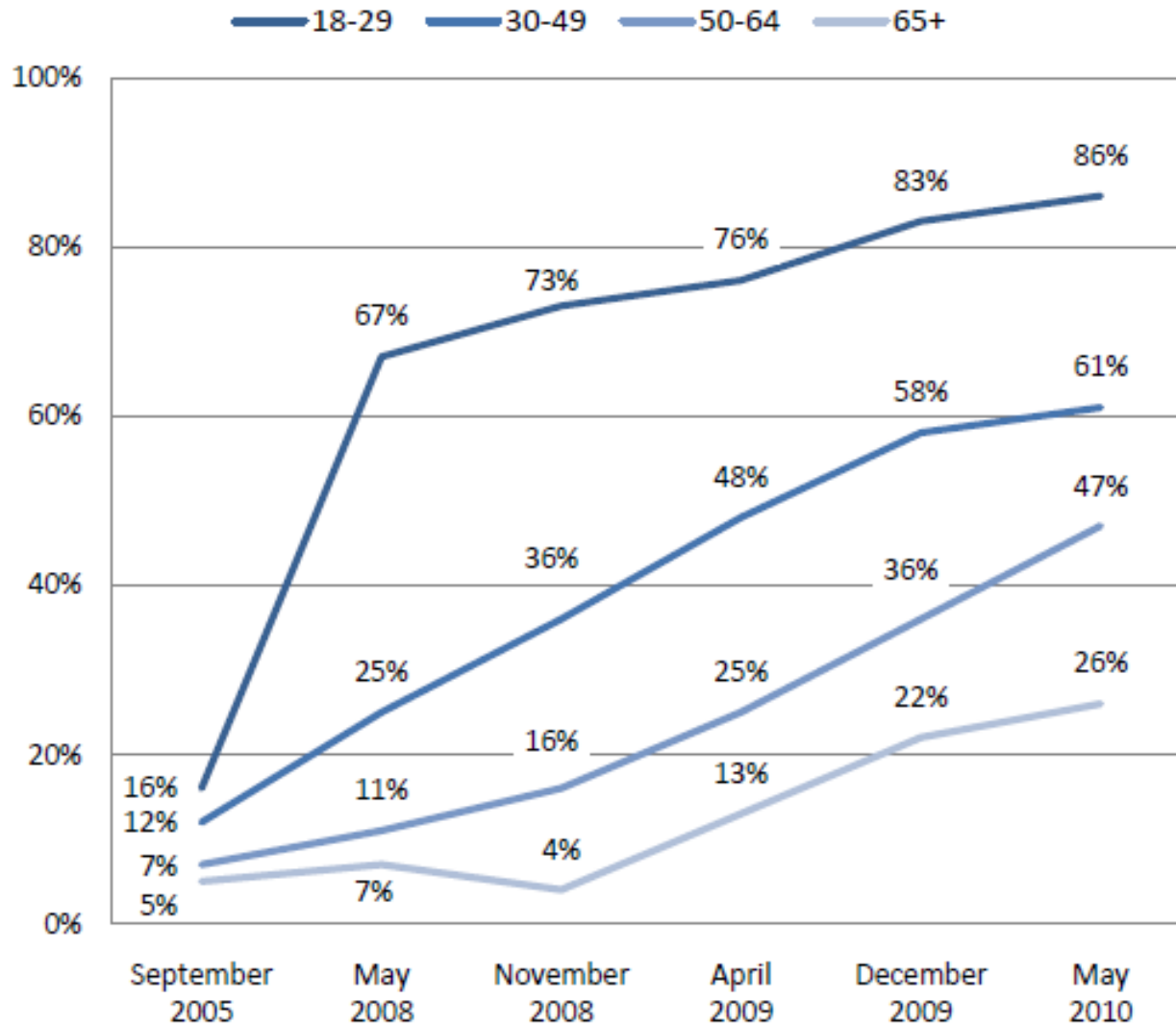
BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

For business and organizations such as the Grange, social media carries the ultimate benefit of being completely free. There is generally no charge to sign up and maintain an account; whether it is Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, or a different outlet.

In addition, through social media sites, we are literally able to reach millions of people instantaneously. For the Grange, that means reaching current members, potential members, industry experts, other agricultural organizations, and possible business connections.

Social networking use continues to grow among older users

The percentage of adult internet users who use social networking sites in each age group



Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Surveys, September 2005 - May, 2010. All surveys are of adults 18 and older.

Because social media is the way of the future, utilizing it as a means of communication helps the Grange establish a reputation for being up-to-date and trendy; permeating our message and appealing to a new generation of potential Grangers.

WHO USES SOCIAL MEDIA?

According to Pew Research Center, the number of people who use social media has doubled since 2008. According to an Internet sample taken by Pew, 79% of American

adults use the Internet, and nearly half of them (47%) engage in at least one form of social media. Of that 47%, over half of them are now over the age of 35. Not surprisingly, 86% of adults ages 18-29 utilize social media as well. However, even more important to note, the number of people over the age of 65 who use social media has grown from 4% in 2008 to an astounding 26% today. That means nobody is too old to use social media!

USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO GROW THE GRANGE

As previously stated, the most popular social media sites are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Blogger, and LinkedIn. Each site was developed with different purposes in mind, and each one provides a valuable and unique way of connecting with Grange members.

Facebook

Facebook is undoubtedly the most popular social networking site available to Internet users. According to Pew, 92% of social media users are on Facebook. This is for many reasons, but primarily because it was one of the first available and has the widest array of uses.

There are three types of Facebook accounts: individual, group, or a page. Individual pages are for individuals. It's your personal account. A group account is pretty much the same except it can have multiple administrators; meaning multiple people can make updates, post information, etc. Most importantly though, a group account still acts like an individual account in that people can post comments and information to the wall. Last, a page virtually acts as a marketing platform for people to visit in order to learn more about a company, band, celebrity, etc. Unlike the other accounts, pages have "fans" instead of "friends," and can be easily tailored to include more logos and graphics.

The National Grange maintains a Facebook group and utilizes it on a daily basis. You too can create a Facebook group or page for your State or local Grange and use it as a means of growing your Grange and staying in touch with current members.

You should use Facebook to do all of the following:

- Update your members on important issues like upcoming events, Grange meetings, issues such as the trademark battle, etc.
- Post links to news articles, relevant websites, registration forms for conventions & conferences, & other valuable resources.
- Attach your Facebook URL to anything & everything you distribute (e-mail signatures, business cards, pamphlets, etc.) allowing potential members or contributors to easily learn about your Grange.
- Look up fellow members or potential contacts when travelling, providing an opportunity for face-to-face contact.
- Market special membership deals & new programs like e-membership.
- Join other agricultural groups, or organizations with similar interests, to share industry information or engage in joint lobbying efforts.
- Use the friends list from similar organizations to solicit new members interested in the Grange.

Twitter

As self-defined by Twitter, they are “a real-time information network that connects you to the latest stories, ideas, opinions and news about what you find interesting.”

Twitter allows users to send out pieces of information in 140-character messages called “Tweets.” Companies, organizations, and even governments have found Twitter to be an incredible tool for communicating with, and receiving feedback from, users.

Look at these incredible Twitter statistics:

- Twitter has over 175 million members worldwide
- On average, 460,000 new accounts are created every day
- Over 140 million tweets are sent out on a daily basis
- 456 Tweets are released per second

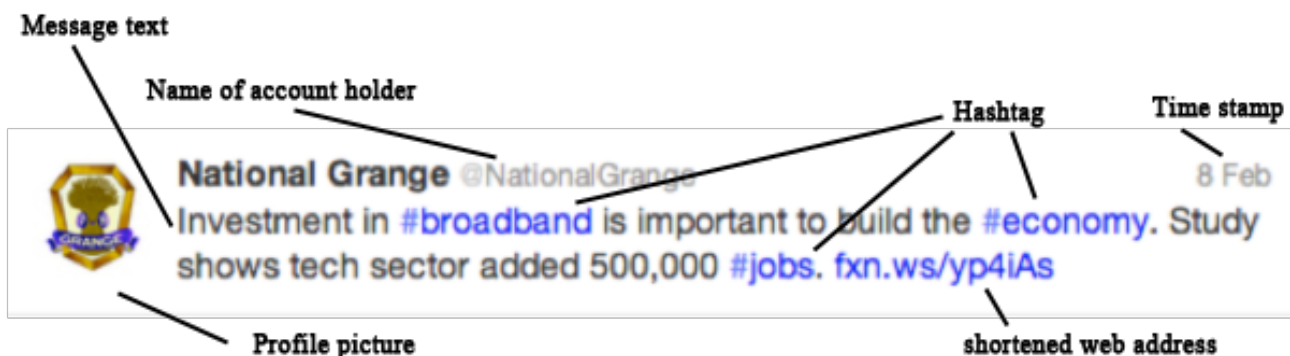
Like all social networking sites, Twitter has some advantages that are all its own. For example, when you want to communicate with another person or group, Twitter is as simple as running a search for an individual, group, band, etc., and clicking follow. Twitter keeps a constant public record of all updates made by those whom you are following. You’re able to ask questions and get instant feedback. And, thanks to Twitter’s web effect, you will have access to tons of traffic.

The National Grange maintains a Twitter account that we use to keep in touch with our members and share information with the entire Twitter community. Similarly, you can use Twitter to help grow your local and State Granges as well.

Here are just a few of the many ways we at National encourage you to use Twitter in your local Granges:

- Use Twitter to get your Grange in front of potential members, industry analysts, experts, and those in your state legislatures.

The Anatomy of a Tweet



Note: when you copy and paste a link into your tweet, Twitter will automatically shorten it to fit within the 140-character limit. Other forms of social media will not necessarily do this. To make a shortened link for those sites, go to <https://bitly.com/> and follow the instructions.

- Communicate with your members instantly and effectively by Tweeting about events, Grange meetings, and other things going on in your local communities.
- Constructive promotion: use TwitterSearch to see what the agricultural community is discussing and then get in on the conversation by tweeting & making connections with those in the same field.
- Check who other agricultural groups are following on Twitter & begin following them as well.

Twitter is a free and effective tool that we can use to grow our Grange and let others know who we are and what we stand for. REMEMBER: just because Twitter is a global information source, that doesn't mean we can't start with people in our own local communities. In addition, you should also be careful when attaching hashtags (#) to material generated by the mainstream media while simultaneously expressing your opinion in a Tweet. Adding hashtags means that whenever somebody runs a search for that topic, your Tweet will come up. It's now public information. Take care to represent the Grange professionally and accurately.

YouTube

YouTube is a video-sharing social media site, where users can upload, share and view videos. Chances are, if you have viewed a video on the Internet recently, you did so on YouTube.

Although most of YouTube's content is uploaded by individuals, companies and organizations have found it to be a useful tool in communicating with the public. Television commercials, political ads, and news specials are just a portion of the content released by companies and broadcasters on YouTube.

Users are able to run searches using YouTube's search function if they are seeking specific content, or they can subscribe to a user's "channel" to view uploads made by a certain account holder. In addition, YouTube's home page provides a stream of the day's most popular and most-watched videos. Often times, videos go "viral," meaning they have experienced immense popularity through Internet sharing- typically through e-mail and social media sites.

The National Grange has taken advantage of this media outlet as well, and we encourage our State and local Granges to do the same. Here are just a few of the ways we can use YouTube to benefit the Grange:

- Viewing videos like our "President's Monthly Message" allows for more personal interaction with members and those curious about our organization.
- Upload footage of events like Grange meetings and State Conventions for those who were unable to attend.
- Use multiple "tags" -keywords detected by search engines.
- Search to find others in our industry and connect with them online, or even narrow it by geographic location and help build a face-to-face relationship.
- Post your videos as video responses to others in our industry.
- Create playlists of similar videos to yours, putting them together for others' convenience.

Blogger

Blogger is a free website that allows users to share their thoughts through a web-based personal journal. Individuals and groups can write up views, opinions, or just random thoughts on a Google-based forum and upload that content to their “blog site” for others to read.

The National Grange maintains several blogs that we use to keep members informed about what is going on in the Grange, things on Capital Hill that have an impact on agriculture and our members, and various other topics relevant to the Grange.

Likewise, you can use blogger in your local and State Granges to keep members informed and let others know the values and opinions of the Grange.

Here are a few ways your local and State Granges might find blogger to be useful:

- Use keywords. When people Google keywords contained in your blog titles, the blog itself will pop up, driving traffic to your site.
- Keep members updated on Grange policy, & allow them to inform you of issues, legislation, etc. that might have missed your radar.
- Allow readers to comment. This helps you to learn their opinions on various issues, allowing you to better represent them.
- Invite experts in the field to be guest bloggers on your site.

OPTIMIZING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Fully capitalizing on your social media accounts is going to be a joint effort. Assign two to three people within your Grange the duty of checking each account on a daily basis to ensure that no message, comment, or request goes unnoticed. Generally, you are able to have multiple administrators on group accounts and login information can be shared between those assigned to the task of checking and maintaining your social media accounts.

In addition, it's important that your social media communication have an upbeat and positive tone. Tweets such as; “Pennsylvania closes another Grange due to membership decline,” will not generate a positive image to readers. “Come join PA Grangers for their annual membership drive!” sounds far better.

Remember, everything you release onto the Internet is forever. Double-check spellings and the content of your message before pressing the Update button.

A SOCIAL NETWORK JUST FOR GRANGE MEMBERS

As introduced in Chapter 4, the National Grange has established a members-only social network in conjunction with its new website. The social network available to members can be found when you click on the Members tab on www.NationalGrange.org.

After you create a login and password, you will automatically enter our social network. In this you can post updates, create groups, upload photos and link to your Grange. You

can publicly post information or privately message other members. It is a great forum for speaking about Grange issues with other members. This social network is also governed by the Grange Website and Electronic Social Media Code of Conduct found in Appendix G of this handbook.

EXPECTATIONS FOR GRANGE-SPECIFIC SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

When managing your Grange-oriented accounts, remember whom you're representing and act accordingly. Avoid cursing, avoid posting inappropriate material, avoid misrepresenting the Grange by stating views that aren't in alignment with Grange policy, etc. Follow the guidelines outlined in the code of conduct in Appendix G and your good judgment.

These moral standards apply to posts made with your personal account as well. Avoid posting something to a Grange page from your personal account that contains inappropriate content or language. Remember, you are representing the Grange and everything you post to Facebook or any other site is forever.

Chapter 8:

Empowering every Member to become a Grange Ambassador

Previous chapters have documented how to interact with the media and how you can use print media or social media to reach people. While all of these elements are important when publicizing the Grange, one of our best resources has been overlooked: our people.

The Grange is made up of wonderful members, committed to the organization, its values and mission. In this chapter, we will explore becoming a personal Grange ambassador, in word and image, and empowering those around you to be the same. We will also discuss how to prepare your personal Grange story or “elevator speech,” effective ways to ask others to join your Grange, and the use of effective signage and recruitment materials to help attract new members to your Grange.

YOU ARE A GRANGE AMBASSADOR

Every member is a Grange Ambassador. You cannot help it; what you say, and how you say it, will make a, hopefully, positive impression about the Grange. Make it a point to speak in positive terms about your Grange. What you say about the Grange is very important because what others hear you say about the Grange influences their perception of our Order. If you speak about the leadership skills you’ve acquired, or the community service projects your Grange is involved with, you can open the door for your friends, neighbors and others in the community to become involved.

It is not necessary to present your Grange “elevator speech” every time you speak about the Grange, but it is an important exercise which we will get to in a moment. For now, share your positive impressions, feelings, and lessons learned in your Grange journey. Be natural and conversational; you are simply speaking with one or a few friends or acquaintances. It should not cause anxiety.

EMPOWERING OTHERS TO SEE THEMSELVES AS AMBASSADORS

As an elected or appointed leader in your Grange, you are in a unique position to demonstrate leadership yourself, but you can also increase the leadership effectiveness in others by delegating leadership tasks. The key is to delegate tasks appropriate to the skills and abilities of the one to whom you are delegating. The more accurate your insight into other’s skills and abilities, the more effectively you can delegate leadership tasks to

Tips to Increase Visibility in the Community

- Always have large signs identifying your Grange on display wherever your Grange is working to serve the community or raise funds. It's also a good idea to keep Grange brochures or business cards on hand to give to anyone who is interested in learning more about the Grange.
- Adopt-a-highway programs include roadside signs that identify the participating organization. Keeping a section of road free from litter is a good service project, and it also provides a permanent, high-traffic display of the club's name in a service context.
- Be alert for opportunities in storefronts, lobbies, and shopping centers to present a display on the Grange and its services to rural communities. Please ask for permission first.
- Annual fairs and parades are great opportunities to be visible to the public.

broaden the overall leadership of your Grange.

If you know that a particular member is good at organizing details, ask them to take on the responsibility of coordinating the annual Grange yard sale. If another member enjoys communicating with others, ask him or her to be responsible for inviting members, friends and others in the neighborhood to your Community Service Awards. If another member is a home gardener, ask them to be a department chair for your local Grange fair. The key is to identify tasks that align with the experience and skills of the members. By asking someone to do something they are already confident about, they are more likely to accept the responsibility and complete the task with confidence.

The other side of delegation is to be prepared to assist the one to whom you have delegated, BUT not to rush in to rescue that person just because their path to successfully completing the delegated task may not be the same as yours. The hard part of delegation is allowing, accepting and celebrating HOW someone else accomplished the task at hand. Once you have had a couple successful experiences delegating tasks, you'll become more comfortable with delegation versus doing it all yourself.

GRANGE SIGNAGE AND DISPLAYS

One way to make people feel welcome in our Grange is to provide an attractive hall or meeting place. What does your hall or meeting place look like from a public perspective? Does your Grange have clear and attractive signage? Is everything in good repair (landscaping, paint, lighting, signage)? Can passers-by readily identify your hall or meeting place as Grange? Is a telephone number or website address visible for follow up?

Several professionally-designed marketing and recruitment items are available to assist

with your marketing and recruitment initiatives. Appendix G lists several items (banners, brochures, roadside signs, etc.) available in the Grange Store.

WEARING YOUR GRANGE PRIDE

Another way you can make the Grange visible is by wearing Grange-logo items or jewelry. Members can do some of their best work just by acknowledging their affiliation with the Grange with the larger community. When members wear Grange merchandise, add Grange decals to their cars and use other products with the Grange name and logo on them, they draw attention to our organization. This is most often a very beneficial way to keep members engaged with the Grange and to draw attention to it. In some rare cases, however, it can negatively impact the organization or our image.

Grange members should be reminded not to wear Grange merchandise, like shirts or pins, if they are campaigning for a specific party or candidate. We are political, however, we are nonpartisan. If the Grange supports a specific issue, or is providing voter services, such as registration days or poll transportation, it is entirely appropriate to wear Grange merchandise in the process. For example, when a Grange member speaks on behalf of the Grange before legislators wearing a pin or shirt with the Grange logo this adds value to their communication because the public officials understand this person represents the voices of many in their community or constituency base. On the other hand, if a member wears a Grange shirt while at a public demonstration for a political candidate, our image of being nonpartisan is damaged.

Make sure to encourage all of your members to show their Grange affiliation in many different ways. Also, find ways to use Grange merchandise as prizes for contests and special awards.

PREPARE YOUR GRANGE ELEVATOR SPEECH

So, you do a good job of wearing your Grange Pride, do you also speak to others with Grange Pride? What do you say when someone notices your Grange apparel or jewelry or decal on your car? Usually, the questioner will only have 30 – 90 seconds to hear your reply before they are moving on to another task or topic. Have you thought about your Grange message...your Grange “elevator speech”? Why is it called an “elevator speech” anyhow? Imagine you are riding in an elevator in an office building or hotel and someone asks you about the Grange...it is likely you will only have 30 – 90 seconds before the doors open and they step out. That’s why it’s called an “elevator speech”.

Your elevator speech is your personal Grange story, not a generic “what is the Grange” story. How has the Grange impacted your life? What is your favorite Grange activity or experience? Share your personal anecdote to explain what the Grange is to you or what you have been able to accomplish because of your Grange involvement. That is your Grange elevator speech. Tell it with enthusiasm and with a smile. Share the fondness you have for your Grange.

Immediately after you share your personal Grange story, ask the person if they would like to join your Grange. Do not be concerned if they say no; in fact most people are not ready to join an organization after hearing a brief explanation. They may ask for more information. The timing may not be right for them, or you may be delighted to learn they would like to join your Grange but didn't know how to go about it.

ASK OTHERS TO JOIN YOUR GRANGE

Each of us is responsible for recruiting new members to our Grange. If you do not ask others to join your Grange, you are giving them the impression that either we would not welcome them, or that we do not need them in our organization. They may, or may not, choose to join, but until you ask them the question...until you actually say the words, "Would you like to join our Grange?"... you have not given them an opportunity to become a Grange member.

Remember, it is not a personal affront if you ask and the other person says "NO." Do not take it personally; rather know that you are one ask closer to a "Yes." So, continue to tell your Grange story and ask others to join your Grange. Invite them to a meeting or special event and make them feel welcome when they do join you.

Chapter 9:

Assistance + Tools available from National Grange

The National Grange has many tools available to local, Pomona and State Granges in order to more effectively communicate with the public. From brochures to banners, the Communications, Sales and Membership departments make materials available free or at reduced cost for all Granges that provide information in a professional, branded format. Use of these products can assist in the awareness and growth of your Grange and our Order as a whole. Further, the departments of the National Grange are available to assist you in many ways. If you have an idea, request or concern, please refer to the National Grange Staff Directory that appears at the end of this chapter.

STAYING CONNECTED HAS MANY BENEFITS

Before reading about specific tools, one way to stay informed and connected to National Grange is by providing the National Grange with your e-mail address. Frequently, sales, legislative alerts and announcements, fraternal concerns and more are sent by e-mail to those on the list.

You may join by visiting the National Grange website and clicking on Submit/Subscribe under the News tab, or you will automatically be enrolled by creating a profile on the National Grange Members social network as introduced in Chapter 8. At a minimum, every Master, public information director and membership director in the Grange should be subscribed to this e-mail service. Encourage your members to become part of the list as well.

INVESTING IN YOUR GRANGE

The National Grange has a wide variety of items available to help you and other Grange members show their pride, as well as assist with membership growth. We have jewelry, belt buckles, rip cards, banners, ties, town markers, brochures and stationary, to name just a few of the items available. Many items can be ordered in bulk, personalized, or otherwise customized to your needs. We are adding new items, styles and sales to our catalog frequently. Please check the online Grange Store at www.GrangeStore.org in order to see the most up to date items and offerings. In addition to placing orders online, you can also place them over the phone or via fax.

Apparel

Grange apparel, including T-shirts, sweatshirts, long-sleeve denim shirts, jackets and more, is available through the Grange Store at www.GrangeStore.org. Prices vary by item.

All of these items are excellent tools for each member to spread the word about the Grange. Members should wear these for Grange events, such as service activities and programs, especially when you're expecting media coverage.

Through the National Grange Sales Department you can request information for bulk purchases with specific, personalized information for apparel and other items; however, all items on sale through the store are generically labeled Grange or National Grange.

Banners

Banners are a great way to attract attention to your Grange and leave a lasting impression at events.

Through the Grange store, several banners with several standard templates are available. Granges can contact the National Grange Communications Department to personalize some banners. Others are preprinted with National Grange information.

These banners vary in price depending on sales through our printer, but typically cost about \$100 for 3'x5' full-color vinyl banners with the "American Values. Hometown Roots." Tagline and \$325 for pop up banners, including stand. Sales prices will be advertised by e-mail and on the Members section of the website.

If you purchase a customized banner, allow up to three weeks for delivery. If you purchase a National Grange banner that is not customized, allow up to two weeks for delivery.

Brochures

As discussed in Chapter 4, the National Grange offers a range of informational brochures for your use. These have been produced in mass quantities and may be purchased through the Grange Store at www.GrangeStore.org. In addition to choosing predesigned National Grange brochures, you can make personalized brochures by working with Staples. Our brochures are also available through a program with Staples at a discounted cost. In order to access these brochure templates, visit the National Grange website and click on the Members page, which will help direct you through the process.

The personalized brochures allow local, Pomona and State Granges to type text into variable fields, include their local Grange name and contact information, and provide short descriptions of local projects, events and successes. You may also select from a variety of images that you feel best represent your Grange. The standard template allows all of us to communicate similarly, which will strengthen our entire organization and provide a professional product for members and nonmembers.

Business Cards

All public information and membership directors are encouraged to purchase cards.

These improve the image of our organization and are extremely useful for both communication and recruitment purposes.

The National Grange offers quality double-sided business cards at a competitive cost for all local, Pomona and State Granges and Grange members. The cards are ivory with the Grange logo, information provided by the purchaser including name and contact information and Grange affiliation. On the back, the cards have a short description about our Order as well as an image of a wheat sheaf.

Granges can customize these cards to include the date, time and location of meetings or other details. These may be purchased through the Grange Store or by contacting the National Grange Communications Department. Please allow up to four weeks for delivery. Sales will be announced through e-mail and on the member's side of the National Grange site.

Car Decals, Magnets and Clings

Even on country roads that so rarely see bumper-to-bumper traffic, car decals are still highly effective communication tools that help show your Grange pride. Decals and magnets for your home or vehicle are available through the Grange Store.

More bumper stickers and decals are planned. An e-mail announcement will be sent when other styles and sizes are available.

Grange Comic Book

As discussed in Chapter 4, the National Grange has produced a comic book entitled "A Grange Story: Finding My Place," to promote and help explain the organization. The story follows a young mouse who is seeking to become more involved in her community and feel a sense of fulfillment. She becomes a Grange member, and we see her journey to become an excited new member and much happier and confident individual.

The comic books are excellent tools for membership recruitment and awareness at large-scale events such as fairs, as well as bonus material for Granges who participate in the Words for Thirds program or hold open houses. A sample was included in the 2012 Grange Month mailing and single copy samples are available through the Leadership/Membership Department.

These are available from the Grange Store. Granges can purchase one or tens of thousands. Any Grange that purchases 5,000 or more can request their contact information and Grange name appear on the back cover at no charge.

If your Grange purchases fewer than 5,000, allow up to two weeks for delivery. If you purchase 5,000 or more, allow up to three weeks for delivery.

Grange Greeting Cards

The National Grange offers several greeting cards with the Grange logo that you can use to connect to your members and the community. Thank you, Get Well Soon and Sympathy cards, as well as blank cards with the National Grange building, are available

through the Grange Store.

More cards and assorted boxes will be available in summer 2012. Continue to check the Grange Store for details. An e-mail will be sent when new products are available.

Rip Cards

As another tool to promote the Grange and gather information about prospective members, the National Grange has created rip cards. These color, 3" x 6.5" cards include the iconic Grange image on the front and the "American Values. Hometown Roots." tagline. A short form requesting name, contact information and a few details from nonmembers is printed on the back. The bottom is perforated so the nonmember has a business card-size take away with information about the Grange and the National Grange website.

These are extremely useful tools to gather information for follow-up with prospective members. They are excellent for fairs, community service events and anywhere at which your Grange has an informational booth.

Rip Cards may be purchased in bundles of 25 for \$2.50 from the Grange Store. If you wish to purchase 5,000 or more, you can contact the Communications Department to order and personalize the cards for your Grange. Allow up to two weeks for delivery for smaller quantities and up to four weeks for delivery of orders of 5,000 or more.

Salutation Poster

Along with banners, brochures and business cards, salutation posters are a great way to provide a professional, branded form of communication during events. These posters are 18"x24" and list the principles of Grange members: Faith, Hope, Charity and Fidelity. Salutation Posters also make great art for Grange halls, offices, the work place, and the home as a reminder of the meaning behind the Grange.

Stationary

All Granges are encouraged to have their own standard letterhead. The National Grange can customize and print letterhead and return envelopes for Granges. Requests can be made through the Grange Store or the Communications Department.

All letterhead and envelopes will have the Grange name and contact information as well as the "American Values. Hometown Roots." tagline. Granges should request these at least four weeks before expected date of arrival and will be required to approve a proof of the letterhead and/or envelope for any errors in spelling or address.

Town Markers

These high quality 21"x26" metal signs are a great way to notify those in the community about the presence and good work of your local Grange. They can be posted at Grange halls or along the edges of town in order to spark interest in your organization as well as strengthen a sense of community within current members. If preferred, we also have card-board versions of these emblems for indoor use.

WHAT CAN THE NATIONAL STAFF DO FOR YOU?

The National Grange staff is available to assist you in many areas of Grange growth, brand development and communications. We are committed to a stronger, more vibrant Grange and hope you will use this and other National Grange products as a resource to begin the journey to enhancing our organization.

You may contact the National Grange staff by e-mail or phone at any time. Each department deals with some specific concerns. Please refer to the list below to determine who the best contact person or department is.

Accounts Payable, Human Resources

The comptroller and human resources manager for the National Grange collects payments for membership dues and provides all bookkeeping for our office. The department can be reached at 888-4-GRANGE ext. 106. You may check the National Grange website for a current e-mail address.

Communications

The Communications Department for the National Grange provides public relations, assists with member communications, produces graphic designs and edits all National Grange publications. The department can be reached at 888-4-GRANGE ext. 102. You may check the National Grange website for a current e-mail address.

Events, Administrative Assistant, Building Manager

For any issues related to event planning, the National Grange headquarters-building or to reach the National Master's administrative assistant, call 888-4-GRANGE ext. 113. You may check the National Grange website for a current e-mail address.

Grange Youth

The Grange Youth Department can be reached by e-mail at youth@nationalgrange.org or by calling the National Grange headquarters at 888-4-GRANGE.

Information Technology

The National Grange Information Technology Department is the primary contact for all website and e-mail issues. To be added to Grange mailing lists or to change contact information, please contact the department by e-mail at info@nationalgrange.org or by phone at 888-4-GRANGE ext. 101.

Junior Grange

The National Junior Grange Department may be reached by e-mail at junior@nationalgrange.org or by phone at 888-4-GRANGE.

Legislative Issues, Advocacy and Grange Policy

The Legislative Department for the National Grange is the primary contact for all advocacy and legislative work at the national level as well as assistance with such work on the state and local level. The department can be reached at 888-4-GRANGE ext. 114. You may check the National Grange website for a current e-mail address.

Membership and Leadership Development

The National Grange Membership and Leadership Development Department is the primary contact for all Grange organization, reorganization, revitalization and leadership issues. You can reach the department by e-mail at membership@nationalgrange.org or by phone at 888-4-GRANGE.

Programs and Grange Department Assistance

The National Grange Programs Assistant, working with all aspects of National Grange programming but primarily with the legislative and communications departments. The assistant may be reached by calling 888-4-GRANGE ext. 107. You may check the National Grange website for a current e-mail address.

Sales and Marketing, Member Benefits and Programs

The Programs, Benefits and Sales Department for the National Grange, handling all sales, competitions and awards for Granges, is also the primary contact for member benefits codes and program information. You can reach the department by phone at 888-4-GRANGE ext. 109. You may check the National Grange website for a current e-mail address.

Secretary and Treasurer Needs and Member Awards/Certificates

The National Grange Marketing Coordinator who handles all member awards and certificates, secretary and treasurer requests and other miscellaneous local, Pomona and State requests can be reached at 888-4-GRANGE ext. 103. You may check the National Grange website for a current e-mail address.

Trademark and Brand Management

The National Grange Trademark Protection and Brand Management Department dealing with all trademark, infringement and licensing issues can be reached by calling 888-4-GRANGE ext. 105. You may check the National Grange website for a current e-mail address.

National Master

The Master of the National Grange can be reached for any matter at 888-4-GRANGE ext. 112. You may check the National Grange website for a current e-mail address.