

Duties of the Officer's Handbook



*American Values.
Hometown Roots.*

**Oregon State Grange
*Celebrating 140 years of Grange Excellence***

Updated 2016

Officers

Duties, responsibilities and opportunities

Each officer and committee chairman is part of the Grange's leadership team. No officer is unimportant and each can benefit their Grange by performing their duties with enthusiasm.

As part of the leadership team each must take seriously their various tasks. Each officer contributes something towards a successful Grange. Only by working together and with unity can Grange officers and committee chairman achieve the goals that they set.

Master/President - the Master must lead the Grange by example. The Master is the team leader for the Grange and the Master's primary duty is to see that the Grange's work is successfully carried out.

- Open and close the Grange in due form. To make the opening and closing impressive, commit to memory the Master's speaking parts immediately upon election.
- Start meetings on time and endeavor to complete the business of each meeting in a timely fashion, allowing all members the opportunity to participate fully.
- Preside at all meetings, standing while conducting the meeting. Always enforce civility among the members during the meeting. Be courteous and diplomatic at all times and attempt to make sure all members can hear what is being discussed. Learn proper parliamentary procedure to protect the rights of your fellow members.
- Never talk on issues from the Master's station. If you must discuss an issue, turn the Master's sash over to another member until the issue is decided.
- Decide all questions rising with calmness and firmness, grant the right of appeal, and accept decisions against you gracefully.
- Encourage each officer to perform his or her duties, offering your assistance, if necessary. Make sure each officer has the appropriate handbook, i.e. Lecturer's, Secretary's, Treasurer's, and Floorwork Handbook.
- See that all reports required by the Oregon State Grange are made promptly.
- Make an annual report, recapitulating the work of the past year and recommending measures for the year to come.
- Provide general leadership for all Grange activities.
- Appoint committees, both standing and special; remember that the Master is an ex-officio member of all committees. Give whatever aid is necessary to allow each committee to be successful. Be familiar with each department's program.
- Conduct a yearly planning meeting with officers.

- Supervise the ritualistic activities and hold an officers' training session for practicing all parts of the ritual.
- Serve as a delegate to the Oregon State Grange Convention.
- Make sure that the Grange does not suspend a member for non-payment of dues without a personal contact.
- Strive to have a net gain in membership. Make a systematic survey of the community for new members. Invite youth and young families to attend Grange functions and make them welcome.
- As soon as possible after a new member is voted into your Grange, conduct the Welcoming Ceremony, give the Obligation, or take new members to conferral of the first four Degrees.
- Designate someone to publicize the activities of the Grange so that non-members in your community know that your Grange is active and contributing.
- Make sure that someone in your Grange files the IRS 990-N e-Postcard and takes care of the Oregon Secretary of State's incorporation fee and paperwork. Urge the Grange to bond officers who handle Grange money. Appoint a Finance Committee to conduct an annual audit.
- Become thoroughly familiar with the Subordinate/Community Grange Manual, Master's Handbook, By-Laws of your Grange and the By-Laws of the Oregon State Grange, and the Digest of the National Grange.
- Check that all Grange property is accounted for and the property is insured against loss.
- Always have a positive attitude and set a good example.

Overseer/Vice President - The second ranking officer.

- Learn the Overseer's part in the Opening and Closing. Be familiar enough with the Master's part to do it in case the master is absent.
- Learn the names, interests and qualifications of members so that you can assist the Master with committee assignments.
- Serve as a member of the Grange's Executive Committee.

Lecturer - Primary duty is to educate and inform the membership in an enjoyable fashion. Encourage all members to become active participants in the Grange.

- Work with the Master to select a committee to assist with ideas and programs.
- Ask committee chairmen (for example, Youth, GWA, Junior, and Legislative) to present a program.
- Vary program content to the ages and interests of members.

- Remember that yours is a literary program, not a "Lecturer's Hour." Be flexible within the constraints of each meeting, working with the Master at all times.
- Be prepared with songs, stunts or skits if the Master asks you to lighten things up. Keep a notebook of these items with you at all meetings. If you are not musically inclined, ask another member to be the song leader.
- If non-members are on the program, arrange the exact time they should arrive and keep the Master informed. If they are early, be prepared to start the program or entertain them.
- Always inform and work with the Master.
- Encourage your Grange to have at least one "Open" meeting a year. A properly conducted Open House or Open meeting will help give the community a good image of your Grange.
- Urge members to enter State and National Grange contests.

Steward - The Steward has charge of the inner gate and is the custodian of the regalia and other property of the Grange.

- Learn the Steward's parts in the Opening and Closing.
- Arrive early for meetings to set up the hall with the help of your Assistants.
- Be familiar with the Steward's part in presenting and retiring the flag.
- Watch for visitors, secure their names and titles so that they may be properly introduced and ask them to sit in a location convenient for the presentation ceremony. Make sure that the Master is aware of the guest.
- Prepare the ballot box with an equal number of cubes and balls, having enough of both for the largest attendance expected at a meeting.
- After the meeting, secure the sashes, implement box, mat, flag, staves, holders, gavels, Bible, and any other equipment used.

Assistant Stewards - The Assistant Stewards primary duties are to assist the Steward and to perform floorwork.

- Help the Steward set up the hall before meetings and put away stations, regalia, and paraphilia after meetings.
- Know well the floorwork required in all Grange ritual procedures from Opening through Closing. Practice opening and closing the Bible, presenting and retiring the flag, draping the charter, presenting guests, and balloting for candidates.
- Carry staves in the right hand, arm straight at the side, staff against your shoulder, the bottom four inches from the floor with the opening of the emblem to the rear. Bear the emblem of your office at all times, except when distributing and collecting paper ballots.

- Refrain from singing the "Star Spangled Banner."
- Open the Bible with reverence. Nowhere in the Grange ritual does it specify whether or not the Bible may be picked up from the Alter while opening and closing it. This act should depend upon the size of the Bible and local custom. Your custom may dictate a specific place to which the Bible should be opened, but Grange law does not.

Chaplain

- Commit to memory the prayers in the *Grange Opening and Closing*.
- Be prepared to say grace before meals and say an appropriate prayer on other occasions.
- Be familiar with the *Charter Draping Ceremony*. Keep the drape in good condition. Be able to place it on the Charter reverently. Practice with the Assistants and Ceres so that they know the ceremony also.
- Send cards to members who are sick or in distress. You may be asked to send or deliver flowers or a plant to a member in the hospital or to a funeral home or church for a memorial service.
- Report on sick or shut-in members during meetings if no one else has this responsibility.
- Be willing to conduct the *Grange service* for a departed member, if asked.

Treasurer

- Have accounts always correct and in order for examination and the funds safely secured and ready for needed payments.
- Pay bills when approved by the Grange.
- Report the complete financial condition of the Grange at every meeting.
- Urge the Grange to bond you, the Secretary, and any other officers who handle money.
- Make records available to the Finance committee for an annual audit.

Secretary - The duties involve record keeping, both of meetings and finances, and reporting to the State Grange.

- Keep minutes of decisions made during meetings. Remember that they are history with your name attached as the author. Recognize participants in that history by using full names. Include the names of members who made a motion and were appointed to a committee.
- If minutes are not recorded in a bound book, have minutes bound periodically.

- Record the exact date a member joins. Keep individual record sheets on each member so that each history of Grange participation is known. List offices held and when. Recognize members for continuous membership of 25 and 50 years and for five year increments thereafter.
- Collect dues. Notify members of dues to be paid 30 days prior to January 1. Follow up with members who have not paid with additional notifications. Work with the Membership committee to avoid dropping members for non-payment of dues in April.
- Report quarterly to the State Grange the names of individuals and families gained by the Welcoming Ceremony, initiation, or obligation, received by demit, reinstated, or affiliated and those lost for non-payment of dues, by request, death, demitted out, or ended their affiliation.
- Check the membership list sent annually by the Oregon State Grange, correct the spelling of names and address and/or update phone numbers and email addresses, and return the list with the third quarter report.
- Report to the State Grange the name, address, phone number, and email address of officers and committee chairmen for the Roster.
- Receive correspondence and bring it to the meeting. Read important letters in entirety and summarize others.
- Record all income received and bills to be paid before transferring checks and invoices to the Treasurer.
- Take care of correspondence soon after the meeting, especially letters and resolutions to governmental agencies and representatives.
- Satisfy yourself that the past minute books and items of Grange history are complete and preserved.
- Make sure that someone completes the IRS 990-N e-Postcard by the due date.
- Make sure that your Grange's incorporation fee is paid on time and information is updated with the Oregon Secretary of State's office.
- Make sure that important documents for your Grange are stored in a secure place.
- Serve as a member of the Grange's Executive Committee.

Gatekeeper - Guard the outer gate and greet members and visitors as they enter.

- Greet all those entering the hall and make them feel welcome.
- Determine if a guest, especially a non-member, is expected for a portion of the Lecturer's program. Be on the lookout for them and wait with them if necessary. Notify the Lecturer and/or Master that the guest has arrived.
- Remind your fellow members of the proper signal and passwords to be used at the outer gate.

- Assist new members with the proper signal and password for the inner gate, if your Grange requires the password to be used in meetings. Review also the procedure to be used in giving the salutation.

The Graces - Ceres, Pomona, Flora add beauty and grace to our meetings by symbolically showing our respect for women and agriculture.

- Decorate your stations (if you have them) with appropriate items: grain for Ceres, flowers for Flora and fruit for Pomona.
- Ceres carries the flag in the Opening and Closing ceremonies of the Subordinate/Community Grange.
- Ceres should memorize her part in the Charter Draping Ceremony.
- The Graces represent the best in women; let your behavior and attitude be positive and encourage all members to do the same.

Executive Committee - Act as the Board of Trustees between meetings in time of emergency or need.

- Serve with other elected members and the Master, Secretary, and Overseer. The Master is the chairman of the Executive Committee.
- Responsible for the custody of the invested funds of the Grange.
- Empowered to attend to general business when the Grange is not in session, in time of emergency or need, but always and only in conjunction with the Master.
- Give advice and counsel that will help your fellow officers in their duties and promote the welfare of the Grange.

Committees

There are two types of committees used in the Grange, Special and Standing. Committees consist of three members unless a different number is ordered by the Grange. The first named member serves as chair, convening meetings and reporting the result of the deliberations.

Committees may raise money, but all expenditures must be approved by the Grange. Only the GWA committee may have an account not under the control of the Treasurer.

Special Committees are appointed for a specific purpose; they are discharged when the purpose has been achieved or completed.

Standing Committees are appointed annually and are named in the By-Laws or by Grange vote. The following are suggested standing committees; those marked with an asterisk (*) are required in the Oregon State Grange By-Laws. While several of these committees are not required to be appointed on the Subordinate/Community level, the Oregon State Grange encourages you to do so.

Some standing committees have report forms for the State Grange. Each committee chairman should attempt to make all reports as complete as possible and on time.

Agriculture * - The Grange has a special interest in agriculture and has a unique opportunity to keep their community informed of the importance of agriculture. Duties of the Ag Committee include:

- Inform your Grange of agricultural issues and events.
- Write or help other members write resolutions calling for action on special concerns.
- Involve your Grange in agricultural activities.
- Educate your community on agricultural interests and Grange policies.
- Present a Lecturer's program on agricultural topics of current interest.

Community Service/Involvement * - The duty of the Community Service committee is to record the efforts of the Grange in serving its community and to report these efforts. Reports are to be made to the State Grange, as well as publicizing the work of the Grange to the local community. The committee will often be called upon to lead a project the

Grange has decided upon. Work with other groups to accomplish the goal that the Grange has set.

Deaf Activities and Family Health - The committee should familiarize themselves with the State and National Grange programs. The committee should then report at each meeting and find ways to involve the membership in the program. Also share with the Grange the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing people in your community.

Education - The committee should monitor and report on the positives and negatives facing local schools and their students. The committee could involve the Grange in a project such as a scholarship or filling a need in a classroom.

Finance * - The committee should consist of three members, who may inspect and audit all bills and accounts prior to the meeting. The Finance Committee is authorized to conduct an annual audit during which they examine the Treasurer's books, the Secretary's books and bank or investment statements for all accounts. The committee shall produce a written audit report to be filed with the Secretary.

Grange Worker's Activities (GWA) -The program is designed to offer something for everybody of all ages. The contest and projects provide an opportunity for members and non-members to be creative and original. Duties include:

- Promote the programs, contests, and projects of the State and National Grange.
- Plan with the Lecturer a program to be presented at a Grange meeting. The topic can include woman's issues (cancer, domestic violence, etc.), elderly issues (falls, transportation, etc.), or the family and family home (gardening and family food production, home decorations, home finances, home repair, etc.).

Information (PR) - The primary responsibility of this committee is to publicize and/or display positive information about Grange activities that will enhance the image of the Grange in your community.

Junior - The primary duties of this committee are to promote the Junior Grange 1+ program, develop activities for Junior members, and encourage them to participate in State and National programs.

- Ask children in the community between the ages of 5 and 14 to join as Junior members and their parents and older siblings to join your Subordinate/Community Grange.
- Make sure that each Junior member receives the Junior Obligation. Have Juniors learn the Junior password and give it during meetings. Have them learn the Junior Salutation and do it during meetings. Have them learn the pledge and recite it during meetings.
- Meet with Junior members at least once a month.
- Become familiar with the State and National Grange Junior programs.

- Assist the Junior Chairperson by providing activities for Junior members who attend Subordinate/Community Grange meetings. Committee members may specialize in certain areas of responsibility such as crafts, ritual, contests, merit badges, and community service, or they may take responsibility for different meetings throughout the year.

Lecturer's - Assist the Lecturer in planning and putting on programs at each meeting.

Legislative * - The duties of the Legislative committee is to help the membership turn ideas into reality. The committee does this by:

- Keep the Grange in close communication with the State Grange Legislative Committee and endeavor to carry out their requests.
- Reporting local, County, State, and National legislative issues and events to members. Also by encouraging members to write to government officials on topics of interest.
- Helping members write resolutions to change and improve local, County, State and National laws.
- Involving the community by having the Grange host "Informational Meetings." Candidate Forums and other similar events.
- Providing a Lecturer's program on a hot issue and/or inviting speakers from other organizations.
- Serve as the liaison between the Grange and outside groups when the Grange takes a stand on an issue.

Membership * - It is the Membership Committee's duty to work to ensure the growth of the Grange, by motivating the membership and creating plans for bringing in new members.

- Help to identify potential members within the community.
- Work with new members to make them feel welcome to the Grange and give them a good impression of the Grange as a whole.
- Encourage members to ask their neighbors, friends, and relatives to join the Grange.
- Help plan events that will bring in non-members to your Grange hall.
- Educate the community on what the Grange is doing and what its ideals and goals are.

Relief - Shall consist of the Chaplain and two other members, one of which should be a Brother. Their duty is to report on all members who are sick.

Veterans - The duties of the Veterans Committee is to report to the Grange issues that effect Veterans and their families in your community.

Youth * - Should include the Lecturer and Junior Grange Leader. Their duty is to:

- Promote a friendly and tolerant relationship between all ages of the Grange in order to enhance the sense of a family organization.
- Give a report at each business meeting on youth activities or outline a program/contest your youth can participate in... don't forget to recognize individual youth successes.
- Give special consideration to the needs and interests of the young people of the Grange and to other youth organizations in the community (4-H, FFA, Scouts, etc.).
- Promote Grange youth projects and contests and encourage young members to take an active role in all Grange activities and work.
- Be aware of and involved with the youth program of the Grange at all levels.
- Remember to include the seven essential ingredients of a successful youth program (fellowship, activities, fun, recognition, leadership, service and membership) in all your activities.
- Invite new youth to become a part of your Grange.

Others - The Grange can create other committees to fill particular needs. As an example, many Granges have a rental committee to oversee the use of their hall.

Resources

Subordinate Grange Manual (Blue)
Code Book
Floorwork Handbook (Pink)
Oregon State Grange By-Laws
National Grange Digest
Oregon State Grange Roster
Journal of Proceedings
Master's Handbook

Secretary's Handbook
Treasurer's Handbook
Legislative Policy Handbook
Grange Bulletin
www.orgrange.org website for the
Oregon State Grange
www.nationalgrange.org website for
the National Grange