

Home Grown Politics Across NH Farmland to Concord and Washington

Legislative Fly-In

This year the State Master, my Grandson Matt, and I traveled to Washington, DC, for the National Grange Fly In, the week of May 14th. It was, as usual, a good time and a rewarding experience. We met with the staff members from Congressman Guinta and Senator Ayotte and personally with Congressman Bass and Senator Shaheen. In fact we went back a second time to have coffee with Senator Shaheen. Our most important lobbying topic was New Hampshire State Meat Inspection and the help we are looking for from our Congressional Delegation. We are asking them to support our Legislature and Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food's effort to get the USDA to approve the NH state meat inspection program. We additionally talked about other topics such as making sure that legislation aimed at the big farms out west does not negatively impact our small farms in New Hampshire. We talked about rural broadband and several other topics, including dairy and Medicare.

I really would like to encourage New Hampshire Grangers to go to DC next year for the Fly In. It is a learning experience. This year we had several technology demonstrations and presentations, Medicare and agriculture discussions. We were also treated to a tour of the US Capitol. You do not have to be a politician to get a lot out of the trip and you can provide feedback to your Representatives and Senators on issues that are important to Grangers.

Awards

I was privileged to attend the Concord Grange Awards night in April. Concord does a lot of different awards. There were many attendees and Brother Dick Patten did a great job, especially since he was just recovering from major surgery. Speaking of awards, I am looking for input from my Grange friends for next year's Agricultural awards. If you have suggestions for a "Young Farmer" or a "Century Farm", please send them to me at bobhaefnerjp@comcast.net. Please do not send possible recipients that have been awarded in the last 15 years.

Legislative Matters

We did the panel discussion at Spring Fling of Legislators, who are also Grangers. Again, I thought it went well. I think we missed the opportunity to do Grange Day at the State House this year. This legislative term is about over. It is time to start paying attention to who is running for what offices at the local, state, and federal level and get to know positions of the candidates. I ask you to show up at the polls for not only the presidential election in November, but the primaries in September. Get out and vote, but more importantly, know the issues and the candidate. Send folks into office that you want to represent you. Be careful about who you vote out of office as well. Do not send good folks away because you disagree with others. Again get to know your candidates.