

Outside My Window on Parker Street

We just completed two very successful conventions. The 138th annual session of the New Hampshire State Grange was held in beautiful Hampton Beach, NH. I walked away from this convention with an optimistic view of our great organization. The delegates made the tough decision to move forward with growth. By a vote of the delegate body they created a Grange Growth Fund so we have the financial resources to grow the Grange. They also created a Grange Growth Team, which I hope will give a focused effort to help revitalize Granges, as well as help create new Granges.

Do you have any ideas on where you think a new Grange can be organized? Do you live in a community where there used to be Grange? Would that community again benefit from having a Grange in it? If you have answers to these questions don't hesitate to contact myself or Membership Director Anne Boisvert.

During the past year we had 19 Subordinate and one Pomona Grange with net gains in membership. Was your Grange one of them? When was the last time that you asked someone to join your Grange? Every Grange can benefit from having new members. They bring a fresh perspective, and they bring new ideas and a vitality that sometimes is needed.

The other goal that I hope to accomplish during my last two years as your State Master is the opportunity to bring new ideas and new people into State Grange leadership positions. I am very excited to announce the appointment of Tara Sad as the new Resolutions and By-laws Chairman. Have you ever wanted to serve as a Deputy, or a Committee Member, but have never been asked? If you're interested in being a State Grange official let me know, I will be happy to consider new appointments to State Committees.

At the 146th Annual Session of the National Grange held in Boise, Idaho, we discussed many subjects. One subject that was discussed extensively was whether to raise dues, The National Grange is at a point where we are not going to be able to sustain the current programs and staff that we have. The other option is to institute an annual \$25.00 charter fee to be assessed to every Pomona and Subordinate across the country. I voted for both of these options, because I believe that we can't grow the Grange by cutting programming and staff. So, I would like to have your input. Which option do you see as being the best option for your Grange?

Next year we will host the National Grange in Manchester NH, for the first time since 1913. I pledged to have 100 candidates for the 7th degree next year and I challenged the other Northeast State Masters to match us with at least 50. Help me make my pledge!! If you have members in your Grange that are eligible to take the 7th Degree, encourage them to do so!!

Some of you might have noticed that the name of my column has changed. That is because I have a new address. At the end of September I purchased my first home, so please update my address. I look forward to staying home for a month or two to enjoy my new home.

I want to take a moment to thank Past State Secretary Carolyn and Past State Treasurer Gail Turcotte, who both retired as state officers at this last session. Thank you for all of your hard work on behalf of our great organization. Your contributions have been appreciated by the Grange.

I hope you all have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and I look forward to seeing you around the State in the new year.