

Pa. State Grange

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bers from around Pennsylvania will gather at the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Reading for the state convention where new policies are discussed and voted on by delegates. The session is being hosted by the 12 Granges in Berks County.

"The Grange is a grass-roots organization which gets its policies from the local Granges in the form of resolutions," said Pennsylvania State Grange Master (president) Bill Steel.

"Over the years the Grange has successfully lobbied for such issues as rural mail delivery, establishment of rural electric cooperatives and fairer prices for farmers. All these policies started at a local Grange and were then passed to the state level."

A special celebration is being held between 1-3 p.m. Saturday (Oct. 25) to mark the 125th convention. An Olympic-style torch that has been moving from county to county the past year will kickoff the anniversary celebration, which includes a program to showcase the many accomplishments of the Pennsylvania State Grange. The public is invited to attend this free event at the Scottish Rite Cathedral.

Another highlight of the five-day convention will be the State of Agriculture Address from Secretary of Agriculture Samuel Hayes Jr., set for Monday afternoon, as well as the presentation of the various departmental awards on Tuesday evening.

Awards to be presented Tuesday evening at the All-Granger banquet include: the State Master's Award for Excellence in Community Service and Membership Growth; Community Service awards to the outstanding Subordinate (local) and Pomona (county) Granges, Past Officer awards and the Granger of the Year award, the highest honor bestowed upon an

individual for service to the organization.

Youth members, ages 15-35, will take center stage Sunday as they compete in the Public Speaking, Sing-A-Song and Knowledge Bowl competitions beginning at 2:30 p.m. at the Inn at Reading.

"The competition in these events is tough and the talent is outstanding as Youth members battle for state-wide honors and the right to perform against their peers from around the country at the National Grange convention," Steel said. "These youths demonstrate skills and abilities that they

have learned as Grange members. Many are leaders within their own Granges and will one day be the leaders of our nation."

The Pennsylvania State Grange is a 125-year-old family fraternity representing 30,000 rural Pennsylvanians. The organization offers its members benefits such as insurance, a credit union, lobbying efforts, community service, and social activities. The Grange is making Pennsylvania a better place to live through its legislative endeavors, community service work and providing member services.

Grangers Demonstrate Love With Their Hands

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) - For the 21st consecutive year the Women's Activities Department of the Pennsylvania State Grange is sponsoring its stuffed toys contest. But this just isn't any contest.

In fact, the stuffed toy contest has evolved into something more than just another competition. It isn't about winning awards or accolades from your peers. Or even being the best.

No, the only winners in this "Labor of Love" are the children who receive these toys. When nearly 1,000 Grangers from around the state descend upon Berks County for the 125th annual Pa. State Grange convention, they'll bring with them nearly 9,000 toys to be judged and then distributed to Ronald McDonald Houses, ambulance services, children hospitals and other needy charities.

Most of the toys will be distributed to services located in the region of the host county. The stuffed toys program is sponsored by Fairfield Processing.

"These Grangers are more

interested in toys for loving than toys for judging," Becky Michalka, women's activities director of the State Grange, said. "There were 8,723 toys made last year, and, according to the reports I've been receiving, there will be many submitted this year."

The toys, however, won't be the only labor of love on display at the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Reading. Over 1,000 baby quilts for HIV-positive and crack-addicted babies will be stacked to the ceiling.

"The ABC Quilts for AIDS babies is designed to make their lives a little more comfortable," Michalka said, "because many of these babies won't live to see their second birthday."

In addition to the toys and quilts, Grangers make clothing items for nursing homes, prepare food that is donated to food banks, cut soup labels for charitable groups and develop kits containing personal care products that are distributed to abused women shelters, to name a few.

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125th Convention Schedule Oct. 25-29, Reading, Pa.

Location Key: Scottish Rite Cathedral = SRC; Inn at Reading = IAR.

OCT. 25

10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Exhibitors arrive and setup; for Lecturer, Youth, Junior, Women's Activities, and Deaf activity groups — SRC.

1 p.m.

Arrival of Torch (Finishes year of passing torch between the state's subordinate Granges.) — SRC.

A celebration of history pageant — SRC.

3:30 p.m.-5 p.m.

More exhibits to arrive and setup — SRC.

7 p.m.

Talent Festival — SRC.

9:30 p.m.

Welcome Reception — SRC (lower level).

OCT. 26

9 a.m.

A time of worship, memorial service — SRC.

10:30 a.m.

Junior Grange Degree Conferral — IAR.

12 p.m.

Junior Luncheon — IAR.

1 p.m.

Judging of exhibits.

2:30 p.m.

Sign-A-Song and public speaking contests — IAR.

6 p.m.

Special session of the Pa. State Grange.

Youth Corps Drill Demonstration.

Address by National Master.

Conferral of the Sixth Degree — SRC.

OCT. 27

9 a.m.

Official opening of the 125th Annual Session — SRC.

10 a.m.

Convention Address by State Master William A. Steel — SRC.

12 p.m.

Youth/GROW Club luncheon — IAR.

4:30 p.m.

Closing of first day's session, youth officers — SRC.

7:30 p.m.

Departmental Recognition Night — SRC.

OCT. 28

7 a.m.

Women's Activities breakfast — IAR.

11:45 a.m.

Election of officers — SRC.

6 p.m.

All Granger Banquet at the Leesport Farmers Market, including Granger of the Year Award presentation and Community Service Recognition.

OCT. 29

7 a.m.

Master's Breakfast — IAR.

9 a.m.

Opening of the third day's session — SRC.

10 a.m.

Exhibitors released.

Installation of officers.

11:30 a.m.

Session Closes.

Weaver Elected Angus Delegate

Delegate

NEW HOLLAND (Lancaster Co.) — Barbara J. Weaver, New Holland, has been elected as a delegate to the 114th annual meeting of the American Angus Association, Nov. 17 in Louisville, Ky., reported Richard Spader, executive vice president of the American Angus Association.

Weaver, a member of the American Angus Association with headquarters in St. Joseph, Mo., is one of 315 Angus breeders who have been elected by fellow members in their state to serve as a state representative at the annual meeting. Representing 45 states and Canada, the delegates will participate in the business meeting and elect a new president, vice president and five directors to the American Angus Association board.

The annual meeting is held in conjunction with the annual convention and banquet, and the Roll of Victory Angus show, Nov. 16-18, during the North American International Livestock Exposition.

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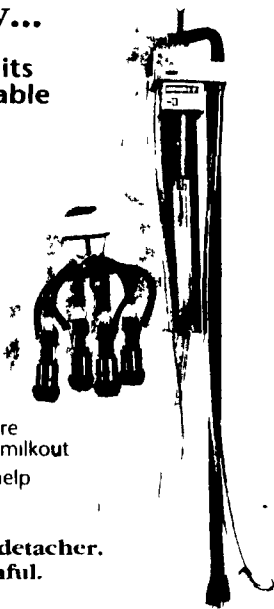
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