

Pennsylvania Grange Celebrates 125-Year History

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125th anniversary of the Pa. State Grange and its efforts over the years.

The announcement of the Granger of the Year Award was held until the end of the banquet. The award is the highest honor to be bestowed upon a Grange member.

Fishovitz, a 30-year Grange member, belongs to the Big Knob Grange No.2008, the Beaver Pomona Grange No. 66. She has served as master of Big Knob and the Beaver Pomona granges; chaplain of the Pomona Grange; a junior leader of Big Knob for 11 years; master for first, second, third and fourth degree teams; and as president of the youth group.

She has also been involved in church activities, and is the Region E representative on the Junior Camp Committee.

"The Grange has a strong family basis, as does the church," she said, "and it is important to me to spend time not only with my own children, but other young people as well. I love to be with young people and it is important to help them build a strong foundation as they grow up.

"One of the things I love about the Grange, that may not be present in other organizations, is that we build self-esteem as we teach children to appreciate themselves and each other."

Dr. John F. McHugh, a Grange member, a Lehigh County commissioner, a retired principal of the Allentown School District, public speaker and toastmaster, was the main speaker of the banquet.

Involved in many public and political organizations for years, he recently was the recipient of the Community Service Award from the Liberty Bell Chapter National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, is an alumnus of Kutztown State College and Lehigh University, is an U.S.

Army veteran, and is to have the library of the to-be-completed Korean Vietnam Memorial Educational Center named after him.

But he didn't talk about all of that. He talked about the specialness of being a Grange member, of being involved in preserving individual freedoms, and of enjoying life through participation.

He also talked about the youth of today and how they still need to be taught survival skills, such as discipline, and the maintenance and caring for themselves and others.

He mentioned the fact that many members of the Grange are greying, and said that it means much — not so much that the members are getting older and need to recruit youth, but that they have much yet to share with youth.

McHugh said that as we approach the end of the century, and thus the millenium, "We have the opportunity to witness life at the begining of a new millenium. We have an opportunit to take a look at what life has been like in the 20th Century — our life — and look at the future and be advisors for the future.

"You and I talk about inheritance. We are the great inheritors of the land of God. God asks us to be guardians of that land."

He said that in the United States, and within the many organizations that exist, there are many duties to perform. But none is so important as preparing for the future.

He said that as the members of Grange look back, they should discover that, "We are special people. We have been upholding the principles of America. We are for America."

McHugh said that his generation



From the left, Janet Fishovitz thanks the 600 members of the Pennsylvania State Grange for allowing her to be named 1997 Granger of the Year, while she is joined on stage by husband Anthony, daughter Jennifer, and son Nicholas.

has experienced much and were able to survive a Depression and world wars and other wars because of benefiting from being raised within a solid family order, where each family created and lived by its own survival strategy, and from learning self-reliance, community, and social skills.

"You and I have been bastions of the best of America," he said, adding that someone must take over and it is up to those currently on watch to ensure that those set to take over understand what it is they can do to .

Other than the Granger of the Year Award, community service awards were presented to the top Pomona (county) level Grange, and to the top subordinate (local)

Grange.

Berks Pomona was named as the winner of its category, while the Virginville Grange was the winning subordinate.

The community service award is based on the projects and number of hours performed in community service.

In other recognition, the William Steel presented the 1997 Master's Award to John Corkum, master of the Keystone Grange No.2 in Montgomery County. He was cited for outstanding membership growth, community service, and legislative work. Steel presented a framed Norman Rockwell print.

In a special presentation in light of the historic occasion, Steel

announced that four of the original 22 subordinate Pennsylvania Granges that formed the Pa. State Grange are still in existence, and that he researched and made reproductions of their original charter applications.

The framed reproductions were presented to representatives of those subordinate Granges: Eagle Grange in Lycoming County; Keystone Grange in Montgomery; Kennet Square Grange in Chester; and Sanatoga in Montgomery.

In other convention activities during the week, state Secretary of Agriculture Samuel Hayes Jr.

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