



The April Meeting

The April meeting was preceded by a scrumptious potluck which seemed to be equal parts food and equal parts dessert! The table was full. Yum.

The meeting started at 7:30 with David Kaynor in the Master's chair. Two guests were present as well as a member who hadn't been to a meeting in a while. She said due to Daylight Savings Time she was now able to be at the meeting until 8:00 while her husband stayed home with the kids. This seemed to reinforce the idea that maybe our Grange should move the meeting start-up time to 7:00.

The two guests were Jesse and Kathy James. Just the day before, Jesse had joined Guiding Star Grange. So Kathy decided to join the Montague Grange, and Jesse became an associate member. We welcome Kathy and Jesse!

Kathy will be "inducted" into our Grange on Sunday, May 1st, during "Four Degrees Day," which happens to also be the day of the annual May Day Celebration. This will be a very busy day indeed for some of our members, and a full day for our Grange.

At 10:00 that morning the Town Common will come alive with the annual May Day Celebration. We will open our hall to revelers to use our bathrooms while we also hold a pie and bake sale to raise some money. (If you would like to bake brownies or a pie, please do so and either come by with on the day of the event or call Mik.)

First and second degrees will begin in the hall at 2:00 PM. We'll take a short break around 4:00 and then go onto the third and fourth. At the conclusion of the degrees we'll sit down for a big potluck dinner, sometime around 6:00. After dinner there will be a Grand March, which will lead into a benefit Contra Dance for the family of Tommy Newton, sometime around 7:30 PM.

Tommy Newton of Northfield was born with end-stage kidney disease. After a kidney transplant at the age of 4, he seemed to be doing well. 12 years later he has now been diagnosed with post transplant lymphoma, a blood cancer. The "Tommy Newton Benefit Fund" has been set up at Greenfield Cooperative Bank, and the Montague



Garden Workshop

Member Sally Prasch started up a monthly garden workshop on the front lawn of the hall to capitalize on the fantastic garden space she and member Sam Yon-Song created last spring. On Sunday April 10th Sam extended the garden down the walkway all the way to the curb by the sidewalk sign and Sally brought two 30-gallon cans of compost and ash. A few people came by for the seed swap, including Chris (shown below) and then the gardening started. We planted pansies, chard, broccoli, snow peas (seeds), radishes (seeds) and kale and covered it up with straw.

On Saturday May 14 we will learn about local herbs from Anneliese Mordhorst who will take us on a "Weed Walk" from 10-12. Meet at the Grange, all ages are welcome. Anneliese will introduce us to our local food and medicine. Common, wild plants offer an abundance of delicious nourishment, health and

beauty in your neighborhood.

On Saturday June 11th Mark Ragonese will show us how to make elaborate twig sculptures. "Mark's work in wood is unique in its variety. He was honored in 1993 by the League of New Hampshire Craftspeople for his distinctive sculptural pieces and has, for many years been an Artist in Residence for NH schools."

Mark will be doing a workshop on making garden fences and trellises from 10 AM until 3 PM. The workshop is free, but donations will be accepted since Mark will be paid for his time.

If you would like to attend this workshop and make your own item(s) please bring fresh-cut saplings, 2" in diameter or less.

May Day Celebration

written by Jeanne Weintraub in response to Q&A. Mostly reprinted from the April 2002 issue.

The Montague May Day Celebration was mostly the brainchild of Rose Sheehan and myself, with a lot of input from David Kaynor, who has actually written a processional march called the Montague Processional for the celebration. Rose, who had once lived in the Cambridge area, wanted something similar to their celebration, with singing and dancing. Montague's Celebration has now been going on for about 20 years.

We have always gotten a good turnout (even the first year) and some years (like last year) we had so many people the common began to feel crowded. Some years we have had entertainment for children (concerts on our porch), juggling, face painting, etc., and one year we also had an art show (like this year).

The morris teams from our area who have been coming to the Montague celebration are: Juggler Meadow (Amherst), Wakerobin (Amherst), Hartsbrook (Hadley) and Guiding Star Clog and Morris (Greenfield). The teams usually dance on the common as part of a bigger tour around the area, including visits to farms like Blue Meadow Farm.

The first maypole was sewn and dyed by Betsy Dawn Williams, Robin David and myself, and we had a little help financially from the Montague Arts Council to pay for the material and dye. The first year we used surveyor's tape, but it kept breaking, so we decided to sew the ribbons out of cloth. That first maypole lasted about 10 years, until it broke one year while people were

dancing and we had to hold it up.

The present maypole was cut and painted by John Lord. We wanted a BIG maypole (we boast the largest in the area!) with lots of colors.

This year, as in the past, the Grange will open its doors to allow the public to use the bathrooms.

Following the May Day Celebration The Grange will go into its Four Degree Day with a potluck, and a Grand March leading into a benefit contra dance. See the

"April Meeting" for more details. It should prove to be a wonderful day. Come join us.



Spotlight On Our Members

Grange will hold the benefit contra dance to raise money for the fund. Please either come to the dance or send a check to Greenfield Cooperative Bank at 63 Federal Street, Greenfield, MA, 01301.

In other news, Overseer Mik Muller was elected to Assistant Lecturer. Master David Kaynor called a general hall clean-up day on Saturday April 30th, the day before the degrees. An agricultural movies series was discussed, starting off with "Root Hog or Die." Mik made two motions regarding local sidewalks: one being the driveway entrance at our hall, and the other being the sidewalk on the inside curve where Main Street turns north towards Turners Falls Road and Greenfield Road. That curb is fairly dangerous since there's not real delineation of sidewalk and street. And the yellow line is completely obliterated, so drivers frequently drive right up onto the curb. A letter will be presented to the board of selectmen of Montague.

The Memorial Day Observance Ceremony was also discussed, citing last year's failure to organize anything in the midst of the 250th Anniversary Parade planning. At the March meeting we recognized that we can't do it alone. Some members suggested that maybe the Grange should give up the "ownership" of the event and hand it to another organization. Some others were in stiff opposition to that idea. We agreed that at least we should publish a letter in the paper saying that The Montague Grange was looking for any local organizations that would want to partner with us in the ceremony.

During the "Suggestions For the Good of the Order" section of the meeting, which always comes up at the end, it was mentioned that every year at the State Session those in attendance vote on resolutions created by the subordinate Granges. That's us. The suggestion was that we, the members of Montague Grange #141, could think of things that could be passed up to the State Grange to be voted on at State Session. Resolutions could be to change various aspects of the Grange in general, or in support of or opposition to U.S. state or national policies.

One example that was brought up was that the Massachusetts State Grange could state their support of voting machines with paper trails, or biodiesel, or anything that our membership feels would be a good thing for the State Grange to visibly and publicly support. Think about it, and then write or call us. Or show up at the next meeting to discuss it.

Lecturer Chris Mason is the Education Director for the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA). He oversees educational resource development and outreach to K-12 teachers on the subjects of sustainable transportation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy.



Chris joined NESEA in June 1998 and since then has organized and run dozens of professional development workshops annually throughout the northeast, two summer science and technology institutes for teachers, and three educators' conferences. Chris has authored two middle school science and interdisciplinary units and several lesson-sets on themes of greenhouse gases, transportation, and solar-energy, developed an education kit that uses mini-solar panels for inquiry-based, hands-on learning, and oversaw the development of a high school unit on alternative fueled vehicles.

At home, Chris runs his car on a vegetable-based diesel fuel, bicycles to work whenever he can, and heats most of his home's hot water with sunlight. He is married and has a spunky 6-year old daughter.

Chris has a Bachelors of Science in Electrical Engineering from the University of Connecticut, a Masters of Science in Resource Management and Administration from Antioch New England Graduate School and is trained and experienced as an elementary and middle school teacher.

This summer Chris will be working with the Gill-Montague School District and leading experts in architecture, renewable energy, and climate science to run NESEA's third science and technology summer institute for Massachusetts's teachers on renewable energy, energy-efficient buildings, and alternative fuels.

The institute will run on June 27 and two weeks in July and will be hosted at the newly renovated, high-performance, "green" Turners Falls High School / Great Falls Middle School building. This provides an opportunity for Chris to use the school's new 30-kW solar array and energy-efficient lighting, heating, and ventilation systems as in-the-field course content for Massachusetts science and technology teachers.

Surveys still coming in...

Overseer Mik reports that so far ten surveys have come in and the results are quite revealing. But before he releases the results he'd really like everyone's input. So please, if you haven't filled out and returned your survey, do it today!

New websites to check out

As you may have read in our previous issue, our Connecticut Valley Pomona now has its own website www.MA-Pomona19.org. This website is the place to go to see all the events happening at the Granges in our area.

What you may not know is that the Massachusetts State Grange finally has their website up too. www.MassGrange.org. Here you will find events happening at various Granges across our state, and back issues of the newsletter, as they provide them. The website is still being built, but at least it's up!

Upcoming Grange Events...

Guiding Star - BIG Bandemonium
Sat, April 30, 8:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Shelburne - May Baskets
Sun, May 01

Montague - May Day Celebration
Sun, May 01, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Pomona - Four Degrees Day (Montague)
Sun, May 01, 2:00 PM - 10:00 PM

Montague - Contra Dance
Sun, May 01, 7:30 PM - 10:00 PM

Shelburne - Area History
Wed, May 04

Montague - Weed Walk (herbs)
Sat, May 14, 10:00 - 12:00

Shelburne - Living Wills
Wed, May 18

Pomona - 5th Degrees Guiding Star
Mon, May 23, 8:00 PM - 9:30 PM

Montague - Dana & Susan Robinson Concert
Fri, May 27, 8:00 PM - 10:00 PM

Montague - Memorial Day Obsrv.
Sun, May 29, 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM



Submissions

Send ideas for articles or questions to the email list, or call Overseer Mik at (413) 320-5336. Send articles by email, early in the month. We publish appx mid-month.



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