

# Marys River Messenger



Vol. 8, Issue 4

March/April 2026

## Sowing Seeds

**Marys River Grange's Annual Plant Sale and Seed Swap is happening on Saturday, April 25, 10am to 2pm at the Grange Hall.** Come early to snuggle with Windy Hill Farm's baby goats! Choose your plants and your price. This family friendly fundraiser benefits Philomath Community Services. Free seeds! Bring yours to share, or just take some. We have obtained free surplus seed from Winona Grange. Bring tools and knives to be sharpened, as well.

Go ahead and start seedlings of all kinds, transplant the overflow from your yard, farm or garden, clone houseplants, gather excess pots and gardening supplies, and sort and organize seeds! Everyone together makes this a successful event. Vegetables, herbs, flowers, shrubs – all manner of plants are welcome (barring invasive species), such as raspberry canes, grape cuttings, strawberry runners, and flower bulbs; also garden art, tools and equipment. Plants and other items may be dropped off at the Grange before the sale. Remainders will be donated to Lupe's Community Garden. Contact [marysrivergrange@gmail.com](mailto:marysrivergrange@gmail.com) or call/text 541-829-2907 for more information.

*"The more I am acquainted with agricultural affairs, the better I am pleased with them; insomuch, that I can nowhere find so great satisfaction as in those innocent and useful pursuits. In indulging these feelings, I am led to reflect how much more delightful to an undebauched mind, is the task of making improvements on the earth, than all the vainglory which can be acquired from ravaging it, by the most uninterrupted career of conquests."*

- George Washington, Letter to Arthur Young, Dec. 4, 1788

## We are the Grange

We believe strong communities are the foundation of a healthy society. We work together to support local economies, connect neighbors, and create opportunities for everyone.

We celebrate family, honor traditions, and pass down values that enrich lives and connect generations.

We are a nonpartisan voice for all Americans—urban and rural alike—advocating for policies that enhance the well-being of all.

We encourage active participation in democracy through being well-informed voters, advocating on local issues, volunteering, and working together to build a better future.

We honor our agricultural roots by promoting contemporary farming practices, supporting rural areas, and protecting our natural resources for future generations.

We foster curiosity and critical thinking through education, mentorship, and skill-building, empowering individuals to grow personally and professionally. We believe in giving children and youth leadership opportunities and fostering their growth and natural curiosity.

We serve others with empathy, lead by example, and support those in need to strengthen community bonds.

We are grounded in moral values, guided by purpose, and committed to doing what is right, even when it's hard.

We treat all people with dignity and fairness, championing equal opportunities regardless of background, identity, or belief.

We believe in moving forward together, respecting differences, finding common ground, and building a more resilient and hopeful tomorrow.

- <https://www.nationalgrange.org/>

Contact [marysrivergrange@gmail.com](mailto:marysrivergrange@gmail.com) or 541-829-2907. See also: [marysrivergrange.org](http://marysrivergrange.org)  
[facebook.com/Marys-River-Grange-Hall-288171007887164/](https://facebook.com/Marys-River-Grange-Hall-288171007887164/)  
To rent the Grange Hall, see Rental at [marysrivergrange.org](http://marysrivergrange.org)

**Marys River Grange #685 regularly meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 pm at 24707 Grange Hall Road in Philomath. Potluck at 6:30. Join us!**

## Membership 2026

More than 100 individuals, associates, and families have renewed their membership to Marys River Grange #685 in 2026. Why join? Why continue? I would describe the Grange as an intentional rural-oriented community organization that provides attention and support to its members and serves the greater good. People join for any one or number of reasons: grassroots advocacy, to support sustainable agriculture, rural arts and crafts, to help support an historic building and community resource, to meet and socialize with like-minded individuals face-to-face, to be part of a family fraternal organization not affiliated to any church or political party, to have the benefit of discounted building rentals, to put time and talent to good use, to promote activities and partnerships, to improve and enhance the lives of others, to build and sustain relationships, to be encouraged and belong.

Some stick with it, some don't. It can surprise oneself. We're all in our own seasons. We may join for one reason and stay for another. We're each weathering different personal experience, yet we recognize some shared values. Grange membership doesn't fit everyone all the time. Sometimes it doesn't work out as intended. Sometimes it works out better, sometimes not so much. It is what we bring to it, and that changes. For some individuals, service is ingrained in their lives, so devotion is natural. Others may be exploring new transitions, such as retirement, and coming to new understandings of themselves. Some are experiencing major changes that were unexpected, and are learning how much they can and cannot handle. We each find meaning in different ways.

That's why it's difficult to say what the Grange represents. It's both communal and personal. And, it's evolving as we all do. It's continually being created by those who participate. At times we are highly focused together and much is accomplished as a whole; other times it's enough to keep it together at all. Sometimes there's strong leadership that influences the Grange in a particular direction; sometimes people fill in however they can. Some members are supportive from a distance, some are in the thick of it. It all matters. Everyone plays their part and contributes in their own manner, generally with the intent of doing as good as they can. And we're still growing – being stretched.

No one promised us a rose garden that takes no planting or tending (and has no fungus), yet there is much to share and enjoy.

Is it worthwhile? Absolutely. Likely more than we ever imagined.

- Judy Hays-Eberts, President  
Marys River Grange #685

There is now a tax deductible way to donate funds toward Marys River Grange! Friends of Marys River Grange is now a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, which also allows us to apply for grants for which MRG would not otherwise be eligible. (Marys River Grange #685 is a 501(c)8.) Friends of Marys River Grange supports the educational and community service activities and infrastructure of Marys River Grange. Donations may be mailed to Friends of Marys River Grange, PO Box 1301, Philomath, OR 97370.

Questions? Contact Judy at 541-829-2907.

# MARCH ON HUNGER

## Food Drive for Philomath Community Service

### Most Wanted Items:

- canned meat
- canned fish
- condiments
- canned entrees
- boxed entrees
- ready to eat soups



Place your bag of nonperishable donations items in a bag(s) near your front door (visible from the curb) on Saturday, March 14th by 9 am, and a volunteer will pick them



For more information or to volunteer contact:  
Diane Crocker or Teresa Neilson at  
[philomathfooddrive@gmail.com](mailto:philomathfooddrive@gmail.com)

## Yoga at the Grange Spring 2026

**Tuesdays 6pm - 7pm**

**March 31<sup>st</sup> - June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026**



Classes are \$10  
for Grange members,  
\$15 for non-Grange  
members.

Questions? Please contact Laura Coen: [lauraploeg@yahoo.com](mailto:lauraploeg@yahoo.com)

## Why I am a Granger: Making Friends like Family

When I was first asked this question, "Why am I a Granger?" my immediate answer was "to make friends and experience community." I felt complete with this answer. In deeper reflection, I realize this is a simplistic answer, and more depth of understanding would be valuable.

Mike, our past president explained to me why it is more difficult to make friends and experience community currently in our society rather than how it has been in the historical past. Institutions that promote community increasingly are less available to the people.

Marys River Grange is a community of goodwill and service. Currently, as many social organizations are losing members and "aging out," Marys River Grange is attracting new members, creating new friendships, and the spirit of community abounds. We are very fortunate.

Our mission of supporting agriculture and farming is also an extension of our love for the planet, and our desire to create beauty and support the birds, the bees and the butterflies. We are farmers of the Earth.

We have clear intention to support Mother Earth in every way possible. And in our hearts, we know that each individual person by themselves contributes to the creation of the spirit of community.

"Making friends like family" is possible with the shared intentions of loving Mother Earth and supporting each other. I find it easy to make friends and the spirit of community is ever present. I'm very thankful.

Sincerely, Mark Files  
Chaplain, Marys River Grange #685

## From the Greeters:

Please make sure you sign in at the beginning of our meetings!

We will have also forms for reporting your community service hours. Please report any volunteer or community service hours you have done outside of Marys River Grange. These hours are reported yearly to the State Grange demonstrating the support that our members give to the broader community. In addition to volunteer hours to other organizations you are encouraged to report service to others, for example taking someone to the store or a doctor's appointment.

We want to continue Mark's tradition of monthly drawings for homemade jams & jellies. We are asking for your donations to continue this fun way of sharing our bounty.

Thank You, Sandy Heath & Sharon Thornberry,  
Greeters, Marys River Grange #685

Contributors welcome! Send items for the *Messenger* to Judy Hays-Eberts at [marysrivergrange@gmail.com](mailto:marysrivergrange@gmail.com) or mail to Marys River Grange, PO Box 1301, Philomath, OR 97370.

Deadline for May/June *Messenger*: April 27  
No fee for business card-sized advertisements from members of Marys River Grange.

## A California Connection III

Dear Marys River Grangers,

The State of the Grange is good here in California! I am pleased to relay that I have been elected the lecturer of my new Grange, Durham #460. This is the first year in recent history where the community Grange has opened the full slate of officers instead of just operating with a president, secretary, and treasurer. My fellow Grangers are eager to learn about Grange traditions, so my programs have been focused on the Heirloom excerpts and relating them to our activities.

Rice farming has been in its slow period, waiting for the spring when the fields become workable. In the meantime, we have been focused on moving equipment to my brother's property since our long-time equipment shop will no longer be ours come fall. Building a new equipment shop will be an arduous task, but we will do it because it must be done.

Last month, I attended a one-day conference entitled "Empowered to Thrive" put on by the California State Grange in Redding, CA. These regional conferences are focused on Grange leadership development, networking, and brainstorming. There I connected with many local Grangers including the president of the newly reformed Berry Creek Grange in my county. Berry Creek, which burned in 2020, are forging ahead as new Grangers with very real plans of rebuilding their hall. At the state grange level, I spoke with Lillian Booth (CSG Secretary), Susan Hanks (CSG Treasurer), Martha Stefenoni (National Assembly of Demeter), and Joe Stefenoni (CSG President, pictured below). Joe and I had an excellent conversation about restarting my county's Pomona Grange and my own home town's Grange (which hall still stands in good condition).

Thinking of you all, and godspeed in your endeavors.  
Onward to spring!  
Mike Terry



CA State Grange Pres. Joe Stefenoni with Mike Terry

## Blood Pressure, by the Numbers

Understanding what your blood pressure numbers mean, how to recognize potential problems and when to seek care can help you stay on top of your long-term health. Blood pressure is measured using two numbers:

- Systolic (top number): pressure in the arteries when the heart beats.
- Diastolic (bottom number): pressure in the arteries between beats.

According to updated U.S. guidelines from the American Heart Association and American College of Cardiology, these are the current categories for adults:

- Normal: less than 120 and less than 80 mm Hg
- Elevated: 120–129 systolic and less than 80 diastolic
- Stage 1 Hypertension: 130–139 systolic or 80–89 diastolic
- Stage 2 Hypertension: 140+ systolic or 90+ diastolic
- Hypertensive Crisis: 180+ systolic and/or 120+ diastolic (seek immediate care)

High blood pressure – also called hypertension – often develops with no symptoms. But over time, it can seriously impact your health. High blood pressure is often called ‘silent condition’ because most people feel completely normal even as their heart and arteries are under strain. Over time, uncontrolled high blood pressure can lead to serious problems such as heart disease, stroke, kidney issues and in some cases even memory decline. If blood pressure rises to 180/120 mm Hg or higher, it may signal a hypertensive emergency, especially when paired with symptoms like chest pain, shortness of breath, weakness, or vision changes. This requires immediate medical attention.

When to Seek Medical Care: **Seek emergency care immediately if blood pressure is over 180/120 mm Hg and you have symptoms like:**

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Back pain
- Weakness or numbness
- Vision changes
- Difficulty speaking

Why Regular Blood Pressure Checks Matter: Many people cannot feel when their blood pressure is high or low. According to clinical guidance, blood pressure does not stay the same throughout the day and can change with activity, stress, medication, or aging. Regular monitoring helps detect changes early, even when no symptoms are present.

Health experts recommend having your blood pressure checked at least once a year during routine health care visits. More frequent checks may be needed if you have elevated readings or other risk factors. Home blood pressure monitors can be useful, but they should not replace regular visits with a health care provider.

Blood pressure is a key measure of your long-term health. Knowing your numbers and understanding what they mean empowers you to take preventive steps that protect your heart, brain and overall well-being.

- Karen Hudspeth, MRG Deaf Awareness & Family Health,  
Information from Samaritan Health



**Tractor Work and Tool Sharpening**

Need help rototilling, mowing, post-holes, and planting, call Mark Files  
(541) 360-8759 - celticforge.net

For knife or garden tool sharpening, please leave your tools at Summer Beam Books at 1337 Main Street in Philomath, for pick up and drop off. Hand-forged infinity key rings are also available at Summer Beam Books.



See <https://oregontaste.com/partners/ten-rivers-food-web> for more info about our members' farms and others.



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**Health Care for Farm Workers**

Farm Clinic is expanding services to uninsured & underinsured agricultural workers in Benton, Linn, & Lincoln Counties. Any small-scale & family-run farms (vineyards, tree farms, dairy, ranching, etc.)

Contact: Lisa Quick, Community Outreach & Farm Clinic,  
541-758-3000

## From the Garden

Wet and wild will soon be in the past and our gardens will speak to us with sunshine and possibilities. The sun is coming, days are getting longer and the ground is warming up. This is the season to sharpen your tools, prepare the soil and prepare for planting. And, the season to anticipate a beautiful summer of abundance of blooms and edibles. What a joy.

The Grangers here at Marys River Grange are proud to do their own gardening and we have beautiful grounds. We have secluded shade areas, we have full sound areas, and there are dozens of micro environments that are ideal for ground covers and plants that support our birds, bees and butterflies. Truly, the garden space of Mary River Grange is a testament to the beauty of Oregon and the possibilities of providing habitat for Mother Nature's abundance

Volunteers to work and help in our garden in the spirit of love and service are always accepted. If you are a person who loves the Earth and loves to work with other people, please join us and our pursuit of providing a place for Mother Nature's abundance.

- Volunteer Mark Files

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Susan Stogsdill, Owner

## Craft Night has joined Spoon Jam – the spoon and other green wood carving circle – on the third Wednesdays of the month, 5:30-8:30 pm.

Come for carving (beginner to advanced, bring your own tools and wood), or drop in with your unfinished project of any kind to work on in the company of fellow crafters. Enjoy friendly conversation, skill sharing, and community building. Feel free to bring your dinner or any snacks you might want to share. We are aligned with Tarweed Folk School, an associate member of MRG. Expand your creativity at Marys River Grange!

The top five benefits of regular participation in arts and crafts are: reduced stress and anxiety, boosts in overall mood, improves physical health, fosters social connections, and enhances cognitive functioning.

Learn about Tarweed Folk School's upcoming classes here: <https://www.tarweedfolkschool.com/classes>

## 2025 MRG Volunteers of the Year: Jim Rouff & Camille Hall



- photo by Suzy Johanson

Marys River Grange has no shortage of candidates when it comes to looking for a Volunteer of the Year in the six years we have awarded this honor. The pool is deep and the bar for quality is set high.

The volunteers chosen for 2025 are Jim Rouff and Camille Hall, who have been actively involved for more than five years. Jim and Camille lead the efforts of our Grounds Committee and invest a large amount of time watering, weeding, cleaning up, helping our Memorial Orchard to thrive and keeping the Grange's grounds appealing to the public. Jim regularly mows throughout the season.

Jim also serves on the Building Committee, and ensures our efforts are not only productive, but fun. His cheerful attitude is a blessing to all who work with him.

Camille is a joy to work with, as well. She brings an infectious enthusiasm to every task she tackles. Among other things, she sewed curtains for the Hall's kitchen windows.

Together, Jim and Camille maintain the large signs near the driveway listing Marys River Grange events. They have both led the cider pressing effort for Harvest Fest, from gathering apples to making the cider, and they contribute to the Annual Plant Sale in many ways.

In addition to supporting our Grange, Jim and Camille help their neighbors and generously share their time and resources for many good causes in the Philomath and Corvallis community.

Our Grange is richer for having such members and we are happy to recognize their efforts. Thank you, Jim and Camille!

### Practice contentment.

“When the sun rises, I go to work,  
When the sun goes down, I take my rest,  
I dig the well from which I drink,  
I farm the soil that yields my food,  
I share creation, Kings can do no more.”

- Ancient Chinese, 2500 B.C.

# Marys River Grange's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Soup Cook-Off was a great success!

Thanks to all 10 contestants, including these Grangers, coordinator Reyna Aguiar Evans, bakers, volunteers & tasters!



Cady & Marchell won with gumbo!

Marys River Grangers gathered in appreciation at La Rockita in Philomath on January 22<sup>nd</sup> to socialize and enjoy a meal at one of the local businesses that helps publicize our events.



On January 4<sup>th</sup>, Grangers uncovered the Hall's septic tank in preparation for inspection before proceeding with the kitchen remodel. We learned the system needed major repairs. One step at a time...



Benton Small Woodlands Association, associate member of MRG, filled the Hall on January 24<sup>th</sup> for their annual meeting.



Grangers worked together on January 31<sup>st</sup> to split, haul, and stack wood in MRG's basement to supply the Hall through the season. Thank you volunteers and small woodlot donors!



*Conversation and friendship are more important than clockwork.*

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**Benefit Plant Sale and Seed Swap**

Free Clover Seeds from Summer Beam Books  
Tool and Knife sharpening by Mark Files

Proceeds benefit Philomath Community Services

Contact marysrivergrange@gmail.com for donations or info or call 541-829-2907

**Sat April 25 10A-2P**  
**Marys River Grange**  
24707 Grange Hall Road

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### Marys River Grange Happenings

**BINGO, 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday – Mar. 13, Apr. 10, 6-8:30 pm,** \$10 for 10 games (3 cards each), \$1 blackout tickets; drinks & snacks for sale, free door prizes

**Bluegrass Monthly Jam/Workshop, 2<sup>nd</sup> Weds. – Mar. 11, Apr. 8,** \$7 adult/\$5 youth, listeners donate as desired.

**Craft Night/Spoon Jam (Wood Carving Circle), 3<sup>rd</sup> Weds. – Mar. 18, Apr. 15, 5:30-8:30 pm,** no fee; bring tools & green wood or any unfinished craft project. Casual conversation, snacks welcome.

**Moonlight Country Mixer – Mondays, 7-10 pm,** \$5, host/instructor Jamie Lee; first Monday – swing lesson starts at 6:30 pm, \$10

**Quarterly Social Potluck – Friday April 3, 5:30p.** Potluck and social time for members & families, friends & neighbors.

**Yoga at the Grange – Tuesdays, 6-7 pm, through March 17 & March 31 – June 9,** \$10 for Grange members, \$15 for non-Grange members