

The Spring Youth Weekend was held at the Veteran Grange Hall in Chemung County from April 29 - May 1 with fourteen present from Steuben, Allegany, Genesee, Onondaga, Albany, and Dutchess Counties. Though we only had a small group, we still had a lot of fun.

On Friday night, we enjoyed a covered dish dinner with the Veteran Grange members and then filled the Officers' chairs for the Veteran Grange meeting as follows:

Master - Jo Barringer (Genesee)  
Overseer – Dan Russell (Dutchess)  
Lecturer - Kenly Ciampaglione (Dutchess)  
Steward - Andru Russo (Allegany)  
Assistant Steward - Allison Orton (Dutchess)  
Lady Assistant Steward - Santa Netti (Onondaga)  
Chaplain - Katie Hanlon (Dutchess)  
Treasurer - Julia Masti (Steuben)  
Secretary - Ben Kauppi (Genesee)  
Gatekeeper – Sara Recktenwald  
Ceres - Pat Campanelli (Chemung)  
Pomona - Alice Roote (Chemung)  
Flora - Mary Johnson (Chemung)  
Pianist - Ryan Orton (Dutchess)

We used the new alternate opening and closing ceremonies. We also supplied the Lecturer's Program and held "The Grange Wedding of the Year" in honor of the Royal Wedding being held the same day. It was an absolute riot, and those present commented that they hadn't laughed that much in a long time! After the meeting, a dartball game was held between the older and younger youth. Though the younger youth were winning with a score of 9 - 0 after the first inning, the older youth eventually won the game with a score of 20 - 19.

On Saturday, after a delicious breakfast, we traveled to Cortland for the State Talent and Public Speaking Contests. On the way, we had a photo scavenger hunt which really had our teams thinking about what they could find on the list on their way to Headquarters. Some of the pictures were very interesting! Though there were no entries in the Sign-A-Song Contest this year, the Public Speaking Contest was excellent with many different topics addressed such as music, Grange, and health topics. Congratulations to the following winners:

Prepared Speech - Age 14 - 19:

1st - Teresa Thomas, Bethlehem Grange #137, Albany County  
2nd - Sara Recktenwald, North Cameron Grange #355, Steuben County

Prepared Speech - Age 20 - 29:

1st - Heidi Henderson, Baldwinsville Grange #1251, Onondaga County

Elevator Speech - Age 14 - 19:

1st - Sara Recktenwald, North Cameron Grange #355, Steuben County

Elevator Speech - Age 20 - 29:

1st - Heidi Henderson, Baldwinsville Grange #1251, Onondaga County

Impromptu Speech - Age 14 - 19:

1st - Ben Kauppi - East Pembroke Grange #1157, Genesee County

Impromptu Speech - Age 20 - 29:

1st - Johannah Barringer, Stafford Grange #418, Genesee County

2nd - Matt Shoop, Bethlehem Grange #137, Albany County

3rd - Heidi Henderson, Baldwinsville Grange #1251, Onondaga County

All 1st place winners in the Prepared Speeches are eligible to compete at the Regional Contest at the Northeast Youth Conference in Maine in July.

On the way back to Chemung County, we had a refreshing stop at Buttermilk Falls in Ithaca. Some Youth members walked all the way to the top and enjoyed a breathtaking view! After dinner, we had a dartball rematch against Veteran Grange, who challenged us to a game after their defeat against us about 2 years ago. The score was very close for the entire game and it was tied in the 9th inning when Veteran Grange's Pat Campanelli scored the winning home run! The final score was 12 - 11, which means a tie breaking game will have to be played!

Sunday greeted us with an early morning start with another fantastic breakfast. We then returned to Cortland for the State Dartball Tournament where we played against teams from Orange, Cortland, and Steuben Counties. We could certainly tell they had practiced because they were winning by a large margin! Even with all the practice we had over the weekend, we came in 4th place. But, we had a very good time playing one of our favorite games.

We would like to thank all the members of Veteran Grange for their gracious hospitality and all the wonderful and delicious food they served! We hope to have a Spring Weekend at their Hall again in the future! Thanks, also, to Jerry Batsford for his guidance and helpful hints during the Dartball Tournament.

Be on the lookout for information regarding the Northeast Youth Conference from July 8 - 10 at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, as well as new information in our 2012 - 2013 State Handbook when it becomes available this summer.