

ELIZABETH DOWNEY

24th MASTER OF THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE GRANGE (2014-2017)

Elizabeth “Beth” Downey joined Allegheny Grange #1843, Lycoming County, in 1968 after returning home from working in the Washington, DC area. Her grandparents were instrumental in organizing Allegheny Grange and donated the land on which the Grange Hall is built. Beth is a fourth generation Grange member.

She has been married to Bernie for 30 years and their blended family includes six children 11 grandchildren and a growing number of great grandchildren.



Beth became an Affiliate member of Eagle Grange #1 to help preserve the first Grange in the state of PA. She has served in many offices in Allegheny #1843, Eagle #1, and Lycoming Pomona #28.

While serving on the State Junior Grange Committee from Region C under State Junior Director Debra Campbell, she organized/re-organized several Junior Granges. She served on the State Grange Executive Committee prior to being elected State Grange Master/President in October 2014, serving through February 2017.

During Beth’s term as State Master, the PA State Grange History Committee was restructured under the leadership of Chairperson Douglas Bonsall. The *Grange Advocate* was changed to the *PA Grange News* and changed to a color magazine format. The Grange Deputy program was reorganized and the name was changed to Grange Advocates to avoid negative connotations with the word “Deputy”.

In addition to the Grange, Beth has been a Township Planning Commission President, been involved with Penn State Cooperative Extension Board, PA Farm Link, PSU Ag Counsel, teaching Sunday School, freelance writing and owns Mountain View Imaging that includes graphic art work, photography, and framing.

2015 YEAR IN REVIEW

THE ORDER

- The 143rd Annual Session was held in Warren.
- Credentials Committee reported
 - 129 Subordinate Delegates representing 73 Subordinate Granges
 - 53 Pomona Delegates representing 30 Pomona Granges
 - 37 Juniors and 6 Chaperones
 - 80 Guests
 - 299 Total Attendance
- State Archives changed policy and will no longer microfilm Grange records
- Friend of the Grange Award presented to Jim and Betty Diamond, Plumsteadville #1738, Bucks County
- No Granger of the Year award presented as there were no entries
- State Officers basket auction netted \$1,595 for the Grange Foundation plus an additional \$176 from the Youth-Young Adults Department baked goods auction
- The Sixth Degree was conferred on 15 candidates

- Membership awards
 - 1-19 members – Allegheny #1843, Lycoming County – 6 new members
 - 20-49 members – Red Lion #1781, York County – 29 new members
 - 50+ members – Plumsteadville #1738, Bucks County – 10 new members
- Study Committee report recommended that the PA State Grange continue with a full-time Master
- Closed 18 Granges and four consolidated
- Changed the Advocate publication back to the *PA Grange News* magazine format
- Betsy Huber hired as Government Relations Director January 2015
- Held two GOAL seminars conducted by Michael Martin, National Leadership-Membership Director
- Membership – 7,417 Subordinate members in 220 Subordinate Granges including 1,572 Lifetime members, and 26 Associate members. There were 230 Junior members.
- Heritage Quilt Trail has 40 new quilt blocks displayed on Granges and community buildings bringing the total of blocks to over 100

LEGISLATIVE

- Delegates voted to support the establishment of a voluntary GMO-free labeling certification program for “organic” farm products.
- Urged Congress and USDA to put whole milk back into the school lunch program.
- Voted to support efforts to require carbon monoxide detectors in hotel/motel rooms and other places of public housing.
- Approved a resolution asking that tattoo and piercing artists undergo professional training and that parlors be regularly be inspected for safety and cleanliness.
- Delegates voted to support an increase of “in lieu of taxes” payments on state forest and game lands from the current \$3.60 per acre to \$6.00 per acre, to be paid to local municipalities and school districts and the county.
- Delegates approved a resolution favoring the legalization of the use of semi-automatic rifles for hunting.
- The Grange favors amending the Hatch Act to allow federal government employees to run for and be elected to local municipal and/or county offices.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

- The Delegates approved a resolution to require all individuals over the age of 18 secure a clearance under Act 33 and Act 34 in order to work with children and youth under the age of 18.
- Specified that the Bible be the only writing to be used on the altar in Grange meetings

LECTURERS

- 12th Family Festival held at Centre County Grange Fairgrounds
- Mid-Atlantic Lecturers’ Conference held in Galax, VA
- Talent Best of Show Runner-up Jennifer Beamon and Gail Switzer, Berks County to represent PA at National Night of Excellence due to the unavailability of Best of Show Michael Adams, Berks County

DEAF & COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Check for \$1,251.66 presented to Second Harvest Food Bank for the Backpack Program
 - Check for \$700 presented to Dino's Operation Shoebox plus six boxes of collected items during Family Festival
 - A \$500 donation was made to Alex's Lemonade Stand
 - Community Service Reports
 - Under 25 members
 - 1st - Chester Valley #1496, Chester County*
 - 2nd - Sinking Valley #484, Blair County
 - 3rd - Frankfort Springs #1989, Beaver County
 - 4th - Bunker Hill #1368, Lebanon County
 - 26-75 members
 - 1st - Goshen #121, Chester County*
 - 2nd - Hayfield #800, Crawford
 - 3rd - Atlantic #344, Crawford
 - 4th - Hamburg #2103, Berks
 - 76+ members
 - 1st - Ontelaunee #1617, Berks County*
 - 2nd - Big Knob #2008, Beaver County
 - 3rd - Plumsteadville #1738, Bucks County
 - 4th - Mahoning Valley #1649, Lawrence County
 - Pomona
 - 1st - Montour-Northumberland-Union #31*
 - 2nd - Centre #13
 - 3rd - Lehigh-Northampton #68
 - 4th - Bucks #22
- *All first-place reports sent to National Grange
- Donated \$250 to Dogs for the Deaf
 - Donated \$670 plus additional money from Family Activities and half of the money collected from church service to Second Harvest Food Bank for Backpack Program in addition to several boxes of food that was collected.
 - Donated \$300 to Warren County Pregnancy Center plus clothes, blankets and baby items

JUNIORS

- National Grange adopted changes to requirements for Junior Grange membership. It allows for individual Junior members in any Subordinate Grange. The "+1" program allows you to start with just one Junior member and build from there
- Junior Grange Supporter of the Year Derek Snyder, Valley #1360, York County
- National Super JG awarded to Anna Benzio, Beaver County and Mikayla and Tanner Davis, Berks County
- Junior Camp held at Camp Sylvan Hills with 45 campers
- 2015-16 Junior Prince Isaiah Blatt and Princess Mikayla Davis, both of Berks County

YOUTH-YOUNG ADULTS

- Friend of Grange Youth Award - Anna May Nauss, Valley Grange #1360, York County
- National Grange 2014 youth Ambassadors - Cassidy Cheddar, Lancaster County and Derek Snyder, York County
- Lindsay Schroeder served as a Communications Fellow during National Session
- Jennifer Nauss, placed first and Derek Snyder, placed third in the Grange Jeopardy contest at National Grange. Both are from Valley Grange #1360, York County
- Camp held at Camp Sylvan Hills with 16 campers and 35 total attendance
- 2015-16 Ambassadors Hannah Leibensperger and Ryan Berger, Berks County
- 2015-16 Young Couple Robert and Jennifer Beamon, Berks County served for the second year.
- National 2015 Outstanding Patrons Robert and Jennifer Beamon, Berks County

2016 YEAR IN REVIEW

THE ORDER

- The 144th Annual Session was held in Shippensburg
- Credentials Committee reported
 - 130 Subordinate Delegates representing 73 Subordinate Granges
 - 46 Pomona Delegates representing 28 Pomona Granges
 - 27 Junior Members and 5 Chaperones
 - 85 Guests
 - 293 Total Attendance
- Friend of the Grange Award presented to Russell Redding, Secretary of Agriculture for PA Department of Agriculture
- The Sixth Degree was conferred on ten candidates
- State Officers baskets auctioned off for \$2,551.50 for the Grange Foundation Museum Fund
- Grange Family of the Year Jack and Sonja Bell, Logan Grange #109, Centre County
- Granger of the Year Eugene Everly, Carmichaels Grange #1389, Greene County
- One new Grange organized – Log Cabin Unity #2110, Mercer County
- Reorganized Sanborn #2016 and Girard #788, both Clearfield County
- Vince Phillips hired as Legislative Director September 1st
- Membership as of June 30, 2016, including 1,589 Lifetime members and 25 Associate members, 6,941 members in 212 Subordinate Granges. There were 201 Junior members.
- Heritage Quilt Trail – 40 new blocks painted and over 100 blocks mounted on Granges and community buildings

LEGISLATIVE

- Delegates approved a change in policy to encourage PDA, PA Game Commission and USDA/APHIS to manage the population of coyotes, as well as other predator, pest, nuisance and vector species.
- The Grange will oppose any action that would impose a water use fee on agricultural or household private well supplies.
- The Grange supports the full-scale production of industrial hemp.
- The PA State Grange supports maintaining the DEP authority over the application of bio-solids.

- Delegates voted to oppose any action mandating school district consolidation.
- A resolution was approved to support the banning of the use of cell phones while operating a vehicle on public roads.
- The Delegates voted to reverse a policy and asked that all legal notices from local governments be published in local newspapers.
- The Grange requests the Congress include grapes, whole milk, and white potato products in the school lunch program via the 2018 Farm Bill.

LECTURERS

- 13th Family Festival held at Centre County Grange Fairgrounds
- Mid-Atlantic Lecturers' Conference held in OH
- Talent Best of Show Jessica Reyburn, Russellville Grange #91, Chester County will represent PA at the National Night of Excellence
- Community Night Reports
 - Subordinate – Liberty Grange #1780, Lawrence County
 - Pomona – Carol Kushma, Lawrence Pomona #65

DEAF & COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Donated \$200 to Heaven Scent – bloodhounds tracking lost people
- \$700 donated to Ronald McDonald House in Danville plus a car load of items and \$650 in gift cards
- \$1,000 donated to Gift of Life Organization
- Community Service reports
 - Under 25 members
 - 1st - Chester Valley # 1496, Chester County
 - 2nd – Frankfort Springs #1989, Beaver County
 - 3rd – Allegheny # 1843, Lycoming County
 - 4th – Roaring Creek Valley #2041, Columbia County
 - 26-75 Members
 - 1st - Schnecksville #1684, Lehigh County
 - 2nd – Kutztown #1836, Berks County
 - 3rd – Hayfield #800, Crawford County
 - 4th – Harveys Aleppo #1444, Greene County
 - Over 76 members
 - 1st - Big Knob #2008, Beaver County
 - 2nd – Ontelaunee #1617, Berks County
 - 3rd - Plumsteadville #1738, Bucks County
 - 4th - Hookstown #1980, Beaver County
 - Pomona
 - 1st - Centre #13
 - 2nd – Montour-Northumberland-Union #31
 - 3rd – Berks #43
 - 4th - Bucks #22

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

- Donated 125 wraps to Gift of Life

JUNIORS

- Heather Druckenmiller, Valley Grange #1360, York County - Junior Grange Supporter of the Year
- Junior Camp held at Camp Sylvan Hills with 55 campers, 11 helpers, six counselors and ten staff for a total of 82 attendees
- 2016-17 Junior Prince Jeffrey McCartney, Beaver County and Junior Princess Kaylen Leiby, Berks County

YOUTH-YOUNG ADULTS

- Friend of Youth Award Derek Schroeder, Virginville Grange #1832, Berks County
- Young Adult Weekend held at Hershey with 33 in attendance
- Eastern Regional Youth Conference Best of Show in Sign-a-Song was Philip Vonada, Centre County
- Representing the Eastern Regional Youth at National Grange in the Jeopardy Contest were Philip Vonada, Centre County and Gail Switzer, Berks County
- Youth Camp held at Camp Sylvan Hills with 28 campers and a total of 36 attendees
- 2016-17 Youth Ambassadors Sara Benzio, Beaver County and Casey Kerschner, Berks County
- Young Couple program replaced by Outstanding Young Patron. Selected the 2016-17 Outstanding Young Patrons were Philip Vonada, Centre County and Jennifer Nauss, York County

2017 YEAR IN REVIEW

- Master Downey resigned February 17, 2017 due to health reasons. Overseer Wayne Campbell, Perry County, was installed as Master to serve until the 2017 Annual Session.