

Maine State Grange Agriculture Committee Report 2021-22

The Agricultural Committee has met 4 times since October 2021 by zoom or in-person. We currently have 9 members and welcome new members for the coming year!

In fall 2021 the Maine Agriculture in the Classroom (MAITC) Annual Meeting was held virtually, so the committee did not host or prepare a meal. Likewise we did not help to host an AG Day at the Legislature meal in spring 2022. MAITC did present the committee with a scholarship donation of \$500. The Agriculture Trade Show was also held virtually in January 2022. Some of the committee members attended presentations and MAITC hosted a presentation on Zoom.

The scholarship fund has received donations of about \$1200 from The Grange Store at Fryeburg Fair, Maine Agriculture in the Classroom, and the raffle at the State Conference. Gladys Chapman won the raffle basket and Christine Hebert won the second prize of fall bulbs for her garden. Congratulations to them both! Many thanks to everyone that bought tickets (\$165 raised!) and donated funds (\$32 raised!) to support the Agricultural scholarship program. About \$4,500 has been or will be paid out for 2021 and 2022 scholarships, and the available balance is less than in the past. We hope to continue the scholarship program and need donations and fundraisers to do so!

In May the Committee met at headquarters with 7 members present. It was wonderful to see each other in-person. There were 8 applications submitted for scholarships. After careful consideration (2 were found not eligible) the group agreed that 3 applicants stood out from the rest. This year scholarships were awarded to:

- Chantal Cyr from Edward Little High School in Auburn, going into Sustainable Agriculture,
- Amelia Mooney from Lisbon High School, going into Ecology and Environmental Science and,
- Alyssa Parker from Winthrop High School, going into Ecological Forestry.

The group met on Thursday, September 15th to discuss the 2022 state conference on October 20 & 21 at the Auburn Masonic Hall which is behind the Auburn Mall. There will be another raffle basket and Agnes and Bob Nelson will be in charge of the table there. The Agricultural Luncheon will be on Friday and the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry has been asked to speak. There were no 2022 applicants for the Agriculture Enterprise Award. Since the Committee Director will not accept the stipend, and no travel by the group has used the funds, the group decided to use it to give a \$100 cash prize to the 2023 Ag Enterprise winner and also a \$100 cash prize to the Grange that helps nominate them. **SEE a new 2023 application in the packet!**

2022 Fair Exhibit results are being received by the State master. Some fair dates changed and judges were shuffled. Many thanks to all! More information will be available by state convention. Ribbons were mailed to all fairs with Grange Exhibits as requested. Fryeburg Grange Ag Store is moving forward. Sharon and Henry Morton from the committee are busy getting ready for the week of October 2 – 9. Let Sharon know if you would like to volunteer.

The MAITC Annual Meeting will be held at State Headquarters on October 27th from 5:30 – 8:00. The committee is busy planning a ham dinner. We are hoping that this year our event will not be interrupted by the pandemic!

Many thanks to committee member, Karen Hatch-Gagne for helping with the scholarship program this year! 48 High Schools received the application directly by email. Ongoing thanks to Sharon Morton who mails applications for both scholarships and the Ag Enterprise Award to all Granges in January! We surely appreciate you both! And ALL the wonderful committee members!

Be well everyone! Stay warm as the air gets a bit cooler and fall is settling in!



Agriculture Director