

## 2023 Report State Grange Agriculture Committee

In 2023 the Agriculture Committee of the Maine State Grange met at headquarters with 6-8 members present at each meeting. Karen Hatch-Gagne has retired from the committee and we would love to have additional members. If you are interested please let Master Sherry know.

The scholarship fund started at \$5,980.42 this year and 5 scholarships were approved in the spring. Fundraising and donations will be needed to continue this program. The committee voted to have a raffle for a \$100 gift card and a basket at State Grange session. Maine Agriculture in the Classroom has sponsored 1 scholarship annually and the Grange Store at Fryeburg Fair usually contributes. Last year at State session the raffle and donations raised \$375. The winners were Timothy Wilson and Bert Welch. We appreciate everyone's help!

The groups voted to fund 5 exceptional applications for 2023, Winners are:

- Lily Mae Jaffray from Blue Hill to study Pre-Veterinary Science.
- Emma L. Alexander from Dexter to study Forestry,
- Zachary Dean Skidgel from Newport to study Sustainable Agriculture,
- Grace Cassandra VanBuskirk from Thomaston to study Pre-Veterinary Science and,
- Ashley Nicole Stubbs from Addison to study Animal Science.

2023 Fairs and events calendar was mailed by the State master to judges. The Fryeburg Grange Ag Store moved location last year and had a much better location. Volunteers are needed to work during the week of October 1 – 8. Let Sharon know if you would like to volunteer next year.

The group discussed the 2023 state conference on October 20 & 21 (Friday & Saturday this year) at the Auburn Masonic Hall which is behind the Auburn Mall. It will start on Friday after lunch and include Friday dinner banquet and Saturday lunch. The dining room made it difficult to hear a speaker last year, so the group decided instead to just draw the raffle winners. It will be a very busy session this year!

There are no applications for the Agriculture Enterprise Award. The committee voted to discontinue giving a Tree Farmer of the Year award. The Maine Tree Foundation selects the winner and presents the award in January at the Trade Show. There has been little success getting them to accept another plaque in the fall. We will try the Ag Enterprise Award again in 2024 and then decide if this is worthwhile to continue after that.

MAITC supplied over 800 books to classrooms for both virtual and in-person readings this year. The book was "Honeybee" and was very well received by everyone. The committee will host the MAITC Association Annual Meeting on October 26<sup>th</sup> at headquarters from 5:30 – 8:00pm. RSVP at [maitc@maine.gov](mailto:maitc@maine.gov) before October 22 if you would like to attend.

Best wishes to everyone for another good year for Maine Agriculture!



Agriculture Director