

# Enrollment



**Helping a  
new member  
become a  
Granger.**



**Produced by the  
National Action Grange Advisory Committee  
October 2002**

## Are you ready for the next step?

With the completion of the first full year of the Action Grange program and the second series of seminars completed, we are hearing more and more that serious problems are getting fixed and that many Granges are ready to begin membership development.

That is very good news, indeed. What we believe we also are hearing is that many Granges, Action Granges and others that have embraced change, have completed or are completing the following:

- They have renovated and spruced up their Grange halls
- They have improved the quality of their leaders and installed a new selection process
- They have identified one or more community projects that bring recognition to their Grange
- They have selected a membership development team leader and developed a plan for membership growth and retention
- They have completed their first year plan and budget and are working on the next year
- They have purchased *75+ Ways to Attract and Retain Members* and are using the activities to increase attractions and improve retention
- They have used the *9 Help Guides* to date and have put many of the ideas to work

All Granges have access to the materials used by the Action Granges via the National Grange Web site at [nationalgrange.org](http://nationalgrange.org) You can download all Help Guides and the Position Papers that have been helpful in turning around the Grange.

So in this Help Guide, we are going to consider a very specific and important activity related to the “making of a new member.” Now, that may seem a very odd way of looking at help for your Grange. You might ask, “Isn’t membership simply asking a person to become a member, accepting his application and helping the new member through the initiation process?”

We say, NO, this is not the right way to take a non-member and make him, her or the entire family a member of the Grange.

What we are suggesting is that this process of making a Granger is called enrollment and it is one that we need to not only understand, but also put into practice in our Grange.

Read on!





## Here is a second example, perhaps even more relevant.

*In November of 2002, Mike Hargrove, a 19 year old from Port Washington, Oregon decided to join the U.S. Marine Corps. A high school graduate, he had not found working in his community rewarding and has decided to see the world.*

*Most readers will clearly understand this example because it has been documented in scores of films, stories, books and articles. In fact, this process of enrollment has become legendary and even those who have never been in the Marines or in the military know it well.*

*This type of enrollment works for the Marines. The events would not be relevant or appropriate for the Grange but there are many elements of the process that we can at least understand and put similar activities to work in your Grange. We are going to list the enrolling activities here. Please work with your team to identify a comparable activity your Grange could adopt as part of its enrolling activities. Remember, some enrolling activities used by the Marines might not be suitable for your Grange.*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Possible Grange Activity</b>
Recruits are grouped into platoons and assigned a drill sergeant for the duration of basic training	
Recruits are told of the benefits of being a Marine and the process is explained to them	
The long and distinguished history of the Marine Corps, its battles, hero's and legends become well-known to every recruit	
Recruits learn the proper uniform, bearing, badges, the Marine Corp hymn and other symbols of a Marine	
Marines are promised a core set of fighting skills which will produce the nation's elite fighting force	
Marines are taught the pride of being a Marine and how to demonstrate that in different situations	
Recruits are taught important life skills appropriate for the age of most recruits.	
Recruits may choose to learn career skills of their choice	
Recruits learn the importance of education and may earn a high school diploma or college degree as a Marine.	

## Bringing these two examples together

Your leadership team should have gleaned that this process of enrollment is important in two organizations with a lot at stake. Community Granges have a lot at stake as well. Granges that invite a family or an individual to become a member need to understand that when they do so they are promising these new members that they made the right decision in joining and that they will be welcomed in a way that meets their expectations.

What are these expectations? Research among new members indicates that new-member needs are specific:

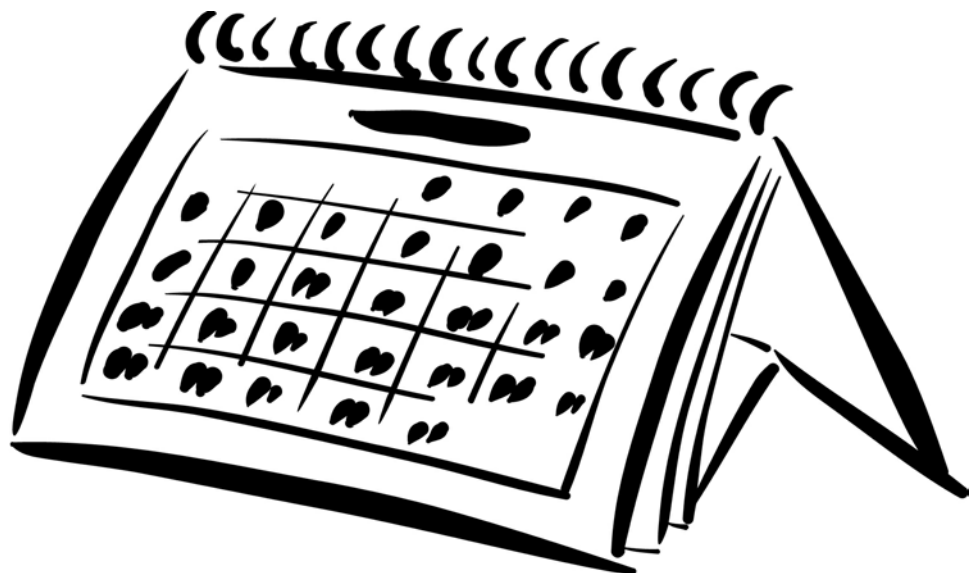
1. They expect the process from application to membership to be smooth and impressive
2. They expect to be initiated in a way that creates pride and is never embarrassing
3. They expect to be helped through any requirements in a clear and concise manner
4. They expect to learn of the benefits of membership both implicit or explicit
5. They expect to learn the history and traditions of the organization and feel pride in membership
6. They expect to meet and make many new friends and renew old friendships
7. They expect the organization to be well-lead and never waste their time
8. They expect the time they spend to be meaningful and significant
9. They expect to be assisted through the first period (months) so they feel like a member
10. They expect to be involved in their community and asked to use their talents and skills in the Grange

These and other expectations should not be looked at as “requirements” of the new member but as opportunities for the Grange. The delivery of these expectations should be under the leadership of the membership team leader in your Grange, but all members need to know that they have an important role in the delivery of many of these expectations.

Let's break these down into specific activities for your membership and leadership team. Let's also assume that the period of enrollment for a new member in a community Grange is one year broken down into three phases.

**Phase 1 From first inquiry through the application and when membership is confirmed;**  
**Phase 2 From initiation through the early meetings or during the first three months; and,**  
**Phase 3 From month three through the first year.**

You can determine the number of days or even months in each phase. On the next pages you will find a series of enrolling activities we would recommend. Study each and then develop those activities that are most important for your Grange and for the enrollment of your new members.



# Enrollment activities for a community Grange

Examine the activities we have identified. In the space after each phase, add additional activities that you would find helpful in your Grange.

## Phase 1 Activities: From first inquiry through the application and when membership is confirmed

- Design and develop a new application that asks potential members to specify reasons for joining, benefits expected, skills and talents and other personal or family data.
- Capture important new member information on computerized membership files.
- Send a letter from the president of your community Grange thanking them for inquiring.
- Send a package of materials that clearly explains the organization.
- Ask a member who knows the family to call and answer their questions.
- Invite the potential members to an open house or Friend's Night.
- Follow up with a second letter or phone call.
- When they express interest, deliver or mail an application with a letter from the president.
- When the application is received, send a thank-you letter, phone or have a member call and add greetings.
- Go over their application and confirm reasons for joining, needs and benefits of membership.
- Explain the near-term schedule and ask them to commit to a special welcoming meeting.
- Post the name and photo of each new member on the Grange hall bulletin board, add information to news letter or other member communications.
- Suggest state president (master) send a note welcoming them to the Grange.
- Schedule a meeting with each new member in their home with the membership chairman and answer questions they may have.
- Consider assigning a mentor for each new member for a period of up to one year.
- Avoid asking them to accept a leadership position during the enrollment process.
- Send them specific information they may need for their initiation and explain in person if possible, the nature of the initiation and eliminate any concerns they may have.
- Encourage at least three members to call the new member, introduce themselves and welcome them to the Grange.
- Ask the mentor to ask the new member about their levels of satisfaction and take any appropriate actions if satisfaction is not high.
- Invite the new members) to a meeting as soon as possible and make sure members know it is their important role to make them feel welcome and at home.

Add your Phase I activities here.

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## Phase 2 Activities From initiation through the early meetings or during the first three months

- Develop a series of phase 2 activities and events that are in line with the initial needs and interest of the new member. Include any of the following:
  - A tour of the Grange hall
  - A visit to the state Grange headquarters
  - A walk through of the National Grange web site
  - A review of Grange apparel or related ceremonial supplies and how to order
  - A review of any electronic or Internet sites that would be appealing
  - A review of the membership and who he knows or wants to get to know
  - A review of the important Grange committees/or teams and see which are of interest
- Begin a dialogue on the ritual used by your Grange and explain how it is important and where it fits in the process of becoming a member.
- Assemble a package of Grange publications or materials developed by your Grange that explain the history of the Grange and share them with the member.
- Share with the member your Grange's plans for the coming year and solicit comments and feedback.
- Begin to learn of the member's interest in the leadership opportunities for committees or Grange teams and explain what is involved and how to proceed.
- Ask each new member how they have enjoyed their new friends in the Grange. Make sure that this important fellowship component (one of the most important reason for joining) has been satisfied or suggest corrective actions.
- If you are active in a state or community fair, explain the important opportunities and dates.
- Explain the degrees and how they occur, what role the new member plays and how it is important in becoming a member.
- Explain the state and national convention and the opportunities for attending.
- Explain the communications from your Grange, the state Grange and National Grange and how or if they are available.
- Arrange a one-on-one meeting with the president of your Grange at a time convenient to all parties.
- Ask the person to become involved in some activity of the Grange in keeping with his or her particular interest, skills or competence.
- Review the new member's attendance during the initial three months and, if inconsistent, determine if there is a problem you can resolve.

Add your Phase 2 activities here.

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