

An Introduction to the Officers of the Grange

The purpose of this ceremony is to introduce the officers and their roles to new members of the Grange. It may be given at any time, but may be especially useful as elections approach. Each officer should stand as s/he speaks. The tools in the Implement Box and the officer symbols are highlighted in many presentations and should be available.

LECTURER: Friends, the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, commonly known as the Grange, is a great, family-oriented fraternity. The lessons of its ritual are expressed by use of symbols drawn from the field and farm home. The axe, the plow, the harrow and the spade are used in the preparation of the soil in spring, and teach us the lesson of faith. The hoe and the pruning knife teach us to keep our minds and thoughts on the pure and honorable. The sickle is used to gather the good crop, so that we might, from our abundance, dispense charity to the needy. The agate is hard and firm, a lasting example of faithfulness, and fidelity.

Some of the officer positions and titles are drawn from the old-time English estate: Master, Overseer, Stewards; some from mythology: Ceres, Pomona and Flora; and some from the world of business: Secretary, Treasurer, and Executive Committee or Board of Directors. We will hear from each of them as they speak to us.

MASTER: The Master of the estate assigned work and maintained order. The Master of the Grange presides at meetings, represents the Grange at community functions, and facilitates the work of the officers, committees and action teams. The gavel is the symbol of the Master's office. My position may also be referred to as President both in and out of the Grange.

OVERSEER: The duty of the Overseer on the estate was to see that the orders of the Master were faithfully transmitted to the laborers. In the Grange the Overseer, or Vice President, assists with the opening and closing ceremony, and takes the Master's place when he or she is absent. I also assist the Master in appointing committees. My symbol of office is also the gavel.

LECTURER: The Lecturer directs the entertainment and educational work of the Grange. It is my challenge to present a program that makes every meeting inspirational and meaningful for all who attend. As we share our talents, our interests, and our knowledge with each other, we all grow into better individuals and more informed citizens of this community. The symbol of my office is the scroll.

STEWARD: The Steward had charge of the tools and supplies on the estate. Similarly, it is my duty to keep the property of the Grange safe and in proper order. My emblem is the spud, an ancient implement used by Stewards in passing through the fields on the estate to eradicate weeds that might have escaped the notice of the laborers. May it remind all of us to remove dissension and strife in our Order and in our lives.

ASSISTANT STEWARD: As the name implies the duty of the Assistant Steward is to assist the Steward in his labors. My duties include the opening of the Bible on our Altar, presenting the flag, and escorting visitors and dignitaries. My emblem is the pruning hook. The spear, beaten into the pruning hook, is emblematic of peace. May it remind each of us to assist in preserving peace in our Order.

LADY ASSISTANT STEWARD: My duties also include opening of the Bible on our altar, presenting the flag, and escorting visitors and dignitaries when recognized by the Master. My emblem is the Shepherd's Crook, a symbol of caring for those who might be in distress or need.

CHAPLAIN: The Chaplain provided spiritual leadership for the families living on the estate. The Chaplain of the Grange participates in the opening and closing of the Grange with prayers, prepares an annual memorial service, and if asked to do so, conducts services to honor our Brothers and Sisters as they are laid to their final rest.

TREASURER: These keys symbolize the trust placed in me as the Treasurer of this Grange. My responsibility is to accept the funds paid, deposit them in a timely manner, and disburse them according to the direction of the membership.

SECRETARY: In addition to taking the minutes of each meeting to insure a record of the history of this Grange, I communicate with community organizations and others as directed by the membership. My duties also include the collection of annual dues from each member, and the reporting accurately of the membership to the State Grange each calendar quarter. You can assist me with my work by reporting all address changes in a timely manner.

GATEKEEPER: On the estate the Gatekeeper's position was at the main entrance, to prevent enemies from entering. In today's Grange my responsibility is that of the official greeter for members and guests alike. Some Granges have changed my office title to Greeter. My symbol of office is the owl.

CERES: In ancient times it was believed by some that Ceres presented to mankind the great gift of grain upon which we depend to such a large extent for our daily living. The symbols of my office are the bundled wheat and the sickle, both are a reminder of God's bounty, and our duty to gather that bounty, carefully and gratefully.

POMONA: It was believed by some in Roman mythology that Pomona presided over the production of fruits, and so growers appealed to her for protection of their trees and bushes for an abundant yield. No tree bears fruit unless it blossoms. May this fruit remind you that the good fruits of life, wisdom and usefulness, result from the blossoms of observation and study.

FLORA: My office title is Flora, and it is my duty to remind you that the beauty and fragrance of flower make life pleasant and teach us that there is another and better world where everlasting spring abides and never-fading flowers.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: The Executive Committee is responsible for the custody of the invested funds of the Grange, and in conjunction with the Master, is authorized, between regular meetings, in time of emergency or need, to act for and in the name of the Grange itself.

(Optional) FINANCE COMMITTEE: It is the duty of the Finance Committee to review the bills as they are presented at each meeting, and to conduct an annual audit of the records of the Secretary and Treasurer in assure the membership that the financial statements are accurate and correct.

MUSICIAN: Music touches the mood of people, increasing joy and happiness in good times, and providing solace in times of trouble and despair. It is said that God hears music above all else. As Grange musician I assist the Lecturer by presenting musical portions of the programs, play for the opening and closing ceremonies, and use my talents to create a warm and cheerful atmosphere for each meeting. Let us close our program with the singing together of the Installation Ode, number 54 in The Grange Songbook, sung to the tune of "America". Please stand as we sing.
