

...you are assigned the important duty of leading in the literary program and the educational work of the Grange." - Installation of Officers, Subordinate Grange Manual - Lecturer

Kansas State Grange Lecturer Program Guide 2026

Kansas Grangers,

I am excited to serve in my third term as the Kansas State Grange Lecturer. In this Program Guide, you will find all of the contests for the 2026 Kansas State Grange Convention. I am always trying to think of new and exciting programs for our Grangers. If there are any updates or changes, they will be sent out and posted on the Kansas State Grange Facebook page and website. This year, there are two new contests: a quilt block contest and America's 250 Time Capsule. Please let me know if there is anything that I can do to support your local Grange with programming. Please note that all contests have a Junior (ages 5-13) and Adult (14+) categories, unless otherwise indicated. Thank you for your interest in the Kansas State Grange Lecturer Program for 2026.

Fraternally,
Mandy Bostwick, Lecturer
Kansas State Grange

Wreath/Door Hanger

Description: Create a handmade wreath or door hanging that reflects your creativity and personal style. Entries must be entirely handcrafted by the participant and designed for display on a door or entryway. Any materials may be used, and the finished piece should be durable, original, and suitable for seasonal or year-round decoration.

Categories

- Holiday (specific to a holiday)
 - Entries in this category should be wreaths or door hangings designed to represent a specific holiday (such as Christmas, Easter, Halloween, Independence Day, etc.). Designs should clearly reflect recognizable symbols, colors, or themes associated with the chosen holiday.
- Seasonal (Winter, Fall, Summer, Spring)
 - Entries in this category should reflect the overall theme of a season rather than a specific holiday. Designs may include elements such as seasonal colors, natural materials, weather themes, or imagery commonly associated with Winter, Spring, Summer, or Fall.
- General/Everyday
 - Entries in this category should be designed for year-round display and not tied to any specific holiday or season. Designs may include neutral themes, inspirational messages, farmhouse or classic styles, or other creative ideas suitable for everyday use.

Lawn Decoration

Description: Create a handmade lawn ornament that reflects your creativity and personality. Entries must be entirely handcrafted by the participant and designed for outdoor display. The ornament may be decorative or themed and can be made from any suitable materials, such as wood, clay, paint, metal, or recycled items. The finished piece should be durable enough for lawn or garden placement and clearly showcase originality, effort, and craftsmanship.

Categories

- Recycled / Upcycled Materials
 - Lawn ornaments created primarily from reused, repurposed, or recycled items.
- Traditional Handmade Craft
 - Ornaments made from materials like wood, clay, paint, fabric, or metal using conventional crafting methods.
- Whimsical or Themed Design
 - Creative or imaginative ornaments with a specific theme, story, or character (e.g., animals, holidays, hobbies, or rural life scenes).

Creative Writing

All creative writing entries must be typed and printed for judging and display at State Convention. Handwritten entries will not be accepted. Entries are encouraged, but not required, to be placed in a report cover for presentation. All submissions should be original work created by the participant and clearly labeled with the participant's name, Grange, and category.

- **Essay Topic:** *Why Rural Communities Matter* (1000 words maximum)
- **Short Story:** *A Day That Changed Everything on the Farm* (1000 words maximum)
- **Poetry:** *The Quiet Strength of Rural Life* (maximum 250 words)
- **America 250 Essay Topics:**
 - Juniors (Ages 5–13): (250 words maximum)
“What Makes America Special to Me”
Share what you like about living in America and your community. You can include family traditions, school, friends, or freedoms that are important to you.
 - Youth (Ages 14–21): (1000 words maximum)
“America at 250: Reflecting on the Past and Looking to the Future”
Discuss what America's 250th anniversary represents, what has shaped the country's history, and what you hope the future will look like for your generation.
 - Adults (Ages 22+): (1000 words maximum)
“The Meaning of America's 250th Anniversary in Today's Society”
Reflect on the historical significance of the United States reaching 250 years, the values that define the nation, and how individuals and communities contribute to its continued growth and identity.

Photo Contest

- A. Photos entered at state shall be entered in physical form.
 - a. Minimum of 4x6 – Maximum of 8x10
 - b. Photos should be mounted on a plain, light colored matboard. 4-H mounting will be accepted. Please do not submit entries in a frame.
- B. Categories below are for all ages. Juniors (5-13) and Adult (14+)
- C. Each individual is limited to entering a one photo per category.
- D. Entries should be no more than one (1) year old.
- E. On the back of mount board should include member name, Grange Name and Number, Division, and Age Category.

Categories

- **Rural Life & Daily Work**
 - Focus on everyday moments that define rural living—farm work, small-town jobs, livestock care, equipment use, early mornings, and hands-on labor that keeps communities running.
- **Community & Traditions**
 - Capture the people and events that bring rural communities together—county fairs, church gatherings, Grange meetings, local parades, school events, and multigenerational traditions.
- **Land & Landscape**
 - Showcase the natural beauty of rural America—farmland at sunrise or sunset, rolling hills, open prairies, dirt roads, barns, seasons changing, and wide-open spaces.
- **Faces of Rural America (Portraits)**
 - Highlight the people who live and work in rural areas—farmers, youth, elders, families, and community members. Focus on expressions, stories, and the character behind the people.
- **America at 250: Past, Present, and Future**
 - Capture a photo that represents what America means to you as we approach the nation’s 250th anniversary. Entries may reflect rural life, community, traditions, landmarks, or everyday moments, along with a brief caption explaining how the image connects to America’s past, present, or future

America 250 Time Capsule

Description: Participants create a small time capsule that represents America today and what it means to them. Entries should include 3–5 items (real or symbolic) that reflect American life, values, community, or personal identity, along with a brief explanation (can be written or verbal) of each item’s significance.

Examples of Items:

- A small handmade object or symbol (flag, craft, model)
- A map, ticket, or program from a meaningful place/event
- A symbolic item representing freedom, community, or rural life
- A personal artifact or replica that reflects daily life today

Display Option:

Participants may present their time capsule in a decorated box, jar, or container.

Judging Focus:

Creativity, relevance to America 250, originality of items chosen, and overall presentation.

ABC Reading Challenge**Rules**

- Choose one book for each letter of the alphabet, based on the title (e.g., "A" for Anne of Green Gables) Titles starting with an article (The, A, An) do not count as the beginning (e.g. A Wrinkle in Time would be a 'W' book)
- **New in 2026:** A "number" challenge was added to include books that start with a number (i.e 1984).
- No Repeats: Each letter must have a different book—no doubling up.
- All Genres Welcome: fiction, non-fiction, graphic novels, and audiobooks count.
- Books must be read September 28, 2025 - September 18, 2026 (the start of State Convention) Track Your Progress by coloring in the letter and writing the book title on the corresponding line. Tracking paper may be downloaded from the Kansas State Grange Website or contact Mandy Bostwick, Kansas State Grange Lecturer.

Holiday Treat Contest

Show some Grange hospitality and win a People's Choice award with your favorite holiday treat.

Rules:

- A. All entries will be served to attendees of the convention, with votes taken and tallied for the winner of each category.
- B. Holiday treats can be, but not limited to,
 - A. Cookies
 - B. Candies
 - C. Snack Mix
- C. Please bring your treat in at least 25 snack sized bags, labeled with the name of your entry EX: "Harvest Crunch Mix"
- D. Please also bring a list of ingredients/recipe to be posted above your holiday treat.

How Judging Works:

1. Voters will be given a ballot with all three categories.
2. Voters may choose their top favorite from EACH category
3. There will a people's choice for each category.