



Aromas Community Grange

#361 - A Designated "Action Grange"

2007 Year-End Newsletter

Happy New Year!

2007 was a great year for the California Grange. The Aromas Community Grange led the way, aided by the Marshall Grange and other Granges all around the state to open up the doors to Grange halls and invite new folks in. The membership project that started last year with the Statewide Grange Talent Contest is continuing this year and will be even bigger and better.



Last October in the Talent Contest finals held in Sacramento at the State Grange Convention two entries from the Aromas Community Grange were featured along with another local act from the Santa Cruz Live Oak Grange—all made an incredible showing for our Region #5. We thought Lily Elder, Ian Hunter and Jay Smith (above) stole the show with their hilarious rendition of "The Arkansas Traveler". They took third place in the 15-and-over category and won \$175. Los Destacados (below), an incredibly talented young jazz/blues band from North County High School won second place and received a check for \$250.



One of the best stories to come out of the show was about Stephan Warmuth (below). Stephan won second place at the Region 5 semi-finals at the Corralitos Grange, and was invited to represent the region at the State Convention when the first place winner wasn't available the weekend of the final show. He regaled the crowd with funny and informative stories about his instrument, the bagpipe,

and then played a flawless piece to win the adult division. We were amazed and pleased to learn recently that the \$400 first place prize money allowed Stephan to purchase a bagpipe of his own—something he had actually never had!



This month the Aromas Grange is 95!

The Hall is in pretty good shape for a building that is coming up on its 100th birthday. We arranged for another coat of finish on the hardwood floors this year and refinished the floor of the stage. The roof began leaking when the rains got heavy this fall, but it has been patched we will re-roof all but the back section over the kitchen this spring. We are waiting to do the kitchen roof as a separate project as we have some ambitious plans for that end of the building.



We'd like a little more elbowroom in the kitchen

We will have to reframe our back wall and perhaps add a few additional feet of space to the kitchen, since we have to replace that section of the roof with a new beam and rafters. But the best part is that the south-facing section of the roof is the perfect place to put a solar system, and this would be the right time to add one. We will have to do some serious fundraising for this project so please pitch in when the time comes.

Adopt-A-Family—It's a joy to give...

Once again the team of Aromas elves brought a brighter Christmas to seven local families with a total of 20 children. This program has been going for several years and is a very rewarding community partnership. The Aromas Eagles, Aromas Hills Artisans and Aromas Community Grange all pitched in, donating money and time. This year we made wrapping all the gifts one of the highlights of our holiday potluck dinner.



Scholarship News

The Teressie White Memorial Scholarship Foundation, which now also administers the newly formed Ginette Gailey Scholarship, had a great year in '07. We were extremely fortunate to have Linda Bjornson's daughter, Susan Boye-Lynn, recommend our scholarship fund to the Boye family foundation. They gave us a grant of \$5,000, which helped us exceed our fundraising goal for the year. We were able to give away \$2,750 in scholarships this year to three deserving students.

And more great grant news...

Jennifer Colby just presented the Aromas Grange with another check from the Community Foundation of Monterey "Communities Advancing the Arts" project. This is the third and final year of grant availability for organizations that support art and artists in rural areas of the county. Along with a check for \$1,600 we have been promised a DVD projector for the Hall. What a great boost for our Grange movie nights.!

Don't Miss Movie Night!

Friday, January 18th the Aromas 4H Solar Project will present: "Who Killed the Electric Car?". In addition to a great documentary film, there will be an actual electric car and a biodiesel vehicle, along with information and discussion about green alternatives for our community transportation and energy needs. Be sure to come, this promises to be a great, fun and informational eveningand the start of a great Grange film series.



Youth Concert Series Begins in February

One of the great outcomes of the Talent Contest here in Aromas was that Alex Rayburn and the rest of the Los Destacados group are now Grange members. Alex came up with a great idea that we are proud to be able to support - a Youth Concert Series. The first concert is scheduled for Friday evening, February 22nd. Alex is lining up several bands to play for the evening, one of which will be his own Los Destacados. If all goes as planned we will be hosting youth concerts every couple of months, which will bring a lot of young people and good energy into our Hall. If you are interested in helping with the organizing of this ongoing music series, give Loren Jones a call—726-7025.

Steve & Cindy return in March

Make sure to get this one on your calendar: Renowned songwriter Steve Gillette and his talented partner Cindy Magnussen (below) will be performing at the Grange Hall on Friday, March 21st from 6 pm to 8 pm. This wonderful duo has a delightfully warm and entertaining presence on stage. They are both superb musicians, and they play off of each other vocally, instrumentally and intellectually with an ease that comes from a lifetime of artistic collaboration. They have played the Grange several times and have become an Aromas favorite. Call Doug for tickets at 726-2322



New Grange Officers

The Grange elected new officers in November that were installed with full regalia by our own Clyde Gailey at the January meeting. It is wonderful to have new people stepping up into leadership roles in the Grange and we welcome their new energy. We are very excited to have Loren Jones as our President for the next two years. Other new officers: Trish Duarte as Secretary and Ted Anderson as Treasurer. Paul Lapidus has moved up to Executive Vice President and Head of Community Development, and Michelle Faeth is taking over as Lecturer. James Kmetovic is continuing as the Grange Chaplain and Rich Saxe as the Hall Steward. Bill Hunter is a new Grange member and our new Grange Musician and has some great ideas for our Grange Concert series. Watch for more live music at Grange events—coming soon!



Loren Jones, the new Grange President, and his wife Crystal

Ongoing Voter Education at the Grange

The Aromas Grange held its first of three voter informational meetings on January 7th, in partnership with the League of Women Voters of the Salinas Valley. The League of Women Voters is partnering with the Grange all over the state to provide non-partisan voter education in this most important election year. Look for 2 more of these informational meetings before both the June and November elections, along with updates concerning the future of the Aromas Post Office. Contact Linda Murdock for more information about the possible closing of the Aromas Post Office and what we can do about it.

Upcoming Events...

Candlelight Contra Dance February 9th

Lynn Ackerson will call the dances, with Joe Weed, Chris Jong & Peter Spicer providing the tunes.

Youth Concert February 22nd

Come hear great music from local bands!

Community School Foundation Fundraiser February 23th

Once again the Aromas/San Juan schools will benefit from this gala evening of fabulous food with live art auction. Proceeds directly benefit our local schools.

Celtic Festival March 9th

The Celtic Festival returns! Come for great homemade corned beef and cabbage, try your hand at the Haggis Toss, take a turn at the Blarney Contest, and see the parades of faeries and leprechauns. There will be music and costumes, harpists and pipers, Irish dancers and fun for old and young.

Statewide Grange Talent Contest April 19th

Call 726-3609 to enter or help out. Winners go to the regional semi-finals in September. Final contest is at the State Grange Convention in Sacramento.

Aromas Live! April 24th at 7 pm Come see the amazing talent that lives in this little town. Be early for best seating, call 726-3609 to get in the line-up.