



"Whitepine Whispers"

News of Whitepine Grange #102

9 Faro Lane, Trout Creek, MT 59874

Published by Friends of Whitepine Grange

April 2020

The sign is up!!

The new sign is up, making our little white building much more identifiable to everyone traveling on Hwy 200.

The sign itself was purchased from the Sanders County Ledger. Don Manning built the green frame and hung it in a highly visible location on the north end of the building.

This marks the completion of one project on the big "rejuvenation list." There are many others. If you'd like to be on the "fix-up committee," please email Jan Manning at sandersagility@gmail.com. Now would be a GREAT time to invest some "sweat equity" and show off your carpentry, painting, or landscaping skills!



Thank you, donors!

The Grange officers would like to thank our supporters for their thoughtful donations during the past couple of months which have been financially difficult.

Because dog classes and dance classes were all cancelled, there has been no rental income at all since mid-March. This all happened at a time when big bills for utilities and insurance were coming due. The COVID-19 fallout has been hard on everyone, and the Grange is no exception.

Hence, it is with deep gratitude that we mention recent donations from Joe Altman, Beth Chestnut, Ron and Linda Weygint, Jan Harris, and Kathy Hassan. We appreciate you being there for us, as we hope to be there again for you in the near future!

Calendar

The Grange's calendar is blank at the moment due to the COVID-19 restrictions on public social gatherings. As soon as we get the okay, we'll be scheduling dog classes, dance classes, parties, potlucks, reunions, craft classes, and whatever else you want at Whitepine Grange, your neighborhood community center!

Rent the Grange

Planning a bazaar? A party or potluck? Holding a class? Need a meeting place? Ask about renting Whitepine Grange #102 for your event. It's clean, convenient, and it's extremely economical. Groups may rent the facility for as little as \$25 a day. For info, call Jan, 406-827-6385.



Those old theater chairs are gone

Gone but not forgotten are the old red theater chairs that once lined the walls of the main hall at Whitepine Grange #102. The chairs had been there for decades, having been re-homed from the old Masonic Temple in Thompson Falls many years ago. Most of the chairs were falling apart and had holes in the upholstery.

We tried selling them on eBay, Craig's List, and Sanders County Online Yard Sale and had no bidders, even at near give-away prices. Finally we decided to gift them to anyone who'd take them out of there. Maurita Crew, Adventist School principal, offered to take several sets for an old barn she's fixing up on her Trout Creek farm. The remaining chairs were claimed by a man from Libby. It was quite a chore to disassemble them sufficiently to get them out the door. He intends to fix them up, reupholster them in bright yellow, and then...well, he's not sure!



We are now raising funds to purchase nice, clean, comfy plastic folding chairs, which run \$25-30 each. We need to replace about 36 chairs. If you can help, please send a check to:

Whitepine Grange 102, c/o Peggy Carlson
35 Willow Lane
Trout Creek, MT 59874

"Friends of Whitepine Grange" are valued at times like these

The March 17 "Friends of Whitepine Grange" organizational meeting was, of course, cancelled due to the COVID-19 advisories, but this is only a "pause" button in our ongoing program to rejuvenate Whitepine Grange as a neighborhood community center.

Here is the plan to form our group:

1. Reschedule an organizational meeting when the time is right.
2. Designate officers for our group: a president, secretary and treasurer.
3. Accept cash donations to "Friends of Whitepine Grange" and open a savings account under that name.
4. Draft a constitution and bylaws
5. Apply for 501.c.3 status with the IRS.
6. Actively pursue major fund-raising to pay for improvements to the building. These will include things like a new roof, new siding, porch and railing maintenance, interior

painting, installation of LED fluorescent lighting, kitchen remodeling, bathroom reflooring, basement cleaning, new signage, landscaping and more. These will be labors of love funded by donations and completed by volunteers. The result should be the refurbishment of an historic neighborhood building that will serve future generations as it has served preceding generations for many decades.

As a reminder....you don't need to pay dues to be considered a "Friend of Whitepine Grange," as this group is not directly affiliated with the official Grange organization. All you need is an active interest in this community project.

Questions? Suggestions?

Shoot them to:

Jan Manning, sandersagility@gmail.com

Your involvement is needed and appreciated!!

“So, who actually owns the Whitepine Grange building?”

The building at 9 Faro Lane in Trout Creek is actually owned by the Montana State Grange. Should the Whitepine Grange organization fail to maintain its required minimum membership of 13 paid members per year, the state organization can close the building or simply sell it.

Upkeep and maintenance of the building are the sole responsibility of members of local Whitepine Grange 102. **They receive no financial assistance** for this from the state or national Grange organization. Because Grange membership has dwindled all over the country in recent years, more and more Granges are “folding.” Whitepine Grange 102 still has sufficient membership (barely) to stay active. It is responsible for paying its own insurance, utility bills and maintenance expenses. By national Grange regulation, all current membership dues (\$30/year) go directly to the national organization. No money is retained at the local level. Hence, Whitepine Grange 102 must generate its own income in order to pay the bills. With the building in its current state of disrepair, it’s difficult to attract enough renters to even pay the light bill.

Meet Artreyu, one BIG puppy!

This is Artreyu, a Caucasian Ovcharka puppy

belonging to Thalia Dalton of Libby. This photo was taken last winter when Artreyu was a baby attending “Puppy Preschool” classes at Whitepine



Grange. Those classes helped young puppies learn how to get along with other dogs in other environments...excellent developmental training for a guard dog like Artreyu who will grow up to be 180 pounds!

Puppy classes like these at the Grange are on hiatus as we await the end of the COVID-19 restrictions.

Hence the need for a separate supportive group like “Friends of Whitepine Grange.” As a “Friend,” you can work from the outside, without joining the actual Grange, to raise funds and help with the upkeep and repairs necessary on the building itself.

Working together, we can establish ourselves as a 501.c.3, meaning we can seek and/or make tax deductible donations. The public is always more likely to donate to an organization that has established itself as a legitimate tax-exempt group. Whitepine Grange 102 is NOT a 501.c.3, but “Friends of Whitepine Grange” can easily become one. (See our plan on page 2.) This will greatly enhance our fund-raising efforts and we’ll be able to afford those costly repairs that the historic building desperately needs.

The building at 9 Faro Lane is more than an historic landmark. It has “good bones” and can serve another several generations of Whitepine and Trout Creek neighbors if we work together to provide it some TLC.

Until the time when “Friends of Whitepine Grange” becomes a 501.c.3, you can still make donations (they just won’t be tax deductible) and send them directly to Whitepine Grange 102, c/o Peggy Carlson, the treasurer. Rest assured your donations will be well spent in a “most needed” priority.

Want to be a “Friend” of Whitepine Grange? There is no fee and no obligation. All we want is your name, contact info, and your interest in preserving the building as a multipurpose gathering place for our rural community. Please email Jan Manning (if you have not already done so) at sandersagility@gmail.com. Thank you!!

Remember when Whitepine Grange was a polling place for our neighborhood precinct?

The first time I ever stepped into a Grange building was in 2008, as a new Montana resident voting in my first election here. All my life I’d heard about “The Grange” and seen movies where folks always gathered at “The Grange” for town meetings or Saturday night dances. Now I was actually voting in my very own neighborhood Grange Hall! That’s a special memory for me!



The Whitepine Grange building has created lots of memories for people in this area. Please share your favorite! Email it to Jan Manning at sandersagility@gmail.com and we may include it in the next edition of “Whitepine Whispers.”