

Message From Executive Director Michael Chrisley



Don't Miss the Convention in Hampton!

We are so thankful for all your hard work in communities this past year. As we approach the holiday season let's continue to do what we do best by remembering those who are not as fortunate as we are. That's easy for Ruritans. It is an extension of what we do all year long.

We are preparing for our annual convention in Hampton, Virginia. I have said it many times and I'll say it again, our conventions are like a big family reunion. Come see all your old friends and make some new ones while we take care of important Ruritan business. We have great entertainment and speakers. There are important bylaws changes and of course we will elect our new leaders. Our convention is sure to motivate, entertain, and inform you. You can find information on our convention activities throughout this issue of Ruritan.

I was fortunate to come to work for Ruritan in August 1980. It is amazing how fast 38 years can go by. I have gained so much from my experiences working for the best community service club in America. I will hold our program of service up to any other program in the industry. We have a dedicated group of volunteers that give tirelessly of themselves to make sure that the local community is served.

I was also fortunate to sign a five-year contract with the board just a couple of years ago. However, time does what it always will and passes quickly. I currently have only 27 months left on this contract. In this issue you will find an advertisement for the

position of Deputy Executive Director. I hope to hire and work with an individual for the next two years or so and create a good candidate for my replacement. One of the things we say all the time is that one of our most important responsibilities is to find and train a potential replacement for ourselves. That is what I hope to do. It is part of a wise move by the board of directors to focus on succession planning with regard to staff. If you are interested in this position please understand it would require you to relocate to the Dublin, Virginia area. It is also not a guarantee that you will be the successor Executive Director, but could be a solid candidate.

In my remarks to the convention delegates every year I always say "any year that there are Ruritan clubs and members serving communities, it is a good year". That is true again this year. If you have read my previous articles you will know that while there are still a significant number of clubs and members serving local communities that there are not as many as there used to be. That continues to be a problem. Early statistical information reveals that this year's membership and club losses are similar to every year in the past 15 or 20 years. Unfortunately we will lose over 800 members net this year ending September 30. An 800 member loss is bad enough when taken alone, when combined with years of similar losses it is exponential. We have to keep our eye on the ball with regard to recruiting new members and building new clubs. It is the most critical issue facing Ruritan. If you need our assistance in any way please ask. We are ready and willing to help your club grow or to help you form a new club.

Hampton Convention Mini Schedule

Wednesday, January 16, 2019

Board of Directors Meeting (1 p.m.)
Sgt-at-Arms Meeting (8 p.m.)

Thursday, January 17, 2019

2019 Governors Training (8:45 a.m.)
Sharing is Caring Dinner (5 p.m.)
Opening Ceremony (6:30 p.m.)

**Dinner and Opening ceremony will be in different ballrooms

Friday, January 18, 2019

Business Session with
Veterans Speaker (9 a.m.)
First Lady Linda's Lunch (12 p.m.)

Friday, January 18, 2019

****Please note that delegate certification closes at noon (12 p.m.) on Friday****

Voting (2-5 p.m.) (Note: those with special physical needs and/or handicaps vote first.)
Workshops (3-5 p.m.)
Foundation Live Auction (7:30 p.m.)

Saturday, January 19, 2019

Business Sessions with awards (9 a.m.)
Workshops (2-4 p.m.)
Installation Banquet (6 p.m.)

Sunday, January 20, 2019

Church Service (7:30 a.m.)