

News From Ruritan: ROCKINGHAM District

PORT REPUBLIC HOSTS ANNUAL EVENT



Port Republic held their 20th Annual Veterans Dinner on November 7, 2023, with 37 veterans, guests, and members in attendance. The ladies of Grace Episcopal Church served a delicious meal. The special guest speaker was Colonel Tom Harkins.

RILEYVILLE SHARES GIFTS WITH ANGELS

Rileyville delivered Angel Tree gifts to Springfield Elementary School for 15 Angels. Pictured (l-r) are Pam Hanson, Dennis Donak, Michaela Mason, and Ahdays Whittaker. Not pictured, Project Chair Stacy Mason.



News From Ruritan: POTOMAC District

MAUGANSVILLE SHARES PRIDE

Maugansville members placed American flags in the community park and along the highway in observance of Veteran's Day.



News From Ruritan: POTOMAC District

JEFFERSON MD HOSTS COMMUNITY TRADITION

Jefferson MD, recently held its 120th community hog butchering. The event began in 1962 and has continued every year. They have had several talented coordinators over the years, from Berkeley Pearson to Larry Jones, Sam Pearson, and Price Kaler, along with the support of members and volunteers. All the meat is sold by pre-order, and the event serves as one of the club's biggest fundraisers, with proceeds primarily used for other community service projects. A country breakfast was held on the morning of the sale, with fresh sausage, pudding, hominy, sausage gravy, pancakes, eggs, country ham, and more. They also had help from Brunswick HS Random Acts of Kindness Ruri-Teens.



LARRY WAYNE CASSELL



Larry Wayne Cassell, 76, of Jefferson, passed away peacefully surrounded by his wife and two daughters on Thursday, February 15, 2024. Larry was born on August 31, 1947, in Frederick, son of Vernon M. Sr. and Mildred Sensenbaugh Cassell.

Larry graduated from Middletown High School in 1965 and Salisbury State College in 1969, where he was voted Mr. SSC and served as Class president. He continued his education by earning a master's degree at Shippensburg University, PA, in 1972. After that, Larry continued his studies at the University of MD, completing all coursework except for the dissertation work for his doctorate.

Larry began his teaching career at Urbana Elementary School, then moved to Myersville Elementary. He quickly became Assistant Principal at Thurmont Middle School. He then served as Principal at Wolfsville, Waverly, Walkersville Elementary, and Middletown Middle, ending his career at Ballenger Creek Elementary School. He retired in 2004 after 35 years. He mentored many new teachers and student teachers from Mt. Saint Mary's University during his many years. In 2003, Larry received the Washington Post Distinguished Educational Leadership Award.

News From Ruritan: POTOMAC District

Larry's community service involvement began in college when he served in Circle K, a branch of Kiwanis. After returning to Frederick County, he started his involvement in the Braddock Heights Optimist Club and earned an Outstanding Leadership award as club president.

Larry moved to the Springview neighborhood of Jefferson in 1977 and joined the Jefferson Ruritan Club shortly after. He also volunteered with several community fire stations. Larry received special permission to respond to emergency fire calls while working as a principal in the small community of Wolfsville. Once, the entire school student population watched as Mr. Cassell actively responded to an emergency call. Larry also had certification as an EMT.

Larry's Ruritan career began in 1978 at the Jefferson Ruritan Club. He held many offices in his local community club, including president and club secretary, for over 25 years. As a member of the Ruritan Club, Larry was also very active in the yearly Jefferson Carnival. With his continued commitment to community service, he held leadership positions as Governor of the Potomac District, comprising 45 clubs. He later became a National Ruritan Director from 2015 through 2017, and in 2018, Larry served as National President-Elect. The highlight of his Ruritan career was being elected National President in 2019. This involved many club visits throughout the eastern United States, where he and his wife, Nelda, enjoyed visiting and meeting fellow Ruritans.

His commitment was recognized via these notable awards: Tom Downing Fellow in 2001, Potomac District Governor Appreciation of Service Award in 2014, Outstanding National Director of 2016, and Ruritan Forever member in 2016.

He was a Trinity United Methodist Church member after being raised in the Centennial United Methodist Church in Frederick.

Nelda C. and Larry were married for 54 ½ years. During these many years, Larry and Nelda enjoyed skiing and camping trips. They also traveled to all 50 states and over 40 countries. Larry also enjoyed reading, golfing, visiting the beach, crabbing, and fishing in the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean.

Larry was not only a dedicated husband but also a loving father of two daughters, Laura and Emily. He never missed a soccer game, swim meet, piano recital, or dance recital. Some of his proudest moments were the weddings of his daughters and the arrival of all four of his grandsons. Now better known as "PapPap," he most recently enjoyed attending his grandson's cross-county track events, ice hockey, baseball, soccer, and lacrosse games. He has genuinely been adored by all four of his grandsons.

He is survived by his three older brothers, Vernon M. (Ruth Ann), Harold (Sheila), and James (Beth); his wife, Nelda; daughter Laura, husband Randy; grandsons AJ and Zak; daughter Emily, husband JT; grandsons Brooks and Bodie; nieces and nephews; and many cousins. He was preceded in death by his parents, Vernon M. Sr. and Mildred Sensenbaugh Cassell, and beloved granddaughter, Allie.

Larry was the life of the party, always surrounded by friends and family. He very much enjoyed dancing, noting the Electric Slide as his favorite. Memorial Donations may be made to the Community Foundation of Frederick County, MD, via frederickcountygives.org in the name of the Ballenger Creek Elementary School fund (established upon his retirement) or to the Jefferson Ruritan Scholarship fund.

News From Ruritan: ALBEMARLE District

HALL CONTINUES ANNUAL PROJECT

Hall assembled 86 fruit baskets to be distributed in the community for Christmas. This is an annual community service project for the club.



The club hosted the Eure Volunteer Fire Department for an appreciation dinner. Club President Bud Eure presented Fire Chief Ed Story with a donation of \$2000. The club celebrated Earth Day by hosting a roadside cleanup in their community.



DISTRICT HONORS MILESTONES

Several Albemarle District clubs were recently recognized for their years of service. Congratulations to South Mills (70 years), Durants Neck (75 years), Newland-Providence (75 years), and Gatesville (85 years).



News From Ruritan: ROANOKE District

BEAR GRASS CELEBRATES MILESTONE

Bear Grass recently celebrated their 75th anniversary. 2023 National President Mike Morrison, National Director Melody Davis, and Roanoke District cabinet members joined with friends, and families to honor the club's achievements.



George "Tom" Holliday was presented with the club's 2023 Ruritan of the Year Award for his unselfish work, outstanding dedication, and service to his club and community.

ROBERSONVILLE HOSTS VETERANS

Robersonville hosted a Veterans Banquet for local veterans at the Filling Station Restaurant. Each veteran in attendance shared their branch and area where they were served.



The club's Ruritan of the Year was presented to Tommy Whichard (pictured left with Tyler Warren.)

News From Ruritan: ROANOKE District



The club helped some local residents by building a ramp that allows easier access to their houses. Pictured is the ramp team with the finished projects.



The club recently held their 68th annual consignment auction fundraiser with barbeque plates available at concessions.



News From Ruritan: ROCKY MT - DURHAM District

BENVENUE HONORS DEDICATION

Benvenue Club President Fran Bunn recently recognized club member Donnie Perry for 51 years of perfect attendance.



News From Ruritan: ROCKY MT - DURHAM District

EFLAND HONORS SERVICE

Efland has named Miguel Castaneda as the club's Ruritan of the Year. Miguel was recognized for his service and dedication to the club in taking on the responsibility of maintaining the club buildings and managing the building rentals.

The club also participated in the Military Missions in Action project by assembling and sending out care packages to members of the U.S. Armed Forces. Jana Murdock-Doherty coordinated the project.



Efland recently hosted their annual rodeo, selling out on both nights!



MCCULLERS AWARDS CLUB RURITAN OF THE YEAR



McCullers closed out the year with its annual Christmas banquet. Amy Eggers and Tina Carter were honored as co-recipients of the club's Ruritan of the Year. Although both are employed full-time, they contributed significantly to the Club's success in 2023. Amy (left) and Tina (right) are pictured with Club President Mark Millikin.

REDWOOD HONORS VETERANS

Redwood NC continues their tradition of honoring veterans in several ways. They recently presented a donation to Durham VA Medical Center Voluntary Services Chief Kendra Moden. They also hosted a guest speaker from NC Serves, an organization that works with veterans and their families



transitioning to civilian life. The club invited local veterans to a catered meal to celebrate Veterans Day. During the holidays, the club collected toys for the Army National Guard toy drive and made a donation to help with the purchase of additional items.



News From Ruritan: **ROCKY MT - DURHAM District**



The club recently prepared and sold almost 1600 quarts of Brunswick stew. Proceeds from the fundraiser help support the club's scholarship fund, as well as donations to the Durham VA Voluntary Services, Emergency Chaplains organization, Redwood Volunteer Fire Dept, the National Guard Christmas toy drive, Durham Rescue Mission, and more.



SILK HOPE CELEBRATES ACHIEVEMENT

Silk Hope celebrated their 70th anniversary in April, with several special guests in attendance including National President Robin Davenport, Past National Presidents Millard Thacker and wife Marty, Linward Hedgspeth and wife Anne, District Governor Marshall Ross and wife Geneva, and Chatham County Sheriff Mike Roberson and wife Annette. Following the invocation by Zone Governor Johnny Johnson, a delicious meal was provided by the ladies of Browns Chapel Methodist Church. Entertainment was provided by the New Direction Bluegrass Gospel Band. Fifty-year members William Earl Perry, Rocky Cook, and Elton Cook were recognized for their service to the club and community. Rocky also shared a brief history of the club.



DISTRICT SUPPORTS TEACHERS

Rocky Mount-Durham District Cabinet voted to support the 8th-grade teachers of Saint Francis of Assisi Franciscan School by covering the costs of taking their classes to visit Washington DC. District Secretary and Assigned National Director Ron Reid (left), who also substitutes at Saint Francis, presented the donation and a thank you card to staff members Ines Morita, Patsy Thieken, Jason Kreeger, and Kristin Dellasega.



News From Ruritan: **ROCKY MT - DURHAM District**

LYNN'S CROSSROADS KEEPS FOCUS ON COMMUNITY

Lynn's Crossroads recently updated their clubhouse with beadboard, chair rail molding, and paint ahead of hosting the Rocky Mount-Durham District Convention. The convention guest

speaker was William "Bill" A. Robinson. Bill was a POW for seven and a half years, the longest period an enlisted serviceman was held as a POW. Geneva Ross was named as the District's Ruritan of the Year.

The club also hosted a special Veteran's Dinner and program. Each veteran was presented with a challenge Coin and a star from a retired American flag. The club also prepared

Christmas stockings filled with craft kits, crayons, markers, toys, books, and stuffed animals.

The stockings were delivered to the Ronald McDonald House in Durham.



March was a busy month with a barbeque fundraiser and a Spring Egg Hunt. The club donated 50 lbs. of barbeque, slaw, and potatoes to the Durham



Rescue Mission to help with a meal. Club members prepared 24 Easter baskets for Ronald McDonald House Durham-Wake and provided enough

barbeque and sides to feed all 46 families staying there. The club members also took part in a roadside clean-up and cleared 24 bags of trash. In April, the club hosted a Spring Vendor Fair with over 20 vendors.



News From Ruritan: ROCKY MT - DURHAM District

TEMPERANCE HALL BUILDS ON SERVICE

Temperance Hall recently honored one of their founding members with a Ruritan Forever. Bobby Proctor (center) helped charter the club in 1966 and remains a very active and much-valued member.



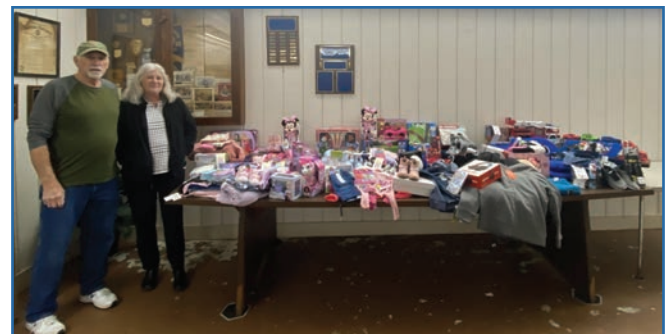
The club built three handicap ramps in January and February. They have partnered with three local churches to build ramps for families in need. These ramps are built with funds raised by the club and Community Christian Service at no cost to the individual. Pictured is the ramp built for a young man who is wheelchair-bound with cerebral palsy. With this ramp being built, this young man was able to come home for good.



News From Ruritan: GREENVILLE-GOLDSBORO District

PINETOWN KEEPS A SECRET

Pinetown sponsored Secret Santa for 12 children from The Salvation Army Angel Tree. Pictured are Club President Dale Fawver and Teresa Fawver.



WHARTON STATION CELEBRATES 50TH



Wharton Station is celebrating its 50-year anniversary. Pictured is Grady (Buddy) Harris, the last surviving charter member. Buddy was honored as the club's Ruritan of the Year.



News From Ruritan: CAPE FEAR District

JOHNSONVILLE SHARES GIFTS

Johnsonville assembled treat bags stuffed with candy and small personal items for the local dialysis center. They helped their community during the holidays with



gifts of Thanksgiving baskets, Christmas dinner boxes, and fruit baskets.

The club also welcomed their first youth member, Shelby Webb.



Johnsonville kicked off the new year by donating over 30 floor pillows to students at Johnsonville Elementary School, which they can use while reading and learning. The club also welcomed new members Yvonne and John Carbonaro and Carol



and Rick Foster, pictured with President Mike Lancaster.



The club delivered supplies to the Fisher House, a home on Fort Liberty that provides free lodging for families of service members and veterans receiving medical care. They also hosted a pancake breakfast, and Valentine's and Easter goody bags were provided for patients at the local dialysis center.

The club hosted the members of Spout Springs Emergency Services for a homemade lunch of chili and soup with all the fixings. Club President Mike Lancaster presented Fire Chief Alan Jarvis with a supply of Rudy bears. The club also hosted Scout Pack 713's annual Pinewood Derby. Nutritious food and fruit baskets were made for families who needed a little help with Easter dinner, and the 5th Annual Community Yard Sale rounded out a busy start to 2024.



News From Ruritan: CAPE FEAR District

BUNNLEVEL HOSTS FESTIVAL AND FUN



Bunnlevel hosted a fall festival that included tables set up by other local service providers. Residents were able to meet with providers and get information on services that were available in their community.

The club also held its annual Boston Butts sale and hosted a Breakfast with Santa. The club donated items to a local nursing home, including soda, coloring books, coffee, and storage containers. Beth Byrd was honored as the club's 2023 Ruritan of the Year.



ANDERSON CREEK HONORS TAYLOR

Anderson Creek recognized their longest-serving club member, Johnny Taylor. Johnny and his wife, Marie, were recently treated to a special dinner in honor of his 42 years of dedicated service to the Club, his community, and his family.



News From Ruritan: CAPE FEAR District

SEVENTY-FIRST CELEBRATES HISTORY OF CARING

Seventy-First hosted Off Road Outreach NC CEO Stacey Buckner. The Outreach Provides showers, laundry service, meals, and more to homeless veterans. The club donated 24 backpacks containing hats, gloves, scarves, blankets, socks, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, toothbrush, and toothpaste.

The club recently celebrated 79 years of service to their community. During the celebration, club members were also recognized for their service.

Pictured with Club President Donnamarie Torres, Zone Governor Alan Banks, and District Governor Polly Bouldin are Robby Hicks (1 yr.), Linda Wright (20 yrs.), Joyce Elmore (20 yrs.), Gerri Griffin (20 yrs.), Harold Griffin (25 yrs.), Sharon Hardin (20 yrs.), and Tom Hardin (30 yrs.)



News From Ruritan: SPARTAN District

MIDDLE TYGER AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS

Middle Tyger has awarded two scholarships. Pictured are recipients Morgan Farmer (left), who is attending The College of Charleston, and Kalyn Baxter (right), who is attending Clemson University.



News From Ruritan: COLUMBIA District

GILBERT CELEBRATES EXCELLENCE

Gilbert was one of the sponsors for the Lexington County School District One 2024 Educational Foundation's "Celebration of Excellence." This celebration honors the academic top ten percent of the district's graduating seniors. Anna Watts, pictured with her parents, Julianne and Justin Watts, and granddaughter of club member Nancy Harmon, was among the seniors honored from Gilbert High School.



The club hosted Lexington County Sheriff Jay Koon at a recent meeting. The Sheriff was presented with a box of Rudy Bears to distribute to children for comfort in difficult times. Several other members of the sheriff's department and Fred, their therapy dog, were also in attendance.

LOWER RICHLAND SHARES GOODWILL

Lower Richland hosted a successful pork butt sale in December.

The club also continued their annual tradition of making cards for Meals on Wheels. They make approximately 500 cards each year. Pictured are Stephanie Ryon (center) with Meal on Wheels Director Becky Morrison and Coordinator Regina Richburg.



News From Ruritan: COLUMBIA District

SANDY RUN CELEBRATES SERVICE

Sandy Run recently celebrated their local veterans. The guest speaker was Reverend Alvin Haigler, Sr., pictured with Citizenship and Patriotism Committee Chair Howard Pees, who shared about his 38-year military career. Veterans provided special military uniforms, photos, insignia, and other military artifacts for display. Pianist June Kirkland played all the songs of the various military branches.

Pictured (l-r) are club veterans Marion Wolfe, Debra



Harmon, Dennis Shanklin, Jill Crim, Gene Crim, Herbert Geiger, Howard Pees, Jack Inabinet, Alvin Haigler, Gary Geiger, and Marshall Stabler.



The club also displayed the Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes

they had assembled to be sent to children around the world. The boxes contain small toys, school supplies, and other items for children. Pictured (l-r) are Sandra Pees, Gerbert Geiger, Ginger Hardee, Kay James, Hailey Hardee, Sheila Shanklin, Amber Hardee, and Kelley Roche-Sanders. The club also provided gifts to local families in need.



Calhoun County Soil and Water Conservation District Director Mary Dixon was awarded the club's first-ever Environmental "Person of the Year" award. Mary helped with the club's efforts to clean and beautify the Sandy Run Pond. Club member Gerald Starnes also presented Mary with his 63rd hand-made bluebird house.



The club joined several local organizations to clean up Old Sandy Run Road 31 and Highway #176 for the Christmas parade. They helped pick up 70 bags of trash off the highway. Pictured (l-r) are Cynthia Boone, Rick Boone, Marshall Stabler, Lena Stabler, Kelley Roche-Sanders, Donald Knight, Becky Starnes, and Reuben Mayer.



News From Ruritan: COLUMBIA District

Sandy Run collected items for their annual project to make Valentine baskets for the residents at the Myers Residential Home in Swansea. Pictured (l-r) are Kelley Roche-Sanders, Sheila Shanklin, Hailey Hardee, Ginger Hardee, and Myers Home residents.



The club recently helped construct a nature trail at Sandy Run K-8 School. Soil and Water Conservation Coordinator Mary Dixon and the Sandy Run Ruritan Environmental Committee supervised the project. The club also



partnered with the Sandy Run School and the Calhoun County Clemson Extension Service. Gary Hardee brought in some heavy equipment that saved the group many hours of hard labor.

Pictured (l-r) are Curtis Bradley, Clemson Extension



Agent Charly Greenthaler, Marshall Stabler, Ginger Hardee, Teacher Grace Farnum, Kelly Roche-Sanders, David Martin, Jill Crim, Rick Dinkins, Teacher Mattie Shuler, Hailey Hardee, Principal Floyd Dinkins, Amber Hardee, Assistant Principal Michelle Bradley, Gene Crim, Mary Dixon, and Gary Hardee.



The club held a special meeting to honor winners of an essay competition. The fifth-grade students from Foundation Christian School and Sandy Run K-8 School wrote on the topic "How Has Patriotism Affected You or Your Community?" Jade Reynolds from Foundation Christian School placed first, Alayna Walker from Sandy Run School placed second, and Gizelle Manning from Sandy Run School placed third. Pictured (l-r) are Sandy Run Principal Floyd Dinkins, Alayna Walker, Gizelle Manning, Jade Reynolds, Foundation

Christian Principal Peg Nelson, and Citizenship and Patriotism Chair Amber Hardee.

The club also presented checks to three special education teachers to help them purchase school supplies for their students. Sandy Run Principal Floyd Dinkins accepted the checks for teachers Momahad Akbar, Gopalakrishna Chelamala, and Manjula Vennapusa. Pictured (l-r) are Club President Jill Crim, Principal Dinkins, and Social Development Chair Teresa Helms.



News From Ruritan: COLUMBIA District



In April, club members met to clean and maintain their “adopted highway.” Thirty-four bags of trash were collected. Pictured (l-r) are Becky Starnes, Amber Hardee, Ed Harmon, Deborah Harmon, Kelley Roche-Sanders, Ginger Hardee, and Gary Hardee. Kay James and Gerald Starnes were also present but not pictured.

Also in April, club members gathered with gifts of *I Like Me* books to all kindergarten students

at Sandy Run School and Foundation Christian School. This program encourages an appreciation of reading with books written for individual students with their own names, friends’ names, principals, teachers, and character development skills.

The club provided funds for a raised bed for Sandy Run School to help students learn



gardening skills. Calhoun Conservation District Director Mary Dixon, Environment Committee Chair Becky Starnes, along with other club members assisted the students in learning about gardening for soil enrichment, sun, water, and types of plants.



News From Ruritan: UPPER WEST VIRGINIA District

DISTRICT PRESENTS TOM DOWNING AWARDS

In November, the Upper West Virginia District presented four Tom Downing awards at their District Convention. Pictured (l-r) are recipients Angela Pugh (Slanesville), Peggy Nelson (North Fork), Gary Riggelman (Capon Bridge), and Sandra Timbrook (North River & Slanesville), with 2023 National President Mike Morrison, and North River Club President Bryan Flanagan.



News From Ruritan: UPPER WEST VIRGINIA District

SLANESVILLE BUTTERS UP TRADITION

Slanesville recently hosted their 32nd annual apple butter sale. Club members lit the fires at 3:00 am and some of the club's scholarship recipients showed up to help. The event started as a fundraiser in 1991, but it has truly grown into something special for Hampshire County and surrounding communities, who look forward to the event every year. Pictured stirring a pot is Luke Alkire, one of the club's youth members and a scholarship recipient.



News From Ruritan: LOWER WEST VIRGINIA District

MAXWELTON NAMES RURITAN OF THE YEAR



Maxwelton recently named club member Bob Hefner (left) as their 2023 Ruritan of the Year. Bob has a love for serving his community. He serves on the Fair Committee and keeps the ice cream concession stand running smoothly during the West Virginia State Fair.

Bob has served as Club President and Vice President and is currently on the Board of Directors. He works with the Frankford Fire Department to determine the location of fire hydrants that the club purchases for the area. As

Pastor of the Henning Church of God, he also volunteers with his church by going on mission trips and caring for his church members.

Club Member Mike Williams was recently honored with the Ruritan 4-H Leader Service Award, which recognizes outstanding leadership and community service. Mike is a 4-H All-Star in Greenbrier County and a WV State 4-H Leadership winner. He has also co-authored a book detailing the history of 4-H in Greenbrier County. For 26 years, he volunteered as the night watchman during 4-H camp and served as a counselor. Pictured with Mike is National Board member Patty Hamilton.



News From Ruritan: LOWER WEST VIRGINIA District

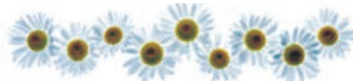
THOMAS COOPER BOGCESS JR.

Past National Director Thomas Cooper Boggess Jr. (Tommy) of Rich Creek, VA, passed away on April 5, 2024. In addition to serving on the national board from 1991 to 1993, Tommy served as Governor of both the New River and the Lower West Virginia Districts. He was a fireman, serving in both Peterstown and Rich Creek Volunteer (life member) Fire Departments, as well as the fire brigade at the Celanese plant where he was employed and retired from after over 40 years of service. He was a member of the Giles County Hazardous Materials Team, a former Lions Club member, and a Mason.



Surviving his wife of 53 years, Marva Mills Boggess. His brother, Bobby Boggess and wife Susan. Three sons and their wives, Billy Boggess (Shelly), Tony Boggess (Missy), Mason Boggess (Crystal). Eight grandchildren; Jessie Ansley (Colten), Dusty Boggess (Savannah), Riley Rose Boggess, Hudson Boggess, Maizy Boggess, Evie Boggess, Rhea Perdue, and Cooper Boggess, two great-grandchildren; Willa Ansley and Ryder Boggess, and a special great-nephew Dakota Frazier.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at the Broyles-Shrewsbury Funeral Home Chapel in Peterstown, WV, with Pastor Aubrey Whitlow and Pastor Doug Armstrong officiating. Burial followed at Sunrise Memorial Gardens in Rich Creek, VA.



News From Ruritan: TENNESSEAN District

DISTRICT SUPPORTS MILITARY AFFAIRS COUNCIL

The **Tennessean District** donated a portion of the proceeds from their convention's silent auction to Wreaths Across America. Tri-Cities Military Affairs Council (TC-MAC) President Sam Jones accepted the donation along with additional donations from **Bloomington** and **Holston**. Pictured (l-r) are District Governor Gary Collier, TC-MAC President (and Holston club member) Sam Jones, Bloomington Treasurer Jim Smallwood, and Holston Treasurer Gary Olinger.



News From Ruritan: GEORGIA-NORTH ALABAMA District

BRYANT CELEBRATES 60!



Bryant recently celebrated their 60th anniversary. National Director Donna Poulton (pictured with Club President Bill Wheeler) was on hand for the celebration.



News From Ruritan: HERMITAGE District

BROWNS COMMUNITY GETS COOKIN'

Browns Community recently hosted a stew and chicken barbeque sale. The event kicked off when the first ingredients went into the pots at 3:30 a.m. By 9:30, 170 gallons of stew and 60 barbeque chicken halves were ready for sale. Club



participation was nearly 100% and was supported by parents and Boy Scout Troop 205 members.



The club has “adopted” an assisted living facility in their community. During their first visit, members made floral



arrangements and delivered them to female residents for Mother’s Day. They returned on Father’s Day with gift bags for the gentlemen. Club members with sewing talents designed and sewed 32 “walker



aprons.” The aprons tie onto the walker handles and have small pockets to hold a cell phone, water bottle, or other small items.

News From Ruritan: OHIO District

DISTRICT HONORS DEDICATION TO SERVICE



District Governor Dave Wingett (right) recently honored Jim Means for serving 25 years as Zone 4 Governor. Jim is a member of **Guilford Lake**.

BUCKEYE ENDS YEAR WITH A BANG!

Buckeye closed out 2023 with a community holiday party. Long-time member Harry Fair served as Santa, and attendees were given gift bags with games and handcrafted toys by Gretchen and Brian Yanssens.



News From Ruritan: OHIO District

GOSHEN CENTER FOCUSES ON COMMUNITY SERVICE

Goshen Center recently donated to the Sebring Chapter of the Salvation Army. Each year, the club selects a charity to sponsor with funds raised throughout the year from their tractor pulls. Pictured (l-r) are Club member and Sebring Salvation Army Chapter President Charlie Pierce, Austin Pierce, Club President Jason Pierce, Lance Myers, and Past Club President and National Director John Biery.



The club also purchased and installed a wheelchair ramp to help Goshen Township residents Harry and Naomi Karlen. Pictured (l-r) are Dave Biery, Brian Schmid, Jeff Hoopes, Dan Zippay, Everett Zippay, and past members Rob Spencer and Dale Elder. Also assisting but not pictured were Larry Pigza and John Biery.



The club recently partnered with the Goshen Good Growers 4H Club to purchase and place 100 wreaths on the graves of Veterans in our local cemetery.



The club also donated to the Damascus Volunteer Fire Department. This brought the club's total donations for 2023 to over \$51,000 in our local community. Club President and National Director John Biery (left) and Damascus Fire Chief Shawn Mesler are pictured.

News From Ruritan: OHIO District

NEW LONDON SHARES RAFFLE SUCCESS

New London held their 2nd annual raffle ticket fundraiser with great success. Prizes included a pedal tractor, a meat bundle, and a family pack of season tickets to a local theme park. The fundraiser was well supported and provided a great opportunity to share Ruritan with the community. Proceeds will fund two scholarships awarded to local youth and various other community service projects throughout the year.



SMITHVILLE HONORS SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Smithville awarded four academic scholarships for 2023. The recipients were invited to attend the club's annual Christmas Dinner. The students are now attending college and were asked to discuss their first semester/quarter experience. Ben Rhoads received the club's Feusier Scholarship and is attending ATI-OSU. Olivia Haines received the Build Your Dollar scholarship and is also attending ATI-OSU. Maddilyn Brillhart received the club's Maynard Yoh Scholarship and is attending Heidelberg University, and Brayden Leach received the club's Academic Scholarship and is attending Ashland University. Pictured (l-r) are Club President Rick Dilyard, Madilyn Brillhart, Olivia Haines, Ben Rhoads, Brayden Leach, Scholarship Chair Phil Gresser, and Club Vice President Bryan Woodward.



News From Ruritan: OHIO District

SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP CELEBRATES MILESTONE!

Springfield Township gathered in March to celebrate 70 years of service to their community. Originally chartered as the Western Reserve Ruritan Club, the name was later changed to Springfield Township. With 30 members, the club continues to be a mainstay in their community. The club's main fundraiser is operating their French fry trailer at county fairs and sporting events.



WASHINGTON OH AWARDS “RISING SENIORS”

Washington OH awarded \$1,500 scholarships to four “Rising Seniors.” Rising Seniors are selected from applicants who are Juniors at Louisville High School, Marlinton High School, or residents of Washington Township. They are awarded their scholarships after participating in regular club activities during their Senior year of high school as full members of the Washington Ruritan Club.



Pictured (l-r) with their Ruritan backpacks are Chloe Millard, Eva Miller, Taylor Dimmerling, and Annalee Kackley. Chloe will attend Kent State University, majoring in biology and premed with a minor in American Sign Language. Eva will study sustainable agriculture at Ohio State University Agricultural Institute. She plans to do research and hopes one day to run her own farm and greenhouse. Taylor will also attend Kent State University. She will major in speech and language pathology and vocal performance. Annalee will major in International Business and minor in Spanish and Communications at Kent State.

WINONA IS BUSY AS A BEE

Winona recently hosted guest speaker Bruce Zimmer, owner of BZ Bees. Mr. Zimmer, the past president of the Columbiana and Mahoning County Beekeepers Association, gave an interesting presentation about the life of a honeybee and their ecological importance.



The club continued its “Made in America” campaign with a Spring gun raffle. Pictured (l-r) are Mike Runzo, owner of Runzo's Outdoor Sports, raffle winner Nate Strabala, and Club Vice President Tom Richey.

News From Ruritan: WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA District

BATON WORKS TO SHARE RURITAN

Baton works hard but has fun doing it. The club recently participated in a community workday. Club youth members, parents and grandparents pitched in to clean up a local park and club grounds.



The club has recently added 25 youth members from Baton Elementary and Hudson Middle School. The students meet at the school with a teacher who is also an adult club member. They are enthusiastic and enjoy



helping with club projects. Pictured are some of the students with club member and teacher Pam Walker, Club President Nicole Conner, Club Treasurer Gary Barger, Club Director Brenda Barger, and Club Secretary and School Principal Jason Teffeteller.



Club President Nicole Conner presented the club's Ruritan of the Year award to Pam Walker (pictured right). Baton Water Works Manager Beth Gray (left) was presented with their Citizen of the Year award.

COLLETTSVILLE CELEBRATES 70TH!

Collettsville recently celebrated their 70th anniversary. National Director Larry Garrison recognized the club for their long history of service to their community.

The club hosted a Valentine's Day Dinner for their community.



The full house enjoyed good food and entertainment. Volunteers decorated, prepared the food, and served the meals. Club President Reuben Chandler welcomed the guests, and Collettsville Beta Club students Lillie Coffey, Gracie White, Mallory Houck, and Raleigh Bowman served.



News From Ruritan: WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA District

GAMEWELL AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS, WELCOMES NEW MEMBER



Gamewell recently awarded seven scholarships of \$1,000 each. The recipients were Lazaro E. Cio Flores, Dora Christine Hagaman, Tristen Logan Harper, Landon Hawkins, Gavin Hunter McCloud, Zoie Catherine Miller, and Stefanic Balaba (not pictured). Club Treasurer Van Griffith presented the scholarships on behalf of the club.



The club recently welcomed a new club member, Christina Green. She is pictured with Club President John Card.

GLENWOOD SHARES RUDY BEARS

Glenwood recently donated Rudy Bears to the Glenwood Fire Department to be given out to pediatric victims of medical and traumatic injuries. Pictured (l-r) are Club President Kyle Settlemyre Chief Donnie Tipton, and Rudy Bear (aka club member Issac Brendle).



News From Ruritan: DELMARVA-NEW JERSEY District

PUNGOTEAGUE DELIVER 25 YRS OF GOODWILL

Pungoteague members Jim Gillett, Carol Wehner, and Doug Wehner were among 11 club members who helped deliver Bank of Cheer food boxes to needy families on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Club members also packed 125 boxes prior to the delivery. The club has supported this local volunteer project for over 25 years.



News From Ruritan: DELMARVA-NEW JERSEY District

HARTLY HOSTS HOLIDAY HAPPENIN'



Hartly hosted a Christmas Bazaar with over 25 vendors and local businesses, a bake sale, raffles, and Santa! They are planning to make the bazaar an annual event. The club donated the proceeds to five organizations as a part of their end-of-year community partnerships.



Club volunteers recently took part in a local Adopt-A-Highway event. Club members cleaned up six bags of trash and two bags of aluminum cans. They also joined the Hartly Volunteer Fire Company for their Easter egg hunt and handed out candy and pet safety stickers.

TRI-COUNTY MD JOINS FESTIVAL



Tri-County MD participated in the Waterfowl Festival in Easton, MD, by selling oyster sandwiches, french fries, hotdogs, and cheeseburgers.



WISTARBURG JOINS TO PROMOTE AWARENESS

Wistarburg joined the Galloway Township Knights of Columbus, Ranch Hope, Aldine Church, and other community members to place 660 flags on the front lawn of the Alloway Municipal Building. **Flags for Forgotten Soldiers** is a traveling memorial dedicated to raising public awareness about the veteran suicide crisis.



News From Ruritan: DELMARVA-NEW JERSEY District

CLUBS TEAM UP TO SUPPORT YOUTH

Bi-State and **Galestown** clubs teamed up to donate a Blackstone tabletop grill and a hotdog grill to the Christ Connections Youth Group at St. Stephens Church in Delmar, DE. The items will be used at the Youth Group's Railroad Cafe Snack Bar as part of the Delmarva Model Railroad Club's open house event. Pictured (l-r) are Galestown Secretary Pam Eskridge, Galestown President Kay Littleton, Youth Group members, Bi-State Past President Roger Martinson, and Bi-State Vice President Brian Messick.



News From Ruritan: PIEDMONT District

FRANCISCO CLEANS UP FOR COMMUNITY

Francisco club members hosted a roadside clean-up. They filled 18 33-gallon trash bags from a two-mile area around the Francisco Community Building. They also hosted a Fat Tuesday pancake dinner, and held a food drive that brought in 200 pounds of various variety of non-perishable and canned food donations in support of Northwest Stokes Food pantry.



The club had an outstanding turnout for a bingo fundraiser. Proceeds from the event went for the upkeep, maintenance, and preservation of the Francisco Community Center Building. The Community Building hosts local music jams, Bingo games, various club meetings, and educational activities. Stokes County Senior Center also uses the community building to host various fitness and educational activities.

Kathryn Converse has been awarded **Francisco's** 2023 Ruritan of the Year. Kathryn joined the club in 2018. She has volunteered over 800 hours running the Northern Stokes Food Pantry to provide food assistance to the community and surrounding areas. She is much appreciated for her service, dedication, and passion for duty.



News From Ruritan: **PIEDMONT District**

SANDY RIDGE SHARES CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

Sandy Ridge hosted their annual Veterans Appreciation Meal at the American Legion Building. Program coordinator Andrea Finch welcomed members and guests, and Girl Scout Troop #2072 presented the colors.



The club sponsored a Veterans Day contest at the local elementary school, with prizes given at each grade level for coloring, drawing, or writing essays. First-place winners and their immediate families were invited to the dinner to share their winning entries. A “Missing Soldier” table was set up in the center of the room, and the description of the table was read. Attendees played a bingo game, and each veteran was given a treat bag. Club members also delivered meals to homebound veterans and their spouses.



The club sponsored “Christmas on the Ridge” in December at the Northeast Stokes Fire and Rescue Department. The night included a visit from Santa, snacks, crafts, and tree lighting. The event also included a toy and food drive.

The club closed the year with a Christmas social and meeting. Voting on their 2023 Ruritan of the Year ended in a three-way tie. The winners were Andy Melvin, David Hogan, and Deborah Ellington. A donation will be presented to the Sandy Ridge Elementary School Library in their honor. Members also prepared 124 treat bags which were



distributed to local elderly and shut-ins.



The club hosted senior students from the Sandy Ridge School District High School. Mrs. Melinda Conner Lemons, the 2024 Teach of the Year at Sandy Ridge Elementary School, presented the club’s scholarships to recipients Kaitlyn Bullins, Kailey Hickman, Kinley Mabe, Lola Shelton, and Chandler Sizemore. Gary Wilkins, a representative of the Northeast Stokes Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, Inc. spoke on their decision to use monies from their Fireman’s Fund to sponsor the Frank Spencer Memorial Scholarship. Mr. Spencer taught at Sandy Ridge High School and North Stokes High School and was a member of the fire department. Mrs. Lemons, who is Mr. Spencer’s granddaughter, presented scholarships to Savannah Fryar, Jazmine Wood, and Leigha Wyrick.

SHOALS HELPS WITH ANGEL TREE



Shoals club members and community volunteers worked together on the Shoals Angel Tree project. Local churches, community members, organizations, and Ruritans came together to sponsor approximately 100 children in the local community to ensure they had a very merry Christmas.

GERMANTON HELPS WITH HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Germantown made welcome bags for patients and families staying at the State Employees Credit Family House in Winston-Salem. The bags included hand sanitizer, word puzzle books, a pencil, a pen, a tissue pack, a sewing kit, note paper, and a journal. The SECU Family House is for adult patients and caregivers traveling to Forsyth County for healthcare. SECU Family House is a compassionate, comfortable alternative to a hospital waiting room or an expensive hotel for people facing the challenge of out-of-town medical care. Pictured Club member Jayson Duncan unloads the bags.



PINE HALL IMPROVES VOCABULARY

Pine Hall presented dictionaries to the third-grade class as part of their support of Pine Hall Elementary School.



UNION GROVE HOSTS BREAKFAST

Union Grove sponsored a Winter Ham Breakfast in February. The annual event featured a country breakfast of country ham, sausage, liver mush, eggs, biscuits, and stewed apples, with coffee and a variety of bottled drinks.



The floor was opened to Iredell County political candidates of both parties, who each gave a five-minute “stump speech” supporting their cause. Fourteen candidates for political office were in attendance representing the 82nd N.C. House District, the N.C. 10th Congressional District, the Iredell County School Board District 4, N.C. District 32 District Court, and the Iredell County Commission.

News From Ruritan: **PIEDMONT District**

CLUBS HELP SHOW APPRECIATION

The East Stokes Outreach Ministry in Walnut Cove, NC, hosted its annual Volunteer Appreciation Meal. Volunteers from four Stokes County Ruritan clubs -**Germanton, Pine Hall, Lawsonville, and Sandy Ridge** - provided and served the meal to attendees.



News From Ruritan: **DAN RIVER District**

DAN RIVER TREATS VETERANS

Dan River recently recognized local Veterans with a meal of hotdogs, all the trimmings, beans, drinks, and a dessert. The club partnered with Ringgold Fire and Rescue to serve the meal. Pictured (l-r) (front row) are Barry Sides, Matt Foster, Randy Echols, Stephanie Burton, Christie Farlow, Frances Sides, (back row) Todd Fitts, Steve Farlow, Eddie Hite, Mike Neal, and Frank Burdette.



ARARAT SHARES BUSY SCHEDULE

Ararat had a busy fourth quarter. They hosted a Be the Match bone marrow drive to register people for the national registry. The event was held in memory of McRay Smith, who lost his life to leukemia at the young age of 46. Pictured are club member and McRay's father, Ray Smith, and McRay's children, Loren Walker and Garrett Smith.

Club member and certified nutritionist Kathleen Loveland started hosting a monthly Nutritional Workshop at the club building. Each is a different topic to help promote healthier eating habits. The club also held their annual barbeque and cruise-in. They cooked over 250 pounds of barbeque and hosted 40 cars and trucks for the cruise-in.



News From Ruritan: DAN RIVER District



In November, Patrick County Sheriff Office held their crime watch meeting at the Ararat Ruritan Building. Club Treasurer Kevin Smith presented Deputy and Woolwine Community club member Dustin Foley with a donation for the “Shop With a Cop” program and 18 Rudy Bears for the Sheriff’s Office.

The club closed out the year by presenting donations to the Ararat Volunteer Fire Department, the Ararat Rescue Squad, and the Blue Ridge Rescue Squad. Several members spent a Sunday afternoon purchasing Christmas presents for 14 children that the



club sponsored through the Patrick County Christmas Cheer program. The club also sponsored four senior citizens through the Senior Tree program. The club donated to the PARC Workshop, which offers training



and counseling programs to mentally and physically handicapped individuals in Patrick County, VA, and held its final blood drive of the year. Twenty-three units were collected, with a couple of first timers and several returning donors.

The club has already made a significant impact in 2024. In January, the club’s generous donation to Blue Ridge Elementary School enabled the purchase of much-needed school supplies. In

February, the club’s donations brought relief to four local families facing hardships. Additionally, a barbeque fundraiser in February raised nearly \$ 5,000, providing support to 18-month-old Willow Guynn’s family for her medical expenses. In March, the club presented a donation to Gary Arrington and Bryan



Young from the Virginia Hunters for the Hungry, who presented a program about their mission to feed the hungry. The club also voted to partner with Hunters for the Hungry to serve as a collection site during the 2024 hunting season.

The club continues to work with Disaster Relief Food Ministry by hosting a food box distribution on the last Saturday of each month. Since the start of the partnership, distributions have increased to over 80 boxes a month.

The club closed out the first quarter by joining forces with the Dan River Park for a Community Easter Egg Hunt.



News From Ruritan: DAN RIVER District

BASSETT MAKES COMMUNITY SERVICE A PRIORITY

Bassett was very active with events and fundraisers throughout 2023. The club donated to several community needs, including \$500 donations to two local schools for classroom supplies and \$250 to Bassett High School for snacks for the band when they travel for competitions. The club also donated \$1000 to help local resident Steve Stone purchase a new wheelchair after his was damaged in an automobile accident.

The club awarded a scholarship to Marcie Kendrick, and a basket of handmade chemo caps was presented to the Martinsville Cancer Center. The club also honored local veterans with a free breakfast. Vietnam veteran Buddy Janey made a display for the front of the building.

The club held several fundraisers that included monthly breakfasts, apple butter, stew, and baskets of items for Easter, Mother's Day, and Thanksgiving. Each Friday, the club sponsors a free community event. They set up rook tables, crafts, puzzles, and snacks to share. Local bands volunteer their time and talents to play music.



News From Ruritan: DAN RIVER District

CARVER ROAD SHARES BUSY 4TH QUARTER

Carver Road had a very busy fourth quarter. Club members participated in Oktoberfest, delivered Christmas fruit baskets to the elderly, sold fruit cups at the Smith River Fest, hosted community meetings with County officials, and held fish fries and apple pie sales. The Club also won a grant for a sign project in the Carver community.



RANGELEY SUPPORTS FIRE DEPARTMENT

Rangeley Club President Rick Huffman (r) presented Fieldale Fire Department Chief Todd Norman with the proceeds from a recent breakfast fundraiser.

The club held a stew fundraiser and sold over 300 quarts of stew and several baked goods. Patrick Rodgers, Travis Keith, and Rick Huffman are pictured as they take turns stirring the stew pot.



The club also welcomed new members Tracy Keith (l) and Teresa Wall (r), who volunteered to serve at our April breakfast.



News From Ruritan: DAN RIVER District

PATRICK SPRINGS HONORS VETERANS

Patrick Springs honored Veterans at a recent monthly meeting. Veteran attendees were each presented with a gift to thank them for their service.



The club presented Tom Steele the Outstanding Citizenship Award for his contributions and dedication to his community. Tom (left) is pictured with Club Secretary Kevin Reynolds.

The club also participated in their community's annual Christmas Parade. Rudy Bear handed out candy to the kids during the parade.



IRISBURG HOSTS SPECIAL VISITOR

Irisburg had a visit from a baby kangaroo, known as a "Joey," during a recent monthly meeting. President Rick Steere and wife Laura operate an exotic and domestic animal educational program for the community called Infinity Acres.



SANVILLE TOM DOWNINGS ADD UP!



Sanville now has ten Tom Downing Fellows! Pictured (l-r) are (front) Annie Maxwell, Elizabeth Maxwell, Ronda Cook, Joel Cannaday, (back) Bill Maxwell, Timmy Howell, Lewis Stone, Ruby Stone, Willie Koger, and Jimmy Cassell.

The club recently hosted successful apple butter and Brunswick stew fundraisers and provided a meal for the veterans of American Legion Post #42.

News From Ruritan: DAN RIVER District

RED BANK HONORS BOWMAN

Red Bank recently honored Club Secretary Charlie Bowman with a Ruritan Forever. Pictured (l-r) are Jerry Atkins, National Director Merlin Scales, Charlie, and Club President and Past National Director Roger Gammons.



STUART STARTS STRONG

The new **Stuart** Ruritan Club has hit the ground running! After a successful raffle ticket fundraiser, the club partnered with Piedmont Community Services to host a Mental Health Walk to bring awareness of mental health issues worldwide and to mobilize efforts to support mental health.

The club also partnered with Tin Pen Alley and held a “Bowling for our Heroes” event. All local veterans, police, fire, and EMS personnel were honored with a night of free bowling (pictured).



News From Ruritan: DAN RIVER District

NEW CLUB RALLIES COMMUNITY FOR BENEFIT

Woolwine Community Ruritan Club was chartered in October 2023 and hit the ground running. The new club jumped in to help when Micah Underwood and his girlfriend, Lauren Worley, were seriously injured when a drunk driver hit their car. The club voted unanimously to organize an event to assist both families with the medical expenses that would be incurred. A benefit was scheduled in February 2024 at Woolwine Elementary School. The benefit began with an opening prayer. Throughout the day, eight local performers entertained the guests. The school's cafeteria manager, who is also a club member, led a group of volunteers who prepared and sold over 900 meals. Countless baked goods were also available for purchase throughout the day. Two club members held a "Cut-A-Thon" on the premises and lost count after they had done 50 haircuts. Donations from individuals, families, small businesses, corporations, churches, and other organizations allowed the club to purchase and raffle off 86 gift baskets. Red



Bank member and Auctioneer Roger Gammons periodically auctioned off baked goods and other items. Ararat and Stuart Ruritans assisted with the 50/50 drawing, and Floyd, Red Bank, and Patrick Springs club members aided with numerous other activities throughout the event. Micah was able to attend the event with his family. Lauren, who was still recovering from her injuries, was able to attend briefly.



A special meeting was held on Monday, March 4th, with Micah's family, Lauren's family, Woolwine Community Ruritans, Smith River Volunteer Rescue Squad, and Woolwine Volunteer Fire Department to present to the two families with the \$45,900 that was raised at the benefit! The families chose to split the money equally for their respective medical and therapy bills.



News From Ruritan: LINCOLNLAND District

DISTRICT PRESENTS RURITAN OF THE YEAR



Lincolnland District Governor Michele Zehr presented the District's 2023 Ruritan of the Year Award to Allendale Club Secretary James Barger.



News From Ruritan: NEW RIVER District

LEAD MINES CELEBRATES 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Lead Mines celebrated their 75th anniversary in October. The club was chartered on October 12, 1948. Initially sponsored by the Draper club, Lead Mines went on to sponsor three additional clubs. The event was organized by club member Jackie Cregger, whose father,



Herman Jackson, was a charter member. A slideshow and memorabilia detailing the club's history was on display.



The club recently produced their second batch of apple butter. Proceeds from the apple butter sales are used to fund community service projects. Pictured, Keith Kelly (l) and Vic Gravley (r) cut up the apples, Rodney Cassell takes a turn stirring the apple butter, and Jackie Cregger performs a taste test to ensure the seasoning is just right.

News From Ruritan: NEW RIVER District



The club named Gayle Wright as their 2023 Citizen of the Year. Gayle (center) is pictured with Sheridan Kelly (l) and Club President Victor Gravley (r). Tina Quesenberry was named 2023 Club Ruritan of the Year. Tina (center) is pictured with Zone Governor Dave Bockes (l) and Victor (r).



News From Ruritan: NEW RIVER District

DISTRICT WELCOMES NEW CLUB BARREN SPRINGS COMMUNITY



BELMONT II SHARES THE BLESSINGS

Belmont II prepared and donated Easter food bags for 50 families. Pictured (l-r) are Vickie Gillespie, Terry Driver, and Vicki Baker. Also pictured, Club President Dean Gray presented Zachary Gray with a donation for the Radford High School Band.



FAIRVIEW CELEBRATES 70TH!

Fairview recently celebrated their 70th anniversary. The club was formed in 1953 in the classroom at Fairview Elementary School by farmers and factory workers in the community. Land was purchased in 1969, and the clubhouse was built in 1970.



TELFORD HOSTS KIDS AND CRAFTS

Telford held a “Children’s Craft Christmas” party for their community in December. Organized by members Dan and Betty Westbrook, the event allowed local children to craft Christmas gifts for their parents and friends. Helped by Santa and his workers, the children also participated in face painting and enjoyed juice and cookies.



The club followed up the event with their long-standing annual Christmas delivery of food and toys to underprivileged families. The family’s names are provided each year by West View and Grandview Elementary Schools. Over 50 food and toy boxes were packed and delivered, with most

LIMESTONE SUPPORTS GIRL SCOUTS

Limestone Vice President Mark Sams presented a check for \$500 to the local Girl Scouts. The Girl Scout troop started with just three members but now has 17 members. The donation will help fund some of their projects and help provide uniforms.



CAMP CREEK ADDS TO NUMBERS!



Camp Creek has welcomed new members Joseph and Elizabeth Donahay (pictured with Club President Tim Smithson, left)

News From Ruritan: DAVY CROCKETT District

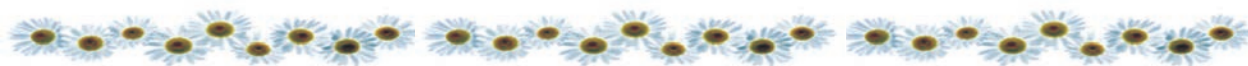
ROGER KYLE CARTER

Roger Kyle Carter, age 51, of Afton, passed away on Friday, March 15, 2024, at Greeneville Community Hospital East after a brief illness. Roger was born July 4, 1972, the son of the late Kyle and Vickie Carter. He was a graduate of North Greene High School.

Roger retired from the State of Tennessee Department of Transportation after 30 years. He was a member of Union Free Will Baptist Church. Roger was passionate about community service. He was a member of the Mt. Pleasant Ruritan Club and the Greeneville Optimist Club, a founding member of the North Greene High School FFA Alumni, served on the Greene County Agriculture Education Foundation, Vice-President of the TSEA (Tennessee State Employees Association), and a past member of the United Volunteer Fire Department.

Roger devoted 35 years to the Ruritan organization and was serving as the National Director for the Bluegrass District at the time of his death.

Survivors include his wife of 20 years, Kimberly Carter; brother, Marcus Anthony Carter; aunts, Ann Martin Slagle and Billie Carter; uncle, Paul (Becky), Martin; several cousins, father-in-law, and mother-in-law, Tommy and Wanda Cutshaw; second mother, Wanda Ruth Miser, and special friends, Tommy, Amy, and Madelin Miser, Max, Melissa, Mitea, Emma, and Kylee Laws.



News From Ruritan: SMOKY MOUNTAIN District

EAST ROANE COUNTY SHARES RURITAN

East Roane County participated in the October Sky Festival in Oliver Springs, TN. The club sponsored a booth to promote Ruritan and a photo booth with different costume styles. Pictured is Past National Director Roy Wallen displaying one of the costumes.



News From Ruritan: **SMOKY MOUNTAIN** District

GIBBS MEMBER HONORED FOR SERVICE



Gibbs sponsored and coordinated their community's annual Christmas Parade.

Club member Wade Jones was recently honored by the club for his work with the Tri-County Honor Guard. Jones, a United States Army Veteran, has participated in 501 military honors at the gravesides of his fellow veterans.



News From Ruritan: **MIDDLE AMERICA** District

PATRICIA JUNE WATSON

Past Ruritan National Director Patricia "Pat" June Watson, 86, of Lane, Kansas, passed away on April 15, 2024. She was born on May 11, 1937, in Kansas City, Kansas. Pat was the beloved daughter of Robert and Ellen Whitaker. Patricia met her husband Merle while she was working at the McCallons Cafe in Osawatomie, Kansas in 1955. They unified their marriage on March 28, 1958.

She was a graduate of Williamsburg High School and Ursuline Academy. Pat was an active member of Ruhamah Baptist Church. Pat had a fulfilling career as a Dietary Manager for Midamerican Nutrition and Ransom Memorial Hospital, as well as owned her own restaurants.

Pat is survived by her sister, Janet Allen; her daughters, Connie S. Bowman, Mary Hampson, and Margaret Watson; her grandchildren, Melissa Calvin, Brandon Powell, Nicholas Hampson, Corey Powell, Devon Powell, Adriane Barrett, Malarie Cook, Makayla Kasper; and her 16 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband Merle Watson, father Robert Whitaker, mother Ellen Whitaker, and siblings Betty Collins, Linda Shell, Robert Whitaker, John Whitaker, and Keith Whitaker. Services for Pat were held at Eddy Birchard Funeral Home in Osawatomie, Kansas, on Wednesday, April 17, 2024. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to Pottawatomie Ruritans and Ruhamah Baptist Church in memory of Pat Watson.



News From Ruritan: MIDDLE AMERICA District

SPRINGHILL COMMUNITY HOSTS BREAKFAST

Springhill Community served breakfast to more than 250 people at their annual "Breakfast with Santa".



News From Ruritan: RAPIDAN District

WOLFTOWN STEPS UP TO SERVE

Wolftown served supper to the Madison County firefighters working the Quaker Run wildfire in Shenandoah National Park.



The club provided burgers, hot dogs, chili, chips, and doughnuts.

The club also donated twelve Thanksgiving boxes for clients of Madison County Department of Social Services. DSS staffer Tiffany accepted the donation.



CHANCELLOR HONORS DEDICATION

Chancellor recently honored club member Allan Thorburn for 56 years of dedicated membership and service to his community. Allan joined the club in 1967 and has served in every club officer position.



Club President Dick Carmichael (r) presented a donation to Spotsylvania Emergency Concerns Association (SECA) representative Dale Weber. SECA's mission is to help Spotsylvania County families with emergency needs such as electricity, water, medicine, food, fuel, and shelter. SECA also operates a thrift store that provides clothing and household items.



WHY RURITAN?

Have you ever experienced a "Godwink"—those moments when life aligns so remarkably that it feels like divine intervention? Let me share a real-life Godwink that unfolded in Woolwine, Virginia.

Back in 1956, a Ruritan Club was established in Woolwine, VA. Despite its disbandment in 2014, the spirit of community service remained alive. Inspired by President Robin's message about revisiting areas that once had a Ruritan Club, two members of the Ararat Ruritan Club took the initiative. They saw the potential of the Woolwine community and were able to gather a few individuals for an information meeting in August 2023. Little did they know this gathering at the Woolwine Volunteer Fire Department would ignite a spark that would soon blaze into something extraordinary.

In October 2023, the Woolwine Community Ruritan Club was chartered. Just weeks later, when a wildfire threatened Tuggles Gap, VA, the club wasted no time gathering support for the brave first responders and firefighters. Through their collective efforts, they provided invaluable aid for weeks on end, demonstrating the power of community service in times of crisis.

Then, tragedy struck in December. Two teens faced a harrowing accident, shaking the community to its core. Yet, once again, the Woolwine Community Ruritan Club rose to the occasion. Not content with merely offering support, they orchestrated a benefit event, drawing upon the strength of their community.

On February 24th, amidst music, food, and heartfelt camaraderie, the community came together for a remarkable event. With determination and generosity, they served 926 meals, had a silent auction, 50/50, a cut-a-thon, entertainment all day, held a live auction, and fundraised tirelessly. The result? A staggering \$45,900 was raised in just six hours, a testament to the community's resilience and spirit of giving.

What's truly remarkable is the timeline. The club was chartered mere months ago, in October 2023, and they haven't even paid their first quarter of national dues. Yet, with 44 members strong in a community of just 705 residents, they've already made a lifelong impact.

This isn't just about joining a club; it's about answering a call to serve. Those who took that leap of faith and embraced Ruritan did so for a purpose—to uplift their community in times of trial. They embody the spirit of service, showing us all what it means to be there for one another. If anyone ever asks what the value of a Ruritan Club is, we can tell them about February 24th in Woolwine, VA, and that magical day.

To the Woolwine Community Ruritan Club members, your dedication and compassion are a beacon of hope. You remind us why we're here: to stand by each other, uplift, and inspire. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to your community. You are true heroes in every sense of the word.

As a footnote, both teens are doing well. They have a long way to go, but with such community support and their faith, we all hope and pray that they will fully recover.



The Value of Ruritan Membership

Benefits and values that individuals and clubs receive for their Ruritan membership

Income Tax Exemption

Each club affiliated with Ruritan National is automatically exempt from paying federal income tax on funds raised or donations received under a blanket exemption issued to Ruritan National. This exemption saves Ruritan Clubs thousands of dollars each year. Each dollar saved in taxes can be used for community service. Many clubs also benefit by exemption from state sales taxes. Without the Ruritan National affiliation, community clubs may have difficulty obtaining tax-exempt status. Ruritan National also provides instructions and guidance for clubs that file information returns with the Internal Revenue Service. Ruritan National maintains and handles all filings concerning the blanket tax-exemption. Ruritan National can also help affiliated clubs that have problems related to the Internal Revenue Service.

Ruritan Liability Insurance & Protection

All clubs in good standing with Ruritan National are covered by general comprehensive legal liability insurance. Such insurance is critical to any group that deals with the public. For example, if a member of the public is injured at a Ruritan-sponsored event covered by this insurance, the club will be protected if a lawsuit arises from the incident. This liability insurance covers lawsuits arising from covered Ruritan sponsored activities, up to \$1 million per occurrence, \$2 million aggregate, plus a \$1 million umbrella.

Ruritan Awards & Recognition Program

Ruritan Clubs and members have the opportunity to earn recognition through national and district awards for outstanding community service. These awards frequently receive not only local but also regional and national publicity. Because Ruritan has a systematic recognition program, individuals and clubs performing outstanding service do not go unnoticed. This recognition adds credibility and distinction to a club's community service efforts.

Ruritan Name and Reputation

Well-known for community service, the Ruritan name is a valuable asset to clubs. Ruritan enjoys a fine reputation among service clubs, other civic organizations, government agencies, and communities in general. Serving America's communities since 1928, the Ruritan name automatically lends credibility to all club activities. Ruritan community service activities usually receive much more support and recognition than projects carried out by an ad hoc group of citizens or a local club that is not affiliated with Ruritan National.

Ruritan National Foundation

Each year the Ruritan National Foundation issues many educational grants to students who wish to further their education beyond high school. The Foundation offers a program that increases a Ruritan club's financial assistance to a student of the club's choice. Using this plan, a club can turn a \$300 scholarship into much more using the Build Your Dollar program. The Ruritan National Foundation also assists victims of local disasters through Operation We Care. Operation We Care provides much needed benefits to disaster victims after the immediate crisis has passed. Also, individuals or clubs can be honored in perpetuity by starting a "named fund" or "special permanent fund" through the Ruritan National Foundation. All donations to Ruritan National Foundation funds and Operation We Care are tax-deductible.

(Continued on back)

RURITAN magazine

Ruritan magazine publishes the community service accomplishments of Ruritan Clubs and members. All Ruritan members receive this quarterly magazine which features Ruritan Club news, Ruritan activities from across the nation, information about new Ruritan programs, and other items of interest to Ruritan members. The magazine gives members community service ideas, proven fund-raising ideas from other clubs, and highlights the special projects of Ruritan Clubs. The magazine serves as a communications link that provides current information to all Ruritan members. Honorary members do not receive RURITAN magazine or other Ruritan National correspondence.

Networking and New Friends

Ruritan membership provides social as well as service opportunities. Ruritan Clubs are a cross section of the community the club serves. Ruritan membership is a unique way to make business contacts and friends while serving the community. Many Ruritans are community leaders and business leaders who share concerns about the community's future. Sharing concerns with others makes the community a better place for everyone. This scope of friendship broadens at district and national conventions, where Ruritan members meet other members with common values and concerns.

Affiliate Partnerships and Community Service Partners

Ruritan National has a variety of ongoing Affiliate Partnerships that offer discounts and benefits to Ruritan members and clubs. For a current list of these Affiliate Partners, see the Ruritan National website at <http://ruritan.org>. Members who take advantage of even one of the programs can save the cost of their Ruritan National dues and much more. In addition, Ruritan has many Community Service Partners who work with Ruritan clubs every day to extend the impact of a club's service program. Partners such as Hunters for the Hungry, Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, Boy Scouts of America, and the National D-Day Memorial know first-hand how important their Ruritan connection is. For a current list of these Service Partners, see the Ruritan National website at <http://ruritan.org>.

Educational Materials

Club officers and committee chairs receive free handbooks and other materials to help them perform more efficiently as community leaders. Community Service Guides developed by Ruritan National help local clubs provide services to their communities and also help clubs discover what community services are needed. Club Officers' Handbooks are designed to help officers serve the club and community in the best possible way. Each club receives a packet of material in the fall with a wealth of information designed to help the club and its leaders serve their community.

Volunteer Leadership & Leadership Development

With the exception of a small national staff, all Ruritan officials at the club, district, and national levels are volunteers elected by Ruritan members. An elected National Board of Directors, together with club delegates at annual national conventions, create the policies and programs of Ruritan National. The leadership of Ruritan is chosen by Ruritan Club delegates to serve the needs and interests of Ruritan members and their communities. Ruritan National also provides educational material to help community leaders and conducts free seminars, workshops, conferences, and other training. Through Ruritan's volunteer program, trained leadership is available to assist clubs with any situation.