



Ruritan

Volume 90, Summer 2025





Ruritan

Volume 90, Summer 2025

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Gratitude and Reflection

Being the President of Ruritan National has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. It has given me the chance to see firsthand the incredible work being done by our members, leaders, and volunteers across the country. Each of you brings something unique and valuable to Ruritan, and I am so thankful for your commitment to making our communities stronger and brighter.

Your dedication is what makes Ruritan thrive. Whether you're organizing fundraisers, leading community improvement projects, or mentoring the next generation of leaders, your efforts leave a lasting impact. Every time I visit a club, I am inspired by the creativity and passion I see. From large cities to small towns, your hard work shows what Ruritan is all about: neighbors helping neighbors, friends supporting friends, and communities coming together to lift each other up.

What impresses me most is how every member finds their own way to contribute. Some of you lead major projects, while others focus on smaller acts of kindness that make a big difference to someone in need. No matter how you serve, you are helping to create a better world. Your actions show that Ruritan's values are alive and well, and they inspire others to join us in our mission.

As we look ahead, let's take a moment to celebrate everything we've accomplished together. Every project, every new member, and every act of service adds to the legacy we are building for Ruritan. Each one of you plays an essential role in shaping our future, and your contributions ensure that our mission will continue for years to come.

Thank you for making this journey so meaningful. Your kindness, dedication, and passion are what make Ruritan so special. I am grateful to serve alongside you and to be inspired by all that you do.





Adapting to Change: Building a Better Ruritan for Today's World

The world is changing—and so is Ruritan.

People are busier. Many work from home or spend more time online. Many feel lonely or disconnected from their neighbors. But here's the good news: people *still* want to belong. They want to help others and be part of something bigger. That's where Ruritan comes in.

Our mission—fellowship, goodwill, and community service—is more important than ever. But to keep making a difference, we must be willing to grow and try new things. That means looking at how we serve, how we meet, and how we welcome new people into our clubs.

One way we're doing that is through **"2+5 to Thrive in '25."** This goal asks every district to start **two new clubs** and encourages every existing club to grow by **five new members**. It's not just about numbers—it's about reaching more people and building stronger communities.

New clubs might meet at different times. They might focus on helping teens, supporting seniors, or solving food insecurity. The key is this: clubs should fit the community's needs. That's what I love about Ruritan. At my church, we surveyed the neighborhood and discovered that many people want to feel connected again. That's a big opportunity for us!

We also need to ask ourselves: *Are we still meeting the needs of today's families, workers, and young people?* Let's listen more. Let's be open to change. Let's use tools like social media and community events to share what Ruritan is all about. Let's be relevant again!

Change can be scary, but it can also be exciting. When we adapt, we don't lose who we are—we become even better at living our mission.

Let's move forward with open hearts, ready to serve and grow. Together, we can create clubs and communities where everyone feels they belong.



2025 Summer Leadership Conference

**** July 18-19, 2025 ****



**The Highlander
600 Tyler Avenue
Radford, VA**



The Summer Leadership Conference allows Ruritan leaders to learn more about their responsibilities, share ideas, express concerns, and plan for the future of the organization. It also provides an opportunity for leaders to learn about the responsibilities that go along with other leadership positions they may wish to seek and encourages them to move up in their leadership roles. The conference brings Ruritan leaders together to discuss concerns and plan for the future of the organization. Attendees will also learn the latest information about Ruritan programs and procedures.

Current Lt. Governors are expensed to this conference. Lt. Governors moving up to District Governor must attend this conference to be eligible for reimbursement of one-half of their National Convention expenses unless the National President approves their absence. Current District Governors and Zone Governors are not required to attend this conference but are highly recommended to attend.

As stated earlier, Lt. Governors are expensed to this conference. Others may attend at their own expense and for a nominal registration fee. The Ruritan National President will consider special circumstances such as substitutions on a case-by-case basis.

Incoming and outgoing District Governors will be paid ½ of their expenses to the 2026 National Convention in Lexington, KY, provided they complete the requirements below.

1. Lt Governors attend the 2025 Summer Leadership Conference (unless excused in writing by the National President).
2. They attend Governors' Training at the 2026 National Convention.
3. They attend substantially all meetings at the 2026 National Convention.
4. The district's form 990 has been filed with the IRS by February 15 filing deadline for the fiscal year end of September 30.

****All expense vouchers must be submitted within 90 days after 2026 National Convention.**

2025 RURITAN SUMMER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

July 18-19, 2025
Highlander Hotel
604 Tyler Ave Radford, VA

Cost: Registration - \$99

Friday Afternoon

(Games, Picnic & Training)

Belmont II Ruritan (Belview Methodist Church) 3619 Onyx Dr. Radford, VA

4PM - *Dunking Booth & Cornhole Tournament*

All Proceeds will go to "PROJECT FOCUS"

6PM - Picnic (Hot Dogs with all the fixings, dessert, tea, soda and water

7:30PM - Training for Zone Governors & Dist. Lt. Governors (Others are welcome to attend)

Saturday, Conference

The Highlander Hotel (Radford University), 604 Tyler Ave Radford, VA

8AM-9AM - Registration

9AM-12PM - Morning Workshops

12PM-1PM - Lunch

1PM-3:30PM - Afternoon workshops and roundtable activities and discussions

Attendees will walk away with valuable tools to grow their club memberships, make a greater impact in their communities, enhance their leadership skills, and so much more. Don't miss this opportunity to learn, connect, have some fun and be inspired!

This year's conference will be facilitated by **author and speaker Gene Burgess**, who was the **keynote speaker** at last year's Summer Leadership Conference. We're excited to have him back to share his insights and expertise!

THRIVING COMMUNITIES



Youth Summer Leadership Conference

Announcing the first ever Youth Summer Leadership Conference in Radford, Virginia. Youth ages 12 to 17 are invited to attend the conference. This is a great opportunity to learn more about Ruritan.

WHEN

July 19th at Radford, VA
9:00 am.—5:00 p.m.

WHERE

Radford, Va in conjunction with the Summer Leadership Conference

COST

\$55.00 per youth participant

Clubs—Support our youth by supplying needed items for the backpacks

Supplies (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409094EAFA92E5-55671786-ruritan>)

Topics Covered at the Conference:

- *Different Officer Positions within Ruritan
- *AI and Internet safety
- *Personality Traits
- *Expanding the Scope of Ruritan
- *Personal Communication and Education
- *Team/Life Building Skills

Youth Service Project during the event:

Youth will help organize back packs for schools in Radford and Western North Carolina.

Supplies Needed from to help those students in need are as follows:

- Colored Pencils (24 ct.)
- Construction Paper (variety of colors - 120 ct.)
- Crayons (24 ct.)
- Pencil Topper Erasers (25 count)
- Folders (made from a durable material)
- Marbled wide-rules composition notebooks –not spiral bound
- Glue sticks (2 pack)
- Washable Markers (10 pack - variety of colors)
- No. 2 Pencils (12 count)
- Notebook Paper (150 count - Wide Ruled)
- Pencil box
- Pencil Grips (20 count)
- Large Block/Bevel Pink Eraser (3 pack)
- Pencil sharpener (portable and sized to accommodate pencils and crayons)
- Scissors (blunt tipped for safety)
- Prong folders with pockets
- Pack of Highlighters (4 count)
- Spiral Notebook (Wide Ruled)

Youth Leadership Conference

Concurrent with the Summer Leadership Conference

Saturday, July 19, 2025

The Highlander
600 Tyler Avenue
Radford, VA

Workshops may include:

1. Different Officer Positions

This workshop introduces youth to various leadership roles within organizations, particularly within Ruritan. Participants will learn about the responsibilities and skill sets required for each officer position.

Objectives: Understand the roles and duties of different officer positions (President, Vice-President, Secretary, etc.); Encourage youth to consider leadership opportunities; Develop confidence in taking on leadership roles in their communities.

2. Team/Life Building Skills

This session focuses on essential life skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving. Participants will engage in activities that highlight the importance of working collaboratively to achieve common goals.

Objectives: Foster teamwork and communication among participants; Teach problem-solving techniques in group settings; Build confidence in individual contributions to team success.

3. AI Training with Internet Security

A modern session covering the basics of artificial intelligence (AI) and online safety. Youth will learn how AI is integrated into everyday technology and the importance of maintaining internet security.

Objectives: Gain a basic understanding of AI and its uses; Pros and cons of AI use; Learn about the importance of protecting personal information online; Develop strategies for safe and secure internet usage.

4. Personality Traits/Leadership Skills

This workshop explores different personality types and how they influence leadership styles. Participants will discover their own personality traits and learn how to apply them effectively in leadership roles.

Objectives: Identify individual personality traits; Understand how different traits impact leadership approaches; Learn how to leverage personal strengths in leadership situations.

5. Expanding the Scope of Ruritan

Focused on how youth can play a role in expanding Ruritan's reach and impact, this session will explore innovative ideas for attracting new members and engaging communities.

Objectives: Inspire youth to think creatively about growth opportunities for Ruritan; Learn strategies to engage a broader audience, including youth participation; Understand the importance of community involvement in organizational growth.

6. Personal Communication and Education

A session dedicated to enhancing personal communication skills and the importance of continuous education. Participants will engage in activities designed to improve public speaking, listening, and interpersonal communication.



Ruritan Summer Leadership Conference and Youth Conference July 18 -19, 2025

Registration includes Friday picnic at Belmont II Ruritan Club and lunch on Saturday. Conference materials are included.

Complete this form and include \$99 per person for Adult Conference and \$55 per person for the Youth Conference by July 1.

Every attendee adult and youth will receive a Conference Briefcase that includes the "Thriving Communities" logo.

For the safety and well-being of all attendees, youth participants must be accompanied by a parent or adult guardian. Additionally, they must be transported to Friday's picnic by their parent or guardian, as transportation will not be provided. Thank you for your cooperation in making this a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone! All adults who will be involved with or interacting with youth during the event must be willing to undergo a background check.

I will be attending the **Youth** Conference and will include a \$55 payment ☐

I will be attending the **Adult** Conference and will include a \$99 payment ☐

Name: _____

Title: _____ Member ID: _____

Address: _____

District: _____

I have _____ guests for the Friday picnic (hot dogs) at \$15 each = \$_____ total

I have _____ guests for Saturday boxed lunch at \$30 each = \$_____ total

Credit Card Payment

Zip Code associated with the card _____

Name on Card: _____

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ CVC: _____

All credit card transaction will include a 3.5% service fee.

****Return this form no later than July 1, 2025 to Ruritan National
P.O. Box 487, Dublin, VA 24084.****

Please reserve
your hotel room at
the Highlander in
Radford, VA, no later
than June 18th by
calling 540-744-1500.
Ask for the RURITAN
rate.

2025 National Board Committee Reports

STRATEGIC PLANNING WITH THE LONG-TERM PLANNING COMMITTEE:

A PATH TO GROWTH, TRAINING, AND COMMUNICATION

In August 2023, we started a journey to make Ruritan better for the future. We followed a plan based on the book *Rhythm* by Patrick Thean, which helped us set goals, track progress, and make changes when needed. This process has been all about learning, teamwork, and committing to a plan that will help our organization grow.

How We Got Started

Our Long-Term Planning (LTP) committee met every Sunday to read and understand *Rhythm*. Since strategic planning can be complicated, we brought in a consultant to help us. This expert explained the process to the National Board of Directors (NBOD) and helped us identify the biggest challenges Ruritan faces.

We focused on three key areas:

- Growth – Getting more members and keeping them involved.
- Training – Offering leadership and education opportunities.
- Communication – Making information clear and easy to share.

Defining the Strategy

In August 2024, we did a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis, and answered important questions about our vision. We then created a list of key priorities for the NBOD to review and vote on in December 2024.

After setting our top goals, we made a plan with specific steps and deadlines. Since we can't do everything at once, we focused on the most important projects first. Other ideas were set aside for later so we could stay organized and effective.

Putting the Plan into Action in 2025

In 2025, we combined the national committees into three committees which will focus on achieving the goals for our three key areas. But setting goals isn't enough—we must follow through.

We will check our progress every three months at the board meetings to make sure we're on track. If something isn't working, we'll adjust our plan and get the resources we need to stay on course.

Looking Ahead to 2026

In August 2025, we will review:

- What we accomplished during the year.
- Challenges and opportunities we faced.
- Goals we didn't tackle in 2025 and whether they should be reconsidered.
- New goals to vote on for 2026.

By repeating this structured process each year, we ensure Ruritan continues to grow and improve in a smart and organized way. Working together, we can make smart decisions and build a strong future for our organization.



2025 National Board Committee Reports

GALLOPING TOWARD GROWTH

As 2025 seems to be zooming by we are seeing some progress. Two new clubs have been added so far this calendar year. That means two additional communities will be served through the efforts of new Ruritan volunteers!

Our goal in 2025 is the addition of two new clubs per District, a total of 72. That might seem like a pretty lofty number but is certainly attainable. As we travel to other Districts, think about all of the communities where there is no sign of a Ruritan club. EVERY community needs to have a Ruritan club!

We, as Ruritan members all know and can appreciate our service to our communities, but what happens when there is no safety net like us? We often hear horror stories of what people go through.

The beauty of Ruritan is that we are often the first responders to the needs of our neighbors and friends. Without Ruritan clubs, how are the immediate needs of people met? Not knowing how to pay one's next heating bill or even purchase groceries can be a traumatic experience. This is where Ruritan steps in to help fill the gap!!

That is why we have the challenge to start 72 new clubs this year. It isn't numbers for numbers but rather the impact that this many more clubs can provide to those who so desperately need us.

As we think about **Galloping for Growth** and starting new clubs this year, think about the odds of winning Horse Racing's Triple Crown. It's only been accomplished 13 times. One of the greatest horses to ever win was the horse Secretariat. Secretariat had the advantage of having a heart much larger than any other horse in history.

That is also why Ruritan has the opportunity and ability to continue to grow and help more communities. Our members are a community's Secretariat and have huge hearts for helping others, one community at a time. Recognizing and helping to meet the immediate needs of our communities is the most rewarding endeavor you'll ever undertake.



2025 National Board Committee Reports

TRAINING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Training Committee along with Sarah Kelly, Crystal Andrews, David Thompson and Rebecca Lane has been meeting on the second Tuesday of the month with a meeting on February 20th and a special meeting with Pearl Underwood on the Growth Committee on Tuesday March 4th. Julie Marshall will serve as secretary of the committee. The committee is working on the Summer Leadership Conference David has contacted Gene Burgess and he has agreed to lead the SLC. We will need volunteers to be presenters for some of the workshops. We will have a youth event at the SLC. Pearl Underwood from the Growth Committee and Billy Hobbs from the Training Committee are working on this. The youth will also do a community service project. They will put together school kits for the Radford area schools and Western North Carolina area. The Growth Committee includes the youth. David said we need training for Zone Governors and Lt. Zone Governors and he would like to do this on Friday night. He plans on contacting all Zone Governors and ask them to come. David and Crystal are working on the meal for Saturday for the SLC and hope to have a buffet-style meal.

Anyone can attend the Summer Leadership Conference, so if you want to be a leader we would encourage you to register for this conference. Login to MMS and go to my record. Click on EVENTS

at top right in box, then click on Register for the Summer Leadership Conference. Follow instructions.

The Training Committee is working on reviewing the training modules and working to incorporate training videos. I encourage others to go through the training modules and provide input on what they like and what can be changed or added. I feel we need to involve the members, clubs and Districts. Everyone should take an active role in working together. Login to MMS and go to My Record, click on training. There you will find all the offices listed. Click on them to look at the training. You can send your input to jzehr56@gmail.com or billysparc@gmail.com.



2025 National Board Committee Reports

THE COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

The Communication Committee has met four times this year. The members are: Merlin Scales (co-chair), Larry Garrison (co-chair), Marty Sewell, Leon Alt, Raymond Cade, Patty Hamilton, Dave Wingett. In addition, President Becky Lane, President-elect David Thompson, Sarah Kelly and Diane Lawson have also attended on a regular basis..

The committee sees a need for communication improvements both internally and externally. From an internal stand point, the committee sees the importance of Zone Governors as key communicators to membership. It is also important for all clubs to have at least one e-contact and preferably more than one. The e-contact must share what they receive at club meetings.

Most of our time has been spent on external communication as that is what we see as a key to growth. "Ruritan is one of the best kept secrets" is a phrase used over and over, but it is true. We need to use social media as a driver to overcome this. We have discussed the use of you-tube, Instagram, face book and X. It is probably no surprise to you that we have not spent much time discussing newspapers, radio ads and television commercials. One of our members (Raymond Cade) daughter Celeste Hickman is extremely knowledgeable with social media tool. She joined the group for our March meeting and helped discuss various approaches for us to use these tools. She helped us a lot and will hopefully join us in the future for additional help.

The committee is developing "why questions or why Ruritan" to help develop short videos to help promote Ruritan. Speaking of videos, there are now training videos on the Ruritan National website. Go to member resources and scroll down (about the 6th item down) click on New Ruritan Training Videos, there a lot to choose from! Please check these out!!!

Do you have an elevator speech? What is that? Imagine if you were on an elevator with a non-Ruritan and had just a short period of time to tell them about Ruritan. What would you say? What are three questions that you would want answered if you were in their shoes? Our National President Becky Lane came up with these:

1. Why you joined
2. What benefits have you found by joining
3. What are some projects your club does

Being prepared with a well thought out answer that you deliver in a short period of time may be the difference between a new member and a quiet ride!

Has your club been reporting how many scholarships and their value it has given out this year? How about the total amount of community service hours and monies donated back to the communities? If all clubs would report these totals, we could really shine in the eyes of the non-Ruritan world and have people wanting to join to be part of such a great organization. Help us shine a light on all the work you do and use it to make us stronger.

The committee would appreciate any suggestion that you may have, Please share your thoughts with one of the members (listed above). See you in Kentucky!

Ruritan - Serving Our Communities

HOW IS YOUR DISTRICT DOING?

1 - HOLLAND (2 POINTS)

2 - CHESAPEAKE

3 - RAPPAHANNOCK (6 POINTS)

4 - APPOMATTOX

5 - PEAKS OF OTTER

6 - SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA

7 - NATURAL BRIDGE

8 - WOODROW WILSON

9 - ROCKINGHAM (4 POINTS)

10 - POTOMAC (2 POINTS)

11 - ALBEMARLE

12 - ROANOKE (2 POINTS)

13 - ROCKY MT-DURHAM (4 POINTS)

14 - GREENVILLE-GOLDSBORO

15 - CAPE FEAR (6 POINTS)

16 - SPARTAN

17 - COLUMBIA

19 - UPPER WEST VIRGINIA

20 - LOWER WEST VIRGINIA

21 - BLUEGRASS

22 - TENNESSEAN

23 - CHEROKEE

24 - GEORGA-NORTH ALABAMA

26 - HERMITAGE

27 - ALABAMA-FLORIDA

28 - OHIO (2 POINTS)

29 - WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

30 - DELMARVA-NEW JERSEY

31 - PIEDMONT (4 POINTS)

32 - DAN RIVER (2 POINTS)

33 - LINCOLNLAND (4 POINTS)

34 - NEW RIVER (38 POINTS)

35 - DAVY CROCKETT (2 POINTS)

36 - SMOKY MOUNTAIN

37 - MIDDLE AMERICA (2 POINTS)

38 - RAPIDAN

40 - TALL CORN

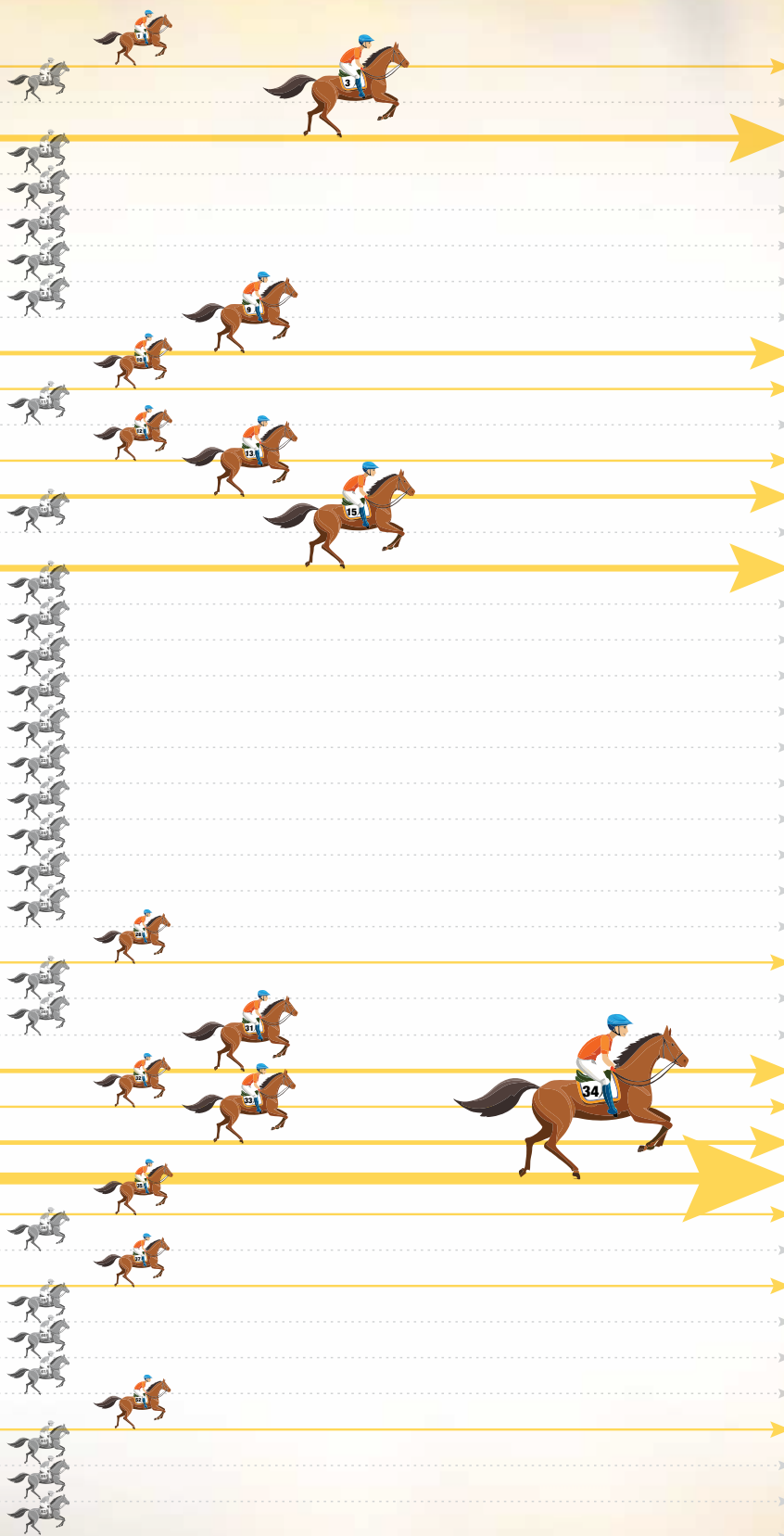
41 - OPPORTUNITY LAND

52 - GREAT PLAINS AREA (2 POINTS)

53 - GULF AREA

55 - NEW YOK AREA

63 - AFFILIATE AREA





GALLOPING TOWARDS GROWTH



HOW TO WIN POINTS PER DISTRICT

Every 5 net new members =
2 POINTS

Each individual member in your district
that earns the 2025 new member bar =
2 POINTS PER MEMBER PER 5 NEW MEMBERS

Every new adult club =
10 POINTS

Every new Ruriteen club =
5 POINTS

District submitting your hours/dollars/scholarship
information to President Becky by 10/30/2025 =
5 POINTS

Every person in your district that is registered
to come to the 2026 National Convention
in Lexington by 12/20/2025 =
2 POINTS

District that have all their club officers
entered into MMS by 12/31/2025 =
5 POINTS

District that have all their district officers
entered into MMS by 12/31/2025 =
5 POINTS



The winning district will be awarded
the galloping towards growth
RUN FOR THE ROSES AWARD
at 2026 NATIONAL CONVENTION
in Lexington, Kentucky



2026 Ruritan National Convention

**January 23-24 in
Lexington, KY**

Plan Your Trip Now!



Visit Lexington!



Scan Here for Marriott Resort 3D Tour!



Scan Here to Book Your Group Rate!

LEXINGTON CONVENTION AT A GLANCE

January 23-24, 2026



Convention Highlights

Rudy Bear Drop – Purchase Rudy Bears to be given to the Union City Ruritan Fire Department

Make pillowcases to donate to Military Missions



DAY	ACTIVITY
Wed	Foundation Trustee Meeting
Thurs	NBOD Meeting Tours and explore Lexington on your own Registration/Vendors/Ruritan Supply Candidate Tables Silent Auction Pre-Convention Workshops Nominating Committee w/Candidates Chair Meeting w/Friday Participants Sgt at Arms Meeting Caucuses
Friday	APNP Meeting Registration/Vendors/Ruritan Supply Outgoing DG/Board Breakfast 2025 Lt. Governor Training Club and District Officers Training Tours and explore Lexington on your own Candidates Tables Chairs Meeting w/Saturday Participants Bylaws/Resolutions for delegates First Timers/New Gold Key reception Opening/Flag Ceremony/Memorial Service Business Session Workshops Derby Day w/karaoke-Live Auction-hat contest/Run for the Roses Award/Photo Booth/District Food Tables/Pottery Wheel Caucuses
Saturday	Registration/Vendors/Ruritan Supply Voting Workshops Business Session Installation banquet/Entertainment
Sunday	Worship Service NBOD meeting

**** Please Note: Registering on Your MMS Profile is Preferred ****

*** In MMS, go to My Record, then Events ***

Ruritan National Convention – Lexington, KY January 23- 24, 2026



Register up to two people using this form. Use more forms for additional people. One attendee below must be a Ruritan member. Confirmation will be emailed to the Ruritan attendee for their party.

Aside from some limited special seating, everyone will be seated for meals on a "first come, first served" basis. You should send your registration forms in together if you want to be seated with specific attendees.

Please print or type

1st Attendee: _____

Member#: _____

Club: _____

District: _____

Phone number: _____

2nd Attendee: _____

Member# (if member): _____

Club: _____

District: _____

Phone number: _____

Check the items below that apply:

____ I have the following food allergies/restrictions:

____ I need handicapped-accessible seating at meals.

____ Send information on wheelchair/scooter rental.

____ I have 50 years or more of perfect attendance.

____ This is my first convention.

I expect to be a voting delegate for the

_____ Ruritan Club.

Check the items below that apply:

____ I have the following food allergies/restrictions:

____ I need handicapped-accessible seating at meals.

____ Send information on wheelchair/scooter rental.

____ I have 50 years or more of perfect attendance.

____ This is my first convention.

I expect to be a voting delegate for the

_____ Ruritan Club.

Please provide us with the names of your guest who are NOT purchasing a full package but will be attending the convention. We will create them a name badge.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

We honor and thank all those who have served, are currently serving, and military personnel. For special recognition, please provide your branch of service.

Name: _____

____ U.S. Army

____ U.S. Air Force

____ U. S. Marines

____ U.S. Navy

____ U.S. Coast Guard

____ U.S. Space Force

Ruritan National Convention – Lexington, KY

January 23 - 24, 2026

Meals

There is a deadline for meal count guarantees with the caterer. Registrations received after January 1, 2026, will be processed as walk-ins, and meals will not be guaranteed for walk-in registrants. To be guaranteed a convention polo, your registration must be received by December 12, 2025. Kid's meals are available upon request.

You must select Package 1 or Package 2 in order to vote at the convention.

Cancellations received within 10 days of the start of the convention will be eligible for base registration reimbursement only.

Packages include the Derby Party Reception, access to exhibits, business meetings, workshops, voting, and all other convention activities.

Package Options

	Qty	Price	Total
Full Package includes the Saturday Installation Banquet and Derby Party Reception	Package 1	\$255	
Base registration and Derby Party Reception	Package 2	\$180	

Extra Meal Tickets and Items

Must purchase at least one package above to purchase additional meal tickets

	Qty	Price	Total
Derby Party Reception	Reception	\$51	
Saturday Installation Banquet	Banquet	\$75	
Rudy Bears - Donated to Ruritan Union City Fire Department	Rudy Bears	\$12.50	
I want a 2026 Convention Polo Pre-sales Only – Order Now ___S___M___L___XL___2XL___3XL ___XLT___2XLT___3XLT	Polo	\$40	
	Total		

Payment Information

_____ Check Enclosed

_____ Please charge my card

*****All credit card transactions will include a 3.5% service fee**

Card # _____

Expiration date: _____

Security code: _____

Zip code: _____



Mail to: Ruritan National, P.O. Box 487, Dublin, VA 24084

PLAN YOUR VACATION IN LEXINGTON NOW

[Horse Activities/Tours](#)

Horse Farm Driving Tour [Explore Kentucky's Horse Country: A Scenic Road Trip](#)

Keeneland | [Keeneland](#)

- 6:00am-9:00am – Watch morning workouts free at Keeneland and then enjoy a hearty country breakfast cafeteria style alongside jockeys and trainers at the Keeneland Track Kitchen

Three Chimney's Tour | [Three Chimneys Farm - A worldwide leader in the Thoroughbred breeding industry.](#)

Kentucky Horse Park | [Kentucky Horse Park](#)

Old Friends | [Home](#) | [Old Friend Equine](#)

[Places to See](#)

Street Art Guide | [The Street Art Guide](#)

Mary Todd Lincoln House | [Mary Todd Lincoln House](#)

Shaker Village | [Plan A Trip](#) | [Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill](#)

[Chocolate](#)

Old Kentucky Chocolate | [Old Kentucky Chocolates](#)

Rebecca Ruth Chocolate | [Store Locations & Hours – Rebecca Ruth® Chocolates](#)

[Regional Distilleries](#)

Buffalo Trace Distillery
<https://www.visitlex.com/listing/buffalo-trace-distillery/5969/>

Woodford Reserve Distillery
<https://www.visitlex.com/listing/woodford-reserve-distillery/5810/>

James B. Beam Distillery

[James B. Beam Distilling Co. - Bourbon Distillery](#) | [JBBD Co.](#)

[Wineries](#)

Talon Winery & Vineyards | www.talonwine.com

1922 House Vineyards & Winery | <https://1922housewinery.com/>

Harkness Edwards Vineyards | [Home](#) | [Harkness Edwards Vineyards](#)

Lovers Leap Vineyards & Winery | [Lovers Leap Vineyards and Winery in Lawrenceburg, Kentucky](#)

[Restaurants within One Mile from Hotel](#)

Sedona Taphouse

McDonald's Subway

Cracker Barrel

Red State BBQ

Little Caesars

Jimmy John's

Hot Head Burritos

Starbucks

[Other Notable Restaurants](#)

Holly Hill Restaurants | [Restaurants — Holly Hill](#)

[Shopping](#)

Eastland Shopping Center | 1209 Winchester Rd, Lexington, KY 40505

Fayette Mall | [Fayette Mall](#) | [Lexington KY](#)

2025 Foundation President Clinton Guy Cox



Learn More About It

I want to remind members that we are offering you a chance to enjoy a mini Ruritan Convention. We will be holding the Ruritan National Foundation Weekend on June 13 – June 15 at the Blackwater Lodge near Davis, WV. If you have never attended a National Convention, this is the time to find out what it is like to be around great Ruritan members and spend some time talking with them and sharing stories. You also get the opportunity to help students by contributing items for the silent and live auctions. All the proceeds from these auctions will help earn more money for the “Build Your Dollar” Scholarships. Please help students receive more money from their scholarship. Remember, your club gives the initial \$300, and then the Foundation builds on that amount using money that has been donated to the Foundation.

Your registration fee of \$65.00 for this weekend will be used to purchase tickets for Smoke Hole Caverns, Sky Lift at Canaan Valley, your banquet meal, and the entertainment. We are trying to give you a special weekend at some of the most beautiful areas of West Virginia. We have never had a Foundation Weekend in Upper WV, and we want to show off the beautiful state parks in our area.

After the Foundation Weekend, we have the Summer Leadership Conference on July 18 and 19. We will be giving out information about the contributions for the “Build Your Dollar” Scholarships and how you can help grow your funds and possibly build your own Permanent or Endowed/Contract Funds to build scholarships. We are determined to help you help your students earn the highest funds possible for college. We will also be discussing how the Birthday Club, a Tom Downing Fellowship, and the “Invest Today... Impact Tomorrow” program will help students receive more money for those scholarships. You are correct if it sounds like we are trying to get you to donate to the Foundation! The more money invested, the more money the student will receive.



CLUB AND DISTRICT NEWS

News From Ruritan: **HOLLAND District**

BURROWSVILLE CELEBRATES 65TH

Burrowsville has celebrated their 65th anniversary. Pictured (l-r) are charter member Roane Brockwell, Club President Manny Garcia, and Holland District Governor Phillip Bradshaw.

The club also awarded a \$2000 scholarship.



Pictured (l-r) are scholarship recipient Haley Bennett, Club President Manny Garcia, and Scholarship Committee Chair Rod Mustanski.

Club members Bob Winfree, Buddy Davis, and Club President Manny delivered 14 five-gallon containers of pull tabs to the Richmond Ronald McDonald House.



KINGS FORK TURNS 75!

Kings Fork celebrated their 75th Anniversary in March with a community Belgium Waffle Breakfast (and a group picture!).



DRIVER COLLECTS TOYS FOR TOTS

Driver recently held its annual Christmas Family Dinner. The dinner finalized collections for the club's annual drive to support the US Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots. Two local churches joined the club in collecting toys for this program.

Several club members, who are also Scout leaders in Troop 16, recently prepared and served a delicious dinner for over 150 Arrowmen, Scouts, and leaders of the Boy Scouts Wahunsenakah Order of the Arrow Lodge's Christmas banquet at Camp Pipsico in Surry County, Virginia. In preparation for the event, members smoked fifteen 20-pound turkeys, and baked spiral-sliced hams. The feast also included dressing, mashed potatoes, green beans, corn, cranberry sauce, and apple and pumpkin pies. This service project supported the Chanco Chapter of the lodge, which was responsible for this year's banquet.

Club members and BSA Troop 16 scout leaders brought their equipment and muscles to



restore the driveway at historic Glebe Episcopal Church. The project was to show our appreciation to the church for allowing both the club and scout troop to meet at their property during the year.



SURRY COUNTY BRINGS THE JOY

Organized by the Social Development Committee, **Surry County** purchased and donated toys for five children for Christmas. The club partnered with Surry County Social Services on the project.



CLUBS SHARE IN SWEET (AND SMOKEY) REWARDS

Windsor hosted its annual PIG PICKIN' at Heritage Park & Joel C. Bradshaw Fairgrounds, Windsor VA. Attendees enjoyed live music with good company and all-you-can-eat barbecue, coleslaw, beans, and cornbread.

Possum Hollow held a drive-through pick-up of barbeque pork butts at Saunders Supply in Chuckatuck, VA.

Smithfield Foods donated all pork products in support of the community outreach through this cooperative arrangement with the Smithfield Ruritan Club Foundation and the Possum Hollow and Windsor clubs. The clubs cook and smoke the barbeque for each of these two events overnight.

The Windsor club was chartered in 1932, the Smithfield club in 1935 and the Possum Hollow club in 1987. Their combined membership and service areas include the mid and northern area of Isle of Wight County and eastward to the Chuckatuck area of Suffolk.

Funds raised through barbecue events and other fundraisers by these three Ruritan clubs help provide tens of thousands of dollars each year for college scholarships and to address food and household insecurities. This includes donations to Christian Outreach for food, basic necessities, and children's books. The clubs also support Meals-on-Wheels, the Western Tidewater Free Clinic, payment of overdue student cafeteria accounts, teacher supplies, and summer reading programs at local Blackwater library branches. Their long-standing support includes charter sponsorships of Cub and Boy Scout troops, contributions to local volunteer fire and rescue departments, and even aid extended beyond state lines—such as helping families in Western North Carolina and Eastern Tennessee rebuild after flooding from Hurricane Helene.



DEEP CREEK SUPPORTS FIRST RESPONDERS

Deep Creek Public Service Chair Mike Kirsch presented a \$500 check to Jamie Rich of Law Enforcement United. The donation will support the 2025 "Road to Hope" bicycle ride to Washington, DC, scheduled for May during Police Week.



The club also presented Lieutenant Tom Bell of the Professional Fire Fighters of Chesapeake IAFF 2449 with a donation in memory of Captain Eric Scoby, who recently lost his battle with cancer. They also donated a new microwave oven to Deep Creek Central Elementary School for the teachers' lounge. Pictured are Social Development Committee Chair Joe Noha and Assistant Principal Dr. Julie Dashiell.

News From Ruritan: **HOLLAND District**



In February, the club honored the "Deep Creek Sweethearts" who have been married the longest. Club President Yvonne Covey presented the award to John and Elinor Horton, who have been married for 65 years.

The club hosted a fried chicken fundraiser in March and served over 900 meals.



HOLLAND JOINS COMMUNITY FOR VETERAN RECOGNITION

Holland club members joined community volunteers to place 14,000 wreaths at the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery in Suffolk, VA. Pictured (l-r) are Carson Daughtrey and his son, Caleb, Calvin Jones, Ronald Daughtrey, Curtiss Johnson, and Tommy Queen.



The club joined 20 churches and organizations in the Holland community food giveaway and supplied 200 cans of fruit cocktail. They also decorated the Ruritan National Monument with lights resembling a Christmas tree.

The club presented a donation to the Angel Quilters to assist with their efforts to provide quilts for children in need in Smithfield, Isle of Wight County, and the surrounding area. Pictured is club member Joe

Simmons with quilters Julie Hopkins and Nancy Trudeau.

LIBERTY SPRING REPORTS A BUSY YEAR

Liberty Spring reported a busy 2024. Their sausage (6000 + pounds) and BBQ Pork (500 pounds) fundraisers were very successful. A new meeting room was built by members which will enable the club to meet in their building year-round.

The building was also given a new coat of paint, a new name placed on the front doors and



the club sign was rebuilt. They hosted their first Citizen and Family Day, with families, local city council members and guests, along with live entertainment. Scholarships of \$1000.00 each were presented to four recipients.

A new Adopt-a-Highway initiative was taken on and club members built a handicap ramp for a community member and cut grass for those unable. Members also volunteered to

help a neighboring non-profit animal shelter with repairs to their facility. Phil Wheatley was awarded the club's Ruritan of the Year award in recognition of his leadership and participation in the club's activities.

The club has also had a busy start to 2025. In April, Club members and volunteers from the community came together to process over 2500 lbs of pork sausage for their Spring sausage sale. Several members have also worked to expand their meeting room. The club will also host a Family Day in May.



The club traditionally supports the American Legion Boys Camp, a weeklong participatory program in which students become involved in local, county, and state government operations. Club Treasurer Brian (center) presented a check to an event coordinator and a participant.

Their fourth roadside cleanup took place in May, and the club will be awarded an official Adopt-A-Highway sign from the city of Suffolk. The club made a monetary donation to a new local food pantry, and members continue to assist a neighboring non-profit

animal shelter with repairs to their facility.

CARROLLTON SUPPLIES SENIOR SERVICES

Carrollton helped Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia by donating several items on their Welcome Home Basket wish list. The baskets provide essential items to older adults transitioning off the streets into new homes.



GRASSFIELD CELEBRATES ACHIEVEMENTS

Grassfield celebrated Veteran's Day with new service flags on its flagpole. Richard Quintilone, representing Mason's Military Sojourner unit, presented Club President Jimmy Ramsey with a framed copy of "The Toast to The Flag."



The club partnered with the Grassfield Baptist Church and held a food and supplies drive for flood relief for southwestern Virginia. Pictured are Club Directors Anne Gwynn and Marty Wright.



In December, the club celebrated



100-year-old charter member Eddie Vincek (pictured with Club President Jimmy Ramsey) as their 2024 Ruritan of the Year and collected over 100 toys for Toys for Tots.



MEHERRIN HONORS VETERANS

Meherrin Club Past Presidents Mike Strickland, Al Reavis, and R.H. Bradley cooked and served a turkey dinner for veterans from the club and community in celebration of Veterans Day. Virginia State Trooper Catherine Tucker Jones spoke to the group about current Homeland Security efforts.



SMITHFIELD NAMES FARMER OF THE YEAR



Smithfield honored J.V. Oliver of Oliver Farms with their annual Farmer of the Year Award. Pictured (l-r) are Club Secretary Michelle Leccia, J.V. Oliver, Tyler Oliver, Jimmy Oliver, and Club Vice President Jamie Leccia.

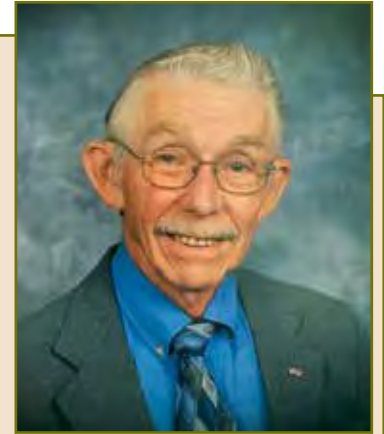
ZUNI DELIVERS FOR SANTA

Zuni delivered 29 bags of toys to Toys for Tots in Isle of Wight County, Virginia.



LONNIE ELMER HINES

Lonnie Elmer Hines, 93, went to be with the Lord, Thursday, December 19th at his home in Chesapeake with his loving family by his side. He was born in Kitty Hawk, NC to the late Ernest E. and Pearl Hines. For many years he and his wife Jean made their home in Wirtz, VA. He was a faithful member of Sandy Ridge Baptist Church, Rocky Mount, VA and locally attended Kempsville Baptist Church. Besides his parents he was preceded in death by his loving wife of 59 years, Jean Landing Hines; sister, Bernice Hyatt; and brothers, Wilber Hines and Ernest R. Hines.



He is survived by his daughters, Sharon Watkins & husband, Mel, Debbie Grubb & husband, Kevin; and son, Larry Hines & his longtime companion, Debbie Moose; grandchildren, Lynn Grubb Monteith & husband, John, and Josh Grubb & wife, Brittany; great-grandchildren Abigail, Parker, Caleb and Esther; bonus granddaughters, Amy Moose and Alissa Moose; nieces, Annette Curtiss, Dana Gray, and Lynn Manning; and nephews, Keith Hyatt and Andrew Hines.

Lonnie was a U.S. Navy veteran, having served during the Korean War. He was a member of the Telephone Pioneer Workers of America and retired from AT&T in April, 1989 after 43 years. He was a Scout Master with the Boy Scouts of America. He was a volunteer with the National Parks Services at Booker T. Washington National Monument and a volunteer with the Road Scholar Program (formerly Elderhostel) at W. E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center at Smith Mountain Lake. He joined Ruritans in 1984 and was a past Ruritan National Director as well as a Ruritan Forever, DRM and Tom Downing Fellow. He served from 1995 until 2016 on many mission projects with World Changers, Impact Virginia, Transformers, Mission Serve, and Virginia Baptist Disaster Relief, and did overseas missions through the Virginia Baptist Missions Board.



ABINGDON CELEBRATES HERITAGE

The Guinea Heritage Association aims to preserve the history and values of the Guinea community. The annual two-day Guinea Jubilee celebrates this unique way of life, drawing thousands of attendees. **Abingdon** supports the event as a vendor, with members volunteering their time and efforts to ensure its success, including assisting in the kitchen.



The club hosted a Soup Supper in January. Entries ranged from seafood soup to Italian-style soup to delicious meat combinations. John Snyder won the competition with his tomato soup. This supper is a favorite because members can show off their

culinary skills and be judged by "soup experts."



MECHANICSVILLE FLIPS FLAPJACKS

Mechanicsville hosted a pancake supper to raise money for Hanover County Christmas Mother. The club made a \$3,000 contribution.



MATHEWS MARCHES ON!



Mathews participated in their community Christmas Parade.

GLOUCESTER STEPS UP WITH SUPPLIES

Gloucester Club Member Tony Michura loaded his truck with donations of food and \$100 gift certificates for the Bread for Life Food Pantry. Tony has been donating his time to the food pantry for ten years. Club members Bob and Jackie Beyea delivered multiple bags of paper products and personal items to the Gloucester GUEST Program as one of the club's community service



objectives.

The club has partnered with the Gloucester Lions Club to bring park benches to their county. Club members Paul and Barbara Bauer delivered 28.5 pounds of plastic bags to Food Lion to be recycled into benches. They delivered an additional 218.8 pounds of plastic bags collected by Brent and Becky's Bulbs.



The club recently hosted guest speaker John Elkin, Jr. John has been a beekeeper for 15 years. He explained the varieties of honeybees, how they arrived in America via Jamestown in 1623, why they are crucial to pollination, as well as life cycles, colony life, reproduction, and survival skills. Pictured (l-r) are Club Director Eric Engle, John Elkin, and Club President Henry Thompson.



The club also hosted Stephanie Ripchick and her daughter Hannah, who gave a presentation about their family-run farm/agritourism business in eastern New Kent County. Hannah recently started her own business, Southern Grace Farm, which includes a 6-acre corn maze. Stephanie and members of the King & Queen Farm Bureau Women's Committee recently spearheaded the first Ag Day Festival held in King and Queen County. Pictured (l-r) are Hannah Ripchick, Club President Henry Thompson, and Stephanie Ripchick.



SHORT PUMP DELIVERS TO USO

Short Pump members Jon and Donna Hatfield recently delivered snack items to the USO Center at Richmond International Airport. The Center is a nicely appointed, quiet lounge where active-duty military can wait for their flights. It is free for them to use, and there is also no charge for food or drinks. The Center operates with minimum financial support, so it appreciates civic organizations like Ruritan helping to stock its shelves.



At their December meeting, the club recognized four members who had reached membership milestones of 40, 50, or more years. Pictured (l-r) are Norwood Nuckols, 59; Harold Englert, 50; Ray Gargiulo, 40; and Dave Hudgins, 53. National President Becky Lane and Club President Donna Hatfield made the presentations. *(Sadly, Mr. Englert passed on January 22).*

The club has also celebrated their 60th anniversary. Charter member Norwood Nuckols was given special recognition for his 60 years of service. He was presented with his 60-year membership pin and received the first slice of the anniversary cake from Past President Donna Hatfield. Also during the celebration, Jim Attkisson received his 50-year pin and special name badge from Club President Van Wagner.



Club members participated in a project with Rise Against Hunger, an international hunger relief non-profit organization, by filling bags with rice, grains, and vegetables that will be sent to help feed people in developing nations.



News From Ruritan: **CHESAPEAKE** District

WEST POINT SUPPORTS COMMUNITY THROUGH SERVICE

Over a year ago, West Point lost its community food pantry. In response, a small group, including a **West Point** Ruritan Club representative, launched the Little Free Pantry concept, setting up three volunteer-managed mini pantries. These pantries allow those needing food access while volunteers—including individuals, churches, and businesses—help keep them stocked. The club has actively supported this initiative with food donations and financial contributions. The club organized a Fall Pulled Pork BBQ and Brunswick Stew fundraiser to further assist this effort. Additionally, they organized a food drive to support both the Little Free Pantries and other community food programs.



Each year, the club helps local elementary school students in need by providing essential winter clothing. Schools identify the students and provide anonymous reference numbers along with their clothing sizes. This year, the club provided winter boots, coats, and clothing for 36 students. Funds for this program were raised through a bratwurst fundraiser held at one of the Jammin' on the Point concerts. United Bank also made a significant donation and hosted a collection box for winter clothing donations.

The club partnered with the West Point Food Lion to distribute Christmas Food Boxes purchased by shoppers at the local store. This year, a total of 461 food boxes were distributed to individuals, churches, and community food pantries, ensuring local families had food for the holiday season.

News From Ruritan: **RAPPAHANNOCK** District

RUDY HELPS BEALETON-REMINGTON

Rudy joined **Bealeton-Remington** Club Director Jim Berger to present \$8000 in scholarships to Liberty High School-Bealeton 2025 seniors.



GAINESBORO KEEPS HOME FIRES BURNIN'

Several **Gainesboro** club members and family members cut several cords of firewood for a widowed neighbor who uses wood for heat. Ranging from age six to 65, they spent a little over four hours cutting, splitting, and stacking four to five cords of firewood.



NOKESVILLE-BRISTOW STAYS BUSY

Nokesville-Bristow recently hosted donors for a Red Cross blood drive, conducted a road clean-up, and donated Christmas gifts to senior rehab/living facility residents and families with students at two local schools. Members also helped with parking and traffic control during their community tree lighting and Christmas parade. They are planning a busy 2025 with activities including Bingo for seniors, road and stream clean-ups, food giveaways, and blood drives.



PATRIOT RURI-TEENS HONOR VETERANS

Patriot High School Ruri-Teens recently wrote and mailed 20 cards to Honor Flight Network's Operation Mail Call in Arlington, VA. The cards are provided to veterans of WWII and the Korean and Vietnam wars when they visit the memorials in Washington DC to thank them for their service to the country.



SHAWNEE WRAPS UP BUSY 4TH QUARTER

Shawnee had a busy fourth quarter for 2024. They did Christmas shopping for Bright Futures students and residents at local nursing homes. They helped their local rescue mission with Thanksgiving and Christmas meals and delivered 100 bicycles to Toys for Tots.



The club has partnered with *Sleep in Heavenly Peace* to build beds for children in need, ensuring every child has a safe and comfortable place to sleep.



They also recognized Tyler Williams and Kathy Golio of Greenwood Fire & Rescue for their outstanding service to the community. In collaboration with Greenwood Fire & Rescue, the club hosted a successful spaghetti dinner to raise funds for their annual Kids' Christmas Shopping event. Additionally, their Pancake Breakfast fundraiser helped support this year's scholarship program for local students.



SUMERDUCK HONORS VETERANS AND CELEBRATES NEW MEMBERS

Sumerduck members celebrated their local veterans by placing flags in local cemeteries. Pictured (l-r) are Wilson Clatterbuck, Elizabeth Bender, Regina Baucom, Lenny Grove, Linda Bender, Ron Roberts, Connie and Tom Mullenax, Patty Embrey, Tracie Costello, and Darlene Constant.



The club installed seven new members in November. Welcome aboard Julie Dickinson, Malachi Dickinson, Kimberly Beahn, Rebecca Maine, Jeanna Heflin Brown, Anthony Eller, Christy Duvall, pictured with Club President Patty Embrey.



Club members recently helped a neighbor who fell when exiting her home. The club financed the supplies, and Scott and Debbie Shephard lent their expertise in building a ramp.



STERLING COVERS SERVICE, SCOUTS, AND SUSTAINABILITY

Sterling launched the year with strong momentum, welcoming five new members. Living up to their motto, *"Making a Change from the Bottom Up,"* the club led a successful diaper drive, donating over 1,200 diapers to the NOVA Diaper Bank, a nonprofit supporting local families in need.



In a show of continued support for their chartered troop, Scouting America Troop 966 received a \$1,000 "Send a Scout to Camp" donation, ensuring all scouts can enjoy outdoor adventures. Sterling members and scouts also joined forces for a roadside cleanup, a Flag Retirement Ceremony, and a celebratory lunch hosted by the club.



Additional community outreach included donating refreshments to the Veterans Lounge at Washington Dulles Airport, sponsoring a CPR course,

writing uplifting letters to seniors in partnership with Love for Our Elders, and launching a Recycle Challenge with a goal to collect 1,000 pounds of plastic to help protect the environment.

SOUTHERN FAUQUIER STARTS STRONG

Formed less than a year ago, **Southern Fauquier** is the first new Ruritan club in the area in 57 years. The club has quickly grown to 34 members and has strongly impacted their community.

Highlights from their first year include:

- Distributing nearly 200 winter coats to local families.
- Supporting Mary Walter Elementary School with new playground equipment and a PTO donation.
- Hosting a "Fall Fiesta" and "Pancakes with Santa" to bring the community together.
- Donating "Rudy" bears to local fire departments and families in crisis.
- Assisting Bealeton Baptist Church in raising funds for youth summer camp.
- Co-hosting a Red Cross blood drive with the Remington Lions Club.
- Launching the Southern Fauquier Ruritan Foundation and securing 501(c)(3) status.
- Earning a \$2,500 Project Focus Grant to provide propane to flood victims in North Carolina.
- Organizing a successful 5K fundraiser.

With even more events planned for 2025, Southern Fauquier Ruritan proves that a small group with heart can make a big difference.

News From Ruritan: **RAPPAHANNOCK District**

WARRENTON HONORS LOCALS

Warrenton recently recognized their 2024 scholarship recipients. Pictured (l-r) are Kevin Sandoval, Vanessa Gutierrez, Lauren Lowenbach, Dylan Dammer, Sara Moore, Brandon Frear, and Karley Gray.



The club also recently recognized their 2024 Public Safety Law Enforcement Officers of the Year recipients. Pictured (l-r) are Warrenton Police Department Corporal Jason Asplundh, Senior Trooper Derek J. Mabie, Fauquier County Deputy Sheriff First Class Duy Duong, and Trooper Charles Scally.

News From Ruritan: **APPOMATTOX District**

CARTERSVILLE HELPS THEIR NEIGHBORS

Cartersville club members recently installed aluminum ramps for two local residents and completed a porch and steps for another community member.



News From Ruritan: APPOMATTOX District

BURKEVILLE STIRS IT UP

Burkeville held a stew fundraiser in March. Stew master Glen Norton prepared and cooked the stew for this event. Pictured (l-r) are Club Treasurer Wayne Norton, Club President Ronnie Armes, and Club Secretary Roger Norton.



News From Ruritan: PEAKS OF OTTER District

ZONE 4 LENDS A HAND

Zone 4 jumped into action when they heard about a family in need. Peggy and Terry Newman were going through challenging times, and the Zone 4 clubs stepped up to help with several loads of firewood and monetary donations. Pictured are Zone 4 Governor Gary Solomon, Terry and Peggy Newman.



CLIFFORD HOSTS FESTIVAL



Clifford recently hosted their Annual Sorghum Festival, which included craft vendors, food, games, and more.

BOONSBORO CELEBRATES 75!

Boonsboro recently celebrated their 75th anniversary. 2024 National President Robin Davenport (pictured with Club President Mary Foster and Club Vice President Ken Nolen) was on hand for the celebration.



NICKELSVILLE DELIVERS THE GOODS



Nickelsville delivers meals to elderly and shut-in neighbors each quarter. The local high school allows the club to use the cafeteria to prepare the meals, which are then boxed up and delivered throughout the community.

Club member Larry Culbertson, left with Club President Glen Broadwater, was presented with his 50-year name badge. Larry was recognized for his service to Ruritan and his community.



The club also donated to the Southwest Virginia Partnership, which provides ministry and mission outreach in their region.

The club recently welcomed new members Edward, Leslie, and Faith Ray (pictured with Glen Broadwater).



RIDERS UNITED SHARES BENEFITS OF RURITAN

Riders United brought Santa and gift bags filled with fleece throws and non-slip socks to residents of Nova Nursing Home.

The club recently hosted a charity ride to benefit veterans in their community.



SAM HOUSTON CELEBRATES 64TH



Sam Houston recently celebrated its 64th Anniversary and welcomed four new members. Dennis Engleman (right) received the President's Gold Key award, and Mickey Cochrane (left) was presented with a Tom Downing Fellow.



KERRS CREEK ENDS YEAR WITH CELEBRATION

Kerrs Creek closed out a bus year and celebrated its 85th anniversary. Pictured with the cake are 50+ year members Bill Jenkins, Wayne Spencer, and Ivan Branch.



Several members rang the bell for the Salvation Army. Rosanne Focciolo and Anita James volunteered on the coldest day of the year.

Club member Ron Perkins spearheaded the drive to decorate veterans' graves in a local cemetery, working with the Wreaths Across America program.



DISTRICT IS RURITAN STRONG!

After hearing Shandy Denton's report at the National Convention about the devastation and ongoing issues resulting from Hurricane Helene, the **Natural Bridge District** clubs all joined together for Operation Vinegar Drop. Each club was informed of the need for cleaning vinegar in western North Carolina and rose to the occasion. Almost 200 gallons (\$4,000 worth) of cleaning vinegar was ordered through Amazon and delivered directly to Shandy for distribution. A special shout-out to **Catawba Valley** for sending 112 gallons just from their club!



News From Ruritan: **NATURAL BRIDGE** District

NATURAL BRIDGE HELPS CLEAN UP

Natural Bridge club members and families filled 29 bags with trash from 13 miles of community roads. The trash will be sorted for recyclables and other treasures. They plan to continue the clean-up on Rt 11 and in Glasgow over the next few months. The group enjoyed a soup and salad lunch afterwards in honor of a job well done.



Club member Scott Hannah and Club President Tim Manning delivered 198 US Constitution (and fascinating facts) booklets to Maury River Middle School. Pictured with our members are students from Ms. Stolarz's 7th-grade Civics classes.

The club joined with sponsors Friends of Natural Bridge State Park and Ricky Siler to offer a free Kids Fishing Day. Youngsters aged 12 and under were admitted free to fish at this annual event. The club donated fishing poles and gear, and Club President Tim Manning, Club Vice President Jimmy Black, and Gary Barker cleaned the fish caught by the children.



News From Ruritan: **WOODROW WILSON** District

CHURCHVILLE GETS TRASHED

Churchville VA members picked up 25 bags of trash to help clean up along US 250 in Churchville.

LOVINGSTON-ROCKFISH AWARDS WAYERS



Lovington-Rockfish Club President Theresa Wayers, pictured with Club Secretary Curtis McIver, received her Gold Key award for recruiting new members.



MIDDLEBROOK HONORS MISSING VETERANS

Middlebrook board member Paul Parish, a U.S. Air Force veteran, recently spoke about efforts by the U.S. Defense Department, service branches, and volunteers such as himself to identify, honor, and repatriate the remains of service members designated as missing in action from the nation's past conflicts. The empty table place setting at the club's dinner meeting symbolizes the inability of MIA soldiers

to participate in the routine aspects of American life and honors their service.

As an ongoing community service project, club members and other local volunteers have built several ramps for community members with restricted mobility.



With support from the **Mint Spring** and **Jolivue** clubs, **Middlebrook** recently honored the players and coaches of the Riverheads High School boys' and girls' basketball teams and their parents after another outstanding season with a friendly dinner at the Middlebrook Community Center.



WEYERS CAVE REPORTS PRODUCTIVE PROJECTS

Weyers Cave ended 2024 with their annual Breakfast with Santa, featuring home-style cooking and family activities. Santa and Mrs. Claus provided photo ops for parents and grandparents.



During the past year barbecue chicken and pork sales provided funds for donations to Bethany United Methodist Church Food Pantry, Weyers Cave Park Electricity, Church League Softball, Fort Defiance FFA and FCCLA, Young Life, Weyers Cave Fire Department, Augusta County Fair, Grottoes Rescue Squad, New Hope Fire Department, Central Valley Criminal Justice Center, Middle River Weekday Religious Education, Samaritans Purse, Washington County Disaster Fund, Disabled Veterans, USO, Wounded Warriors, Backpack Pals, Local Emergency Aid, and Verona Food Pantry. Pickle Ball courts were also added to the Weyers Cave Ruritan Memorial Park.



Service awards were presented to Gary Huffman and Harry Lee Houff (60 years), Tim

News From Ruritan: **WOODROW WILSON District**

Wade (45 years), Tom Wilson (40 years), Dennis Houff (35 years), Tom Tourje (30 years), Malcolm Cameron (25 years), Danny Shreckhise (20 years), Sharon Ratzsch and Donna Houff (5 years).

The club held their first Bingo fundraiser in March. The community center's half-court gym was set up for 300 seats, but more tables and chairs were added as the crowd grew larger than expected.



At the March meeting, Olivia Tarbell, a senior at Fort Defiance High School, was recognized for her outstanding participation in club activities.

JOLLIVUE-BARTERBROOK, MINT SPRING HOST DINNER DATE

Jollivue-Barterbrook and **Mint Spring** have joined forces to host monthly community spaghetti dinners. The funds raised will support their community service projects and donations.



MASSIES MILL WELCOMES SANTA

Massies Mill partnered with the Nelson County Parks & Recreation Department for "Pictures with Santa @ The Piney River Caboose." They welcomed 89 children, along with their parents and grandparents, into the caboose to take pictures and talk with Santa. The train depot next door provided hot chocolate, cookies, and crafts for the children.



MAUR-BROOK-OLIVE HAS FUN IN PARADE

Maur-Brook-Olive and Rudy Bear participated in the Toms Brook Community Christmas Parade. They handed out candy and small gifts.



Club member Doris Morris (with Club Treasurer Phil Fauber) shared a thank-you note from St. Jude. Doris places St. Jude donation containers around town, and the club matches whatever she collects.



BRIDGEWATER HONORS MEMBERS

Bridgewater recognized Kenneth and Karen Will as their 2024 Citizens of the Year. They also installed new member Rick Eagle. Club Treasurer Keith Spitzer was recognized as the club's 2024 Ruritan of the Year.



FORT VALLEY MAKES A DIFFERENCE AT HOME AND ABROAD

Fort Valley has been coordinating the collection of care items for deployed military personnel, such as food, books, stationery, personal care items, etc. Packages have been shipped to 1st Lt Riley O'Hara, the daughter of a Fort Valley club member.



The club also sent 70 Rudy Bears for children in North Carolina communities affected by Hurricane Helene and volunteered as bell ringers to support the local Salvation Army during the holiday season.

The club sponsored its Third Annual Turkey Trot, a two-mile walk/run to benefit Matthew's Food Pantry. The event raised \$3,668.00; a

\$3,000.00 contribution from the Edinburg VFW brought the total donation to \$6,668.00.

The club continued to participate in Zone 4's Empty Stocking Project. Partnering with the Department of Social Services, Shenandoah County Ruritan Clubs shop for local children in need. The club participated in Wreaths Across America by placing remembrance wreaths on military graves at their local cemetery.



The Fort Valley club also sponsored the organization of the new Seven Bends Ruritan Club in Woodstock, VA.

LURAY HELPS HOMELESS MINISTRY

Luray Club Secretary Dave Naser presented a donation to Arise, a local homeless day ministry.



MOUNT CRAWFORD OFFERS HELP AND HOPE

Mount Crawford hosted a benefit breakfast for a local family, Ronnie & Betty Cornwell, pictured with Club Treasurer Jason Landes, who lost their home in a fire. The breakfast raised over \$20,000 for the family.



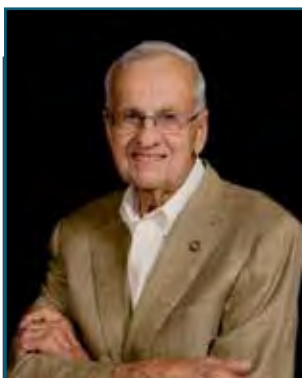
Club members decorated a patriotic Christmas tree that was auctioned off at the Fairgrounds Christmas festival. Pictured (l-r) are Randy Campbell, Kristy Campbell, Club President Kathryn Landes, Lexi Campbell, and Jaylin Keeler

PORT REPUBLIC HONORS VETERANS

Port Republic held their 21st Annual Veterans Dinner, honoring 22 local veterans in attendance.



DANIEL WEST BRUBAKER



Daniel West Brubaker, age 93, of Harrisonburg, Virginia, passed away peacefully in his residence at the Bridgewater Retirement Community on Saturday morning, March 15, 2025. Dan was born on July 12, 1931, in Callaway, Virginia (Franklin County), the son of the late Riley Elmer Brubaker and Junie Boitnott Brubaker.

Affectionately called Daddy Dan by his family, he met his future bride (Nancy Lee Revercomb Brubaker) on a train ride in 1950 to the National 4-H Congress in Chicago. They were united in marriage on August 23, 1952, in the Clover Hill United Methodist Church and started their married life together in Franklin County. A year later, they returned to the Revercomb family farm in Ottobine in a worn-out Studebaker truck with all their worldly possessions on the back. Little did he know then that this move marked the beginning of a successful lifelong career in agriculture.

Dan first started Shenmont Farms in 1953 with 13 Guernsey cows, building one of the first milking parlors in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Using his father's experience in the wooden silo business, Dan's passion for the dairy industry led him to establish the Virginia Silo Company in the 1960s, putting his own design on the trending concrete stave silos of the time. The need for readily available concrete prompted him to later start Rockingham Redi-Mix and Rockingham Pre-Cast companies, with his entrepreneurial spirit driving him next to real estate. As a developer committed to revitalizing downtown Harrisonburg, he was among the first to envision the need for mixed-use commercial and residential spaces. After renovating and reestablishing the old Metro, Inc. and Rockingham Motor Company buildings, he became integral in forming Bluestone Land Company and other local developments.

A firm believer in giving back to his community, Dan was a leader in numerous local, state, and national civic boards. With 73 years of Ruritan National membership, that included serving as National Treasurer, and countless Clover Hill Ruritan chicken BBQs, he was also a passionate volunteer in the agricultural community. He served on many boards, including as member and past president of the Rockingham County Fair Association and in the American Guernsey Association. He and Nancy raised their four children in 4H, showing their Guernsey cattle in dairy shows across the country and later selling their award-winning cattle internationally.

As a private religious person, Dan was deeply committed to doing the right thing for the right reasons. He earnestly endeavored to have a positive impact on the lives of others, without expecting anything in return. A person of principle, his values and contributions did not go unnoticed. Dan and Nancy received many recognitions for their accomplishments and generosity, including the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Chamber of Commerce Entrepreneur of the Year Award and the Individuals in Philanthropy Award, and Dan's induction into the Virginia Livestock Hall of Fame with his brothers.

After 71 years of marriage and travel to all 50 states and all but one continent, Nancy passed away on August 19, 2023. Together, they are survived by their four children and nine grandchildren: Barry and wife, Nancy of Atlanta, Georgia (Jason, Oksana), D. Lynn and wife, Becky of Dayton, Virginia, (Lindsay, Brett), Tom and wife, LeAnne of Keswick, Virginia (Nicolaus, Patton), and Lisa and husband, Walter Hopkins of McGaheysville, Virginia (Hillary, Helena, Evan); 11 great-grandchildren; a brother, E. Cline Brubaker and wife, Mary Lee, and sister-in-law, Zelda Brubaker, all of Rocky Mount, Virginia.

Dan is preceded in death by his siblings Emory Brubaker, Galen Brubaker and wife, Ruby, and Francis Wampler and husband, Fred, all of Rocky Mount, Virginia.



JEFFERSON HONORS DEDICATION AND SERVICE



Jefferson MD recently recognized and honored four members who have been an integral part of the club for over 50 years. Pictured (l-r) are Charles (Chiz) Summers, with 60 years of service; and David Remsburg, and Dean Harper, with 52 years. Not pictured is Bill Hemp, who has 53 years of service.

Club members participated in an area road clean-up. They filled a pick-up truck bed with trash and half a blue bin with recyclables.

Pictured (l-r) are Casey Patrick, Jaime



Patrick, Gardner Duval, David Robinson, Jay Nedwick, Mikayla, Tigger Higgins, Bill Six, Kaliey, Kassie Higgins, and Theresa Furnari



The club also held its annual Breakfast with the Easter

Bunny for the community. The Brunswick High School Random Acts of Kindness club helped serve breakfast and later hosted an Easter egg hunt.

ROHRERSVILLE COORDINATES HELPFUL EFFORTS

Thanks in part to generous donations from many organizations, businesses and individuals from the Rohrersville and Boonsboro areas, **Rohrersville** Vice President Tim Fauble coordinated an effort to help provide donations and relief to the families impacted by Hurricane Helene in Western North Carolina, especially in Marshall and nearby small communities. Over \$1500 in items were delivered in four separate trips, including kerosene heaters and fuel, generators, propane heaters and fuel, camping cook stoves and lanterns, electric cords, blankets, dog/cat food, non-perishable food, clothing, tools, toys, and much more. Around \$750 in toys were donated to the Christmas toy drive in Weaverville, NC.



MAUGANSVILLE TAKES ACTION FOR A CLEANER COMMUNITY

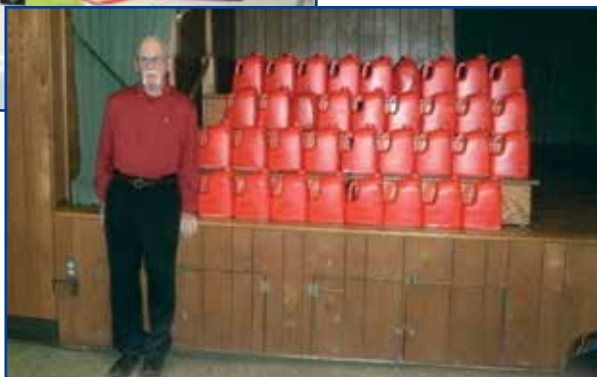
The **Maugansville** S.W.A.T. (Stop Waste and Trash) Team members recently demonstrated their commitment to community service by cleaning up a local highway. Pictured (l-r) are Mike and Leah Schaefer, Dave Post, Charlie Lee, Terry Hovermale, and Marty Lumm, who took part in this effort to maintain a cleaner and safer environment for their community.

The club hosted representatives from the American Red Cross, the Washington County Commissioners Office, and family members of David Keener.



Dave,

a lifelong Maugansville resident, has donated 36 GALLONS of blood through the Red Cross blood drives and has been donating for over 50 years. Gallon containers painted red were displayed to represent that amount. The Red Cross estimates that over 2000 lives were saved by his donations. David's father donated 35 gallons, and his brother has donated 22 gallons.



BURKITTSVILLE AWARDS SENIORS

Burkittsville awarded five \$1,500 scholarships to graduating seniors from Brunswick and Middletown High Schools. Pictured (l-r) are Taylor Fry, Roselyn Arias, Alayna Hu, Trinity Coldren, and Brooke Munday.



SHADY GROVE DELIVERS ON HURRICANE RELIEF

Shady Grove and its chartered scouting units have partnered with Chesterfield Ruritan Club in Morganton, NC, to collect donations for the victims of Hurricane Helene in western North Carolina. The club made several deliveries of jackets, sweaters, hoodies, blankets, comforters, diapers, hats, gloves, and medical gloves to the Chesterfield club, who then delivered the items to the victims in the hurricane-ravished mountains just a few miles away.



WILLIAMSON HONORS LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE



Williamson awarded Jaren Stoner its Most Distinguished Member Award in recognition of his leadership and dedication to the club. Joyce Hawbaker was also recognized for her service. National Tom Downing Fellow Awards were presented to Evelyn Crider and Eric Gossard.



CHURCHVILLE HOSTS GAME OF THROWS

Churchville recently hosted a Corn Hole Tournament fundraiser. Local businesses donated the door prizes.



DISTRICT HONORS MILESTONES

Several clubs in the Albemarle District are celebrating milestone anniversaries. National Director Roger Peterson presented certificates to representatives from **Sunbury** (90 years), **Gates** (85 years), **Parksville** (75 years), **Pasquotank** (85 years), and **Nixonton** (50 years).



HALL GOES FROM GIVING TO GUARDING

Hall Ruritan Club President Jim Brown recently presented donations to Ryan Boyce of the Dream Hunt and Fishing Program and to Ed Story, Chief of the Eure Volunteer Fire Department.

In celebration of Earth Day, members also participated in a roadside cleanup to support environmental stewardship. The club was honored to receive a donated AED (automated external defibrillator) and completed

training on its basic use.

The device has been installed in the club

building and is available for use by anyone utilizing the facility in case of an emergency.



News From Ruritan: ROANOKE District

MID-COUNTY SUPPORTS HURRICANE RELIEF

Mid-County took action to support victims of Hurricane Helene. Members purchased items from the needs list that were still available at our local Walmart and delivered three loads of supplies to hurricane relief centers in western North Carolina. These supplies included bug spray, bottled water, socks, plastic cutlery sets, cat and dog food, contractor-grade trash bags, and disposable gloves.



ROBERSONVILLE SHARES INFORMATION FOR VETERANS

Robersonville held a veteran's banquet where attendees received information about services offered by the Greenville VA clinic. Club members recently built and installed ramps for local residents.



News From Ruritan: ROCKY MT-DURHAM District

BAHAMA HOSTS FUNDRAISER FOR RELIEF

Bahama held a fundraiser in December to help with Hurricane Helene Relief in Western North Carolina. The event featured local bluegrass, country, and rock music performances and raised over \$5,000. In January, Club President Ada Glenn presented a check to the non-profit organization Baptist on Mission to benefit their relief efforts.



COOPERS CONTINUES HEALTHY ANNUAL PROJECT



Coopers continued their annual fruit basket project. Each December, they assemble fruit baskets that members deliver to local shut-ins. This year, they distributed 55 baskets.

WEST EDGECOMBE PRESENTS AWARDS

West Edgcombe Club President Rusty Proctor awarded Carla Pipkin the club's Ruritan of the Year award, and Joe Sawyer was presented a Tom Dowing. National Director Ron Reid presented the District's Veteran of the Year Award to club member Dwight Harper. Dwight served as a Marine in Vietnam and shared stories of his experience.



LYNNS CROSSROADS BRINGS JOY TO RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE

The Rocky Mount-Durham District and **Lynns Crossroads** presented a Tom Downing to District Governor and charter member Marshall Ross in recognition of his support and dedication to his community and Ruritan.

The club honored 33 local veterans by hosting a Veteran's Dinner. They also prepared 36 stockings for children at the Ronald McDonald House of Durham. The stockings were stuffed with crafts, coloring/puzzle books, crayons, markers or colored pencils, and stickers.



The club hosted their first Breakfast with Santa, with a special appearance by the Grinch. Shawn Martin was recognized as the club's Ruritan of the Year.



EFLAND HONORS TRADITION AND COMMUNITY

Efland recently held their 27th Annual Rodeo Event. This year, the sold-out event was dedicated to long-time club member Billy Cecil, who passed away last year. The proceeds go towards funding community service projects, the spring tractor pull event, and scholarships.



The club hosts a Cowboy Breakfast for cowboy and cowgirl participants. They also sponsor a friendly competition between teachers or principals from local schools, with funds donated to the winning school.



A special thank you goes to the Orange County Sheriff's Department, which provided security, Orange County EMS, and the Efland Fire Department, which helped with parking.



ELI WHITNEY BRINGS BACK THE FUN

Eli Whitney recently revived their Children's Carnival, which had been put on hold for the last few years. The event was free to the community, with games, food, prizes, face painting, and cakewalks throughout the three-hour program. Funding for the event was provided through local business sponsorships. The club entertained 65 children, along with parents, grandparents, and other family members. Led by Committee Chair Vicki McBane, over twenty-five club members worked over two days, from set-up to tear-down, to make the event a great success.



PINETOWN PARTNERS WITH SALVATION ARMY

Pinetown supported the Salvation Army and provided Christmas to 14 area children. Pictured (l-r) the gifts are Myra Stickland, Johnnie Hewitt, and Dale Fawver.



PINEY GROVE HOSTS SPECIAL VALENTINE

Piney Grove sponsored a Valentine Dance for the special needs adults of Sampson County at the Sampson Agro Civic Center, with over 200 in attendance.



SEVENTY-FIRST HITS MILESTONE

Seventy-first celebrated their 80th anniversary in April!

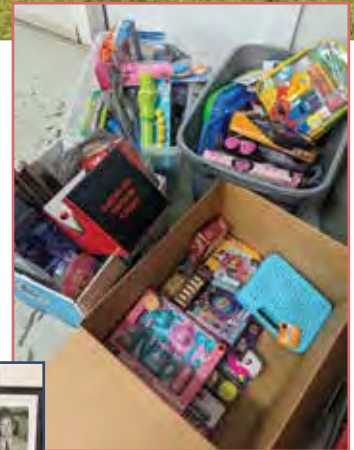


BUNNLEVEL HOSTS FESTIVAL AND FUN

Bunnlevel closed out 2024 with some fun activities. They hosted a Fall Festival with hay rides, games, and a special guest, "The Tarheel Traveler" Scott Mason. They cleaned up a local cemetery and held a Boston butt fundraiser. They collected toys and supplies for victims of Hurricane Helene and hosted breakfast with Santa.



The club honored Jamie Johnson, pictured with Club Vice President Beth Byrd, as their 2024 Ruritan of the Year.



JOHNSONVILLE DELIVERS COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Johnsonville Club President Mike Lancaster joined Larry and Louise Taylor to place flags at veterans' gravesites in local cemeteries for the annual Veterans Day ceremony. Local Scout Troop and Pack 713 did a great job presenting the flags.



Thanksgiving baskets (pictured), Christmas dinner boxes and fruit bowls, made possible by club fundraisers, were delivered to neighbors in need of food and encouragement. The club also



participated in their local Christmas parade and hosted the sixth annual Johnsonville Community Tree Lighting Ceremony. Festivities included pictures with Santa, Christmas carols, hot chocolate, and cookies. Mrs. Claus (Karen Cox)



read "The Christmas Story" and "Twas the Night Before Christmas," and the local children's bell choir returned to share a second year of Christmas music. Mrs. Claus, Rudy Bear (Ashley Holmes), and Santa (Rodger Nicely) visited the students and staff at Johnsonville Elementary School, handing out candy canes and wishing them a Merry Christmas.



National Director Roger Peterson awarded the Johnsonville 2024 Ruritan of the Year to Roger Jensen.

News From Ruritan: CAPE FEAR District



The club hosted a luncheon for Spout Springs Emergency Services. Club members prepared and served the buffet, which included a hearty meal of four different soups, sandwich fixings, and desserts.

Club members prepared Valentine and Easter-themed treat bags for patients at the local dialysis center. Club members also joined the Easter Bunny for a visit to Johnsonville Elementary School. School secretary Ms. Morrison (l) and Principal Renee Gilmore (r) are pictured.

Club President Mike Lancaster, Director Scott Owen, and Roger Nicely stepped up to repair a wheelchair ramp to help a local community member.



News From Ruritan: COLUMBIA District

GILBERT CELEBRATES HISTORY OF SERVICE

Raymond L. Boozer was honored at the Columbia District Ruritan Convention for 73 years of service with the **Gilbert** Club. Over his decades of commitment, he served as club president, committee chair, Zone Governor, and District Governor (1960) and helped establish new clubs in the region. His dedication has greatly benefited the Gilbert community, exemplifying the values of Fellowship, Goodwill, and Community Service.

The club celebrated their 75th Anniversary in November. Special guests included family members of the original 19 charter club members, National Director Donna Poulton, and District Governor Ginger Hardy and family. Nancy Harmon shared remarks on the original 19 charter members in 1949. The club also welcomed new member, Pastor Luke Swanson.

The club also supported district initiatives by donating \$200 to the Hurricane Helene Relief Project and \$300 in baby supplies to the Epworth Children's Home project.



SANDY RUN WRAPS UP BUSY 4TH QUARTER

Sandy Run recently hosted United States Marine Corps Veteran Nick Morrison (pictured with Club President Jill Crim and Club Director Amber Hardee). Nick flew from Indiana to talk about the Wounded Warrior Project. He shared that while serving in the Middle East after 9/11, an IED hit his vehicle, and several of his men were killed. He suffered with PTSD for fourteen years before finally getting help from the Wounded Warrior Project. He now works with this organization to help other veterans heal from war injuries.

In November, the club gathered frozen, canned, and boxed goods to distribute to needy families in their community. Each family also received a \$75 gift card to complete their Thanksgiving dinner



The club participated in Operation Christmas Child and assembled several boxes with toys and other small gifts. The organization distributes boxes to children around the world at Christmas. Pictured (l-r) are

Debra Harmon, Sheila Shanklin, Kay James, Jill Crim, Kelley Roche-Sanders, Bill Steele, Sandra Pees, Teresa Helms, Brenda Goodwin, and Becky Starnes. Several members also gathered to organize and bag sweet potatoes for a fundraiser. Pictured (l-r) are Jill Crim, Sheila Shanklin, Dennis Shanklin, June Kirkland, Kelley Sanders, Becky Starnes, and Kay James.



Environment Committee Chair Becky Starnes organized an Adopt-A-Highway cleanup. Members of the Sandy Run Ruritans, Sandy Run Lutheran Church, Sandy Run Fire Department, Denny Memorial Southern Methodist Church, Coon Hunters Club, and Sandy Run Museum gathered trash along Old Sandy Run Road 31 in preparation for the Sandy Run Christmas parade. Forty bags of trash and 4 tires were collected. The Ruritan Club provided refreshments.

The club recently welcomed new members Gabrielle Jourdain, Connor Hayes, and Cassandra Thompson. Gabby, Connor, and Cassie are college students who were the club's scholarship recipients. Pictured



News From Ruritan: **COLUMBIA District**

(l-r) are Beth Jourdain and daughter Gabby, Jammie Hayes, son Connor, Teresa Helms, Cassy, mother Christie Thompson, and Club President Sheila Shanklin.

Several members made their annual trip to deliver Valentine's Day gift bags to residents at Myers Residential Care Facility in Swansea. Pictured (l-r) are Willie Dunbar,



Kay James, Paul Waltz, Nelson Govan, Debra Harmon, Kelley Roche-Sanders, and George Waltz.



Club members Kelley Roche-Sanders, Amber Hardee, Hailey Hardee, and Principal Floyd Dinkins

presented donations for school supplies to several special education teachers. Pictured (l-r) are Kelly, teachers Veronica Primus, Amie Lober-Piece, Pravin Kamble, and Mohammed Akbar, Amber, and Principal Dinkins.



In April, the club welcomed new member Tyler Hearron (pictured with Kay James). They also visited the kindergarten classes at Sandy Run and Foundation Christian Schools to give them their *I Like Me* books. The books are personalized with the names of each student, his/her friends, principal, teacher, and positive character education traits that teach the students to become good citizens.

Pictured is Club President reading to the students.



Club members joined the Calhoun Soil & Water Conservation District's Mary Dixon and Ben Sease to teach students about the joy of gardening. Sandy Run School students planted vegetables and flowers in a raised garden bed at Sandy Run School.



News From Ruritan: **UPPER WEST VIRGINIA District**

HEADSVILLE COUNTRYSIDE HELPS RUDY MEET AND GREET

Headsville Countryside honored their veterans with a small gift at their November Meeting. Pictured (l-r) are Russell Haggerty, Rick Johnston, Raymond Mallow, Ed Dennis, and Eugene Tasker.

The club sponsored a parking meter during the holidays to introduce Rudy Bear to their community and dressed up to participate in the annual Fireman's Christmas Parade.



News From Ruritan: **LOWER WEST VIRGINIA District**

CLINTONVILLE HONORS ONE OF THEIR OWN



Clintonville recently honored club member Lee H. Johnson. Lee is a charter member having joined on March 5, 1954. At the time, Lee was serving in Korea with the 7th Division, 17th Regiment, Medical Company, so his father, Howard Johnson, signed him up. Lee has served as a club and district officers, attending over 70 meetings each year, and 32 National conventions. Lee has also been a driving force in helping the club grow with over 100 new members. Lee continues to serve as club secretary. Pictured (l-r) are Past National President Jerome Rodes, National Director and District Governor Patty Hamilton, Lee Johnson, 2024 National President Robin Davenport, and Club President Jason Lewis.

MAXWELTON AWARDS RURITAN OF THE YEAR

Maxwelton Outgoing President Brenda Wallace presented Elizabeth Christie with the 2024 Maxwelton Ruritan of the Year award. In addition to her activities with the club, Elizabeth volunteers with the Greenbrier County Humane Society and local food pantries.



News From Ruritan: **BLUEGRASS District**

CHOATEVILLE SUPPORTS MILITARY MISSIONS

Choateville Club President Chester Hillard presented a donation to Military Missions and several club members made over 50 pillowcases and sent 100 thank you cards for soldier packages. The club also donated 65 Christmas gift bags to a local senior home.



News From Ruritan: **TENNESSEAN District**

BELL RIDGE CELEBRATES BIG

Bell Ridge celebrated its 60th anniversary serving the Bell Ridge community. National Director Lynn Fillers and members of the Tennessean District cabinet joined the celebration. Club Vice President Tom Page, a 51-year member, entertained the gathering with stories of past club activities.



CEDAR GROVE SHINES A LIGHT ON RURI-TEENS

Cedar Grove TN hosted special guest speakers Ketron Ruri-Teen Adviser Angie Sybert and Ketron Ruri-Teen Club President Kynslie Jones. Kynslie was recognized for her community service work with an award from Wonder Works in Pigeon Forge, TN.



BRYANT BUILDS COMMUNITY PRIDE

Bryant continues to serve the Northeast Alabama community through hands-on volunteerism. Over spring break, members rolled up their sleeves to complete improvement projects at the local elementary school. The club has partnered with Alabama's Adopt-a-Mile program and proudly displays their dedication to keeping the community clean and welcoming.



MODEL CELEBRATES SCHOLARS

Model hosted their scholarship recipients for a club steak supper. A Brunswick stew fundraiser, which sold over 200 gallons, funded the scholarships. Club President Steve Sluder presented scholarships to Emma Rosemary Molyneux, Mia Love Riddle, and Lakin Hayes Dancause. Also pictured are stew masters Roy Echols and Les Hopper.



SPRING PLACE MARKS 75TH!

Spring Place has celebrated their 75th anniversary. Pictured (l-r) are District Governor Mark White, Club Director Phil LoBiondo, and 2024 District Governor James Mills.



BELOIT HONORS CHARTER MEMBERS



Beloit recently honored their two remaining charter members. The club was chartered on January 14, 1959. Pictured (l-r) are District Governor and Club President Charlie Pierce, charter members Valas Winters and Leland Vancamp, and Club Treasurer Randy Barker.

BUCKEYE MAKES HOLIDAYS SHINY AND NEW

Buckeye worked with electrical and welding students from their local Joint Vocational School to refurbish and update the stars and wreaths in their community Christmas lights. The club covered the cost of supplies and provided funding for a party for all the students and teachers involved. Pictured are Club President Brian Yanssens, and Chad Haught.

Club members take part in a community Spring clean-up every year around Earth Day. This year, they added safety vests with the club's name imprinted. Pictured are Brian and Gretchen Yanssens, Harry Fair, Tammy Yanssens, Abby Yanssens, and Dara Martin.



GOSHEN CENTER CONTINUES SUPPORT THROUGH SALVATION ARMY

Goshen Center was once again able to donate \$3,000.00 to the local chapter of the Salvation Army. Pictured (l-r) are Charlie Pierce, local Salvation Army Chapter President, 2025 Ohio District Lt. Governor and Club President Jason Pierce, and National Director and Club Secretary John Biery.



GRAND VALLEY HONORS CHARTER MEMBER

Grand Valley recently honored 94-year-old charter member Cloyce Griffin. The club was chartered on April 7, 1969. Pictured (l-r) are 2025 Ohio District Governor Charlie Pierce, Club Vice President Diane Giel, Cloyce Griffin, National Director John Biery, and Club President Roger Herbster.



HARPERSFIELD TEAMS UP FOR FOOD AND FUN

Harpersfield partnered with the Harpersfield Fire Department for their annual Clam Bake dinner. In addition to the dinner, sponsors were asked to donate baskets to be raffled off. Over 100 baskets were raffled, and over 275 people were served. Proceeds are split between the club and the fire department.



WEST BRANCH AREA LADIES COORDINATES BOOK DONATIONS

West Branch Area Ladies proudly presented books to the third-grade classes at West Branch Elementary School. This initiative was made possible through generous donations from our club, along with contributions from the Beloit, Knox, Damascus, and Goshen Ruritan Clubs. Pictured are Beverly Yaggi and Joann Pinkerton.



The club also celebrated Viola Blanchard's 100th birthday in April. Viola was showered with cards, flowers, food, and cake



SMITHVILLE HOSTS SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Smithville's scholarship recipients, who graduated in May 2024, and are now attending college, were invited to the December meeting to share their first-semester experiences. Pictured (l-r) are Scholarship Committee Chair Philip Gresser, Ava Besancon – Attending Bowling Green State University, recipient of the Feusier Academic Scholarship, Adeline Thorn – Attending Bluffton University, recipient of the Build Your Dollar

Scholarship, Angelina Yates – Attending the University of Akron - Wayne College, recipient of the Gloria & Maynard Yoh Academic Scholarship, and Club President Bryan Woodard.

The club set up a Ruritan display booth at Smithville High School during the FFA Toy Show. They held a raffle for two farm toys and shared information about Ruritan and their club activities. Pictured are Linda Porter and Susan Dilyard.



FAIRFIELD HONORS SERVICE

Fairfield celebrated their 73rd anniversary in February and recognized two long-standing members. Pictured (l-r) are Phil Welce (64 years), George Crook (51 years), and Club President Bill Flesse.



WASHINGTON OH HOST RISING SENIORS BOWL-A-THON



Washington OH Rising Senior members Trent Lofland and Matthew Frederick participated in the annual Rising Senior Bowl-a-thon. Also taking part were Leah Collins and Jacob Dine. The event raised over \$2,000. Rising Seniors are students from Marlinton or Louisville High Schools who are granted a one-year active membership in the Washington Ruritan Club. After completing a number of service hours and meeting attendance requirements, each student will be presented with a \$1,500 scholarship.

COLLETTSVILLE REBUILDS, RECOGNIZES, AND RAISES FUTURE LEADERS



Collettsville received a donation from Case Farms in Morganton NC to help rebuild a flood-damaged park. Additional contributions came from Fort Valley, Locketts, Shawquon, Pottawatomie, Gainesboro, Black Swamp, Baton, and Cedar Valley clubs. Pictured (l-r) are Jacqueline Monges, Case Farms, and Club Secretary



Patsy Richardson.

Students Jayden Munday, Cortland Coffey, Lillie Coffey, Gracie White, Maddie Story, Zoey Hood, Andi Calloway, and Loclain Coffey volunteered as servers for the club's Valentine Steak Dinner.



Club Vice-President Anita Pinson presented two Ruritan Forevers for 2025. The recipients, Club President Reuben Chandler and Director Melvin Chandler, were honored for their many years of service to their club and community.

The club also hosted local student Loclain Coffey, the school's speech competition winner. Loclain gave his winning speech to the club. He spoke about the science behind soil, water, and preserving wetlands. He will be competing in the state competition in Raleigh. Pictured (l-r) is Club President Reuben Chandler, Loclain, and Principal Amy Brawley.



DEEP GAP HONORS TIRELESS SERVICE

Deep Gap President Les Gentry presented Tina Watson with the Deep Gap Ruritan of the Year award. Tina and her crew at Blue Ridge Diner have worked countless hours providing meals, supplies, Christmas gifts, and other donations to locals and others in areas of the High Country after Hurricane Helene's devastation.



News From Ruritan: **WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA District**

HOPEWELL-HOLLIS PACKS A HEALTHY PUNCH



Hopewell-Hollis continued their monthly community service projects by preparing and distributing food boxes for local families.

Pictured are Donald Blanton and Jean Hunncutt. Teresa Blanton and Cindy Milling were additional helpers.



OAK LEVEL HONORS COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY



Oak Level recognized several members for their service to the club and to Ruritan. Pictured with District Governor Robbie Causeway (left) are Ann Kirkman (15 years), Donald Bridges (5 years), Carolyn Bridges (10 years), Rodger Bowen (34 years), Dwight Harper (50 years), Ravin Carpenter (15 years), and Sophia Bridges (10 years).

News From Ruritan: **DELMARVA-NEW JERSEY District**

POWELLVILLE GETS EARLY SURPRISE

When **Powellville** members arrived for their last Chicken BBQ of the 2024 season, they were surprised with a smoked prime rib, scrambled eggs and biscuits breakfast prepared by Club Secretary Billy (in the camouflage shorts) and Lt. District Governor Kevin.



HARTLY HOSTS ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

Hartly hosted its 2nd Annual Christmas Bazaar Fundraiser, which featured over 25 vendors and small businesses, a bake sale table, a Chinese Auction, a Cozy Christmas Corner sale, and a 50/50 raffle. They also sold tickets to win a Gift Card Tree, with over \$800 in gift cards donated by club members and local businesses.



The club also placed 12 wreaths in a local church cemetery to honor veterans. They plan to make this an annual project.

The club named Dora Virdin as their 2024 Ruritan of the Year. Dora serves as the Chair of the Program/Entertainment Committee



and the Social Development Committee and is always willing to volunteer on club projects.

Hartly held their first Basket Bingo and Auction, with over 80 participants. The event was



very successful, with proceeds going toward end-of-year donations to the local firehouse and auxiliary. They also had their first Adopt-

A-Highway of the year and collected six bags of trash and two bags of aluminum cans.



CLUBS HOST FOODIE FUNDRAISERS



Pole Tavern hosted a Pulled Pork Lunch.

Galestown Club held its Winter Sticky Bun Sale





Rehobeth held a special Chicken BBQ to raise money for NC Hurricane Victims. Great support from the community helped the club raise \$8000 for Samaritan's Purse!



Idlewild hosted their Spring Sausage Fundraiser. During this impressive operation, over 7,000 lbs. of sausage was made and packaged!

MANNINGTON TOWNSHIP SUPPORTS FREEDOM AND FLAPJACKS

Mannington Township recently held a successful Chicken BBQ. Proceeds are used to fund their community service projects.

The club hosted Ian McKinney and Gradin Buzby at a recent meeting. Ian and Gradin reported on their weekend trip to Valley Forge for the Founding Forward event, as part of the Freedom Foundation.

The club has sponsored local high school students annually for over 25



years. The kids are exposed to how our judicial system works, patriotism, early American history, and the opportunity to meet kids from all over the USA. Gradin's father, Eric, shared that the club had sponsored his trip to the Freedom Foundation 26 years ago. Pictured (l-r) are Deb McKinney, Ian, Gradin, Eric, and Marty Buzby.



The club also hosted their annual spring Pancake Breakfast fundraiser. Pictured manning the griddle are Charles Allen and Donnie Richmond. They had assistance from the local Cub Scout Troop, and by District Lt. Governor, Kevin Jenkins, who was elbow deep in pancake batter for the entire event!



LITTLE PUNGO BOASTS BIG MUSCLE

April 26th was clean-up day in Quinby, VA. Members of **Little Pungo** did some landscape maintenance at the Quinby Post Office and Smith's Chapel Church. After completing the work, they were treated to lunch at Smith's Chapel.



ROCKAWALKIN RISES TO THE OCCASION

Rockawalkin presented Stevie Stevenson with a Project FOCUS grant to assist with his efforts in supplying hay to farmers affected by Hurricane Helene in Western NC. Mr. Stevenson, a resident of Fruitland, MD, has made over 15 trips with his own truck and incurred over \$20,000 in out-of-pocket expenses. Pictured (l-r) are Club Vice President Bob McCrorey, Stevie Stevenson, Sherie Stevenson, District Governor Kevin Jenkins, and Club President Rick Klebon.



In April, the club partnered with the United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore and the Chesapeake Housing Mission to build a wheelchair ramp in Salisbury, MD. Pictured (l-r) are District Governor Kevin Jenkins, Scott Davis, Club President Rick Klebon, Gail Davis, Chris Klebon, Sharon Fitzgerald, Don Fitzgerald, and Julie Cain. Other members who helped on the project included Tim Harig, Wayne Shaff, Club Vice President Bob McCrorey, and Tom Field.

TRI-COUNTY PROMOTES EDUCATION

Tri-County awarded 14 scholarships totaling \$8400 to local high school graduating seniors. Recipients represented five high schools in the area. The scholarships were funded by proceeds from the club's sporting clay event.



News From Ruritan: DELMARVA-NEW JERSEY District

WISTARBURG BLOOMS!

Wistarburg recently held its Easter Flower Sale. Zone Governor John Sakewicz and Club President Lou Joyce were on hand to help.



News From Ruritan: PIEDMONT District

FRANCISCO HELPS START THE DAY

Several **Francisco** members assisted the Francisco Ladies Auxiliary with cooking and serving a big country breakfast at the Francisco Volunteer Fire Department & Ladies Auxiliary's Christmas Bazaar.



The club also assembled and delivered gift bags loaded with various goodies to shut-ins in the Francisco, NC community.

The club held a food and blood drive in March. The club also hosted a Fat Tuesday Pancake fundraiser event with live entertainment. Proceeds will help fund community improvements and projects.

The club sponsored a presentation by Stokes County Sheriff's Department Captain Danny Bottoms. Captain Bottoms shared information on crime prevention and important safety tips. The club also promoted Ruritan at a Farmer's Appreciation Dinner.



SANDY RIDGE HONORS VETERANS AND TAKES A PLUNGE

Sandy Ridge hosted its 17th annual Veterans Appreciation Meal in November. The event included a warm welcome by Club President Jimmy Ellington, a color presentation and Pledge of Allegiance led by Girl Scout Troop #2072, and the National Anthem performed by musician Joshua Ray Hudson. District Governor David Hogan offered a prayer, and the "Missing Soldier Table" was acknowledged. Attendees enjoyed a meal, heard the announcement of student winners from the Sandy Ridge Elementary School Veterans Day Contest, and viewed their displayed entries. Veterans received tokens of appreciation and witnessed a US Flag Retirement Ceremony by the Girl Scouts.



Club President Jimmy Ellington, Director Deborah Ellington, and Environmental Committee Chair Lorri Amos were invited to attend the Sandy Ridge Elementary School Veterans Recognition Program. Certificates were presented to the student winners of the club's Veterans Day Contest. Lorri shared with the students how her military service had impacted on her life and career.



The club sponsored the annual "Christmas on the Ridge" event hosted by the Northeast Stokes Fire Department and Rescue Squad, Inc. Santa Claus made his entrance on a fire truck and assisted with lighting the community tree. A food and toy drive was held at the event, and lots of food and toys were donated. The food supports the backpack program and area blessing boxes.

The club recently named Andy Ferguson as their Ruritan of the Year Award and welcomed new member David Yawn.

Club members prepared 126 treat bags for the elderly and shut-

ins in their community and prepared bags of candy and prizes to distribute to children at the Walnut Cove Christmas Parade.

Several brave club members participated in the January 1st Polar Plunge at Hanging Rock State Park Lake. This annual event is a fundraiser for the Stokes County Arts Council, which uses the funds raised to bring the arts to the county through outreach programs.



News From Ruritan: **PIEDMONT District**



The club hosted a successful Bingo fundraiser in March. Club members and local businesses generously provided prizes.

Club members and a guest picked up 13 bags of trash and several other items during their Spring roadside cleanup. Pictured is Kenny Bennett doing his part to keep trash off our roadsides.

The club partnered with the Northeast Stokes Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, Inc., to sponsor the first Easter Egg Hunt of the season. The children especially enjoyed the visit from the Easter Bunny, pictured with Club President Andy Ferguson. The club also collected food donations for the Northern Stokes Food Pantry. Several local businesses and individuals donated prizes, candy, and other items to make the event a success.



The club hosted 12 high school seniors from the Sandy Ridge School District for a cookout at Stanley Farm in April. The Northeast Stokes Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, Inc, also had

representatives at the event. Mr. Stephen Sauer, Guidance Counselor from North Stokes High School, was one of the guest speakers. The club presented six scholarships. The recipients were Samuel Easter, Kaylee DiJohn, Kaydence Woods, Kayleigh France, Paisley Heath, and Oscar Osornio-Arellano. Fire Department



Representative Gary Wilkins spoke to the group and presented eight Frank Spencer Memorial scholarships. The recipients were Jackson Lester, Cash Dalton, Ila Hassan, Antonio Hernandez, Tyler Smith, Carter Joyce, Emma Woods, and Michael Frye.

The club also recently donated toys, puzzles, playdough, balls, and games to the Sandy Ridge Head Start.

ROCK HOUSE HONORS CHARTER MEMBER

Rock House member Don Bennett was presented with the club's Ruritan of the Year award and a 30-year perfect attendance pin at their December meeting. Don is the only surviving charter member and has served as club treasurer since the club's organization 30 years ago. Don also coordinates the club's annual tractor and old equipment event in August.



SEMORA SHARES THE LOVE

Semora continues to host a community breakfast on the fourth Saturday of each month, January through October. The crowds have increased since word has spread about their delicious all-you-can-eat buffet breakfast. The club recently designated a breakfast day to support their local animal shelter. Community members filled their van with food and other items needed for the shelter.

Club members delivered fruit and other items to local shut-ins during the holidays and collected drink tabs to support the Chapel Hill Ronald McDonald House.



TROUTMAN RECOGNIZED FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The town council recently selected **Troutman** as the Organization of the Year for 2025 in recognition of its many community efforts.

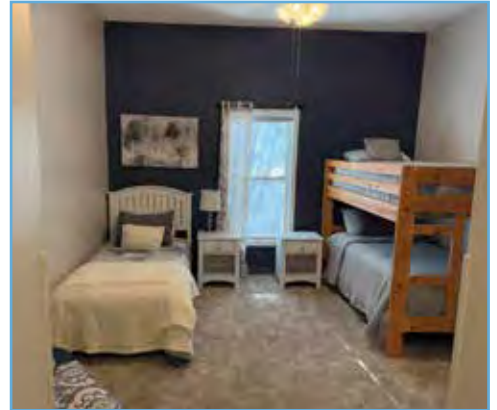
The club's recent large project served LIFESPAN, an organization that has provided education, employment, and enrichment for individuals with developmental disabilities since 1973. LIFESPAN's nature path is often used during therapy sessions, but some clients lack the ability to walk the entire path without resting. Because the path's benches became unusable, some could no longer participate in therapy walks as part of their treatment. Club members cleaned, repaired, stained, and reinstalled 16 benches on solid foundations. Club members also cleared away brush and overgrowth



News From Ruritan: **PIEDMONT District**

around the approximately quarter-mile path area, repaired and replanted landscape plots, planted a memorial garden, created a community garden, mulched, and completed other tasks to make the nature walk site beautiful and usable.

Another major ongoing project is at My Sister's House, the county's domestic violence shelter. Club members recently completed a bedroom redecoration and bathroom remodel in one of the client rooms. The club has also completed sorting and organizing a mountain of donated items in two storage buildings. Additionally, the club completed an art installation and hung gorgeous handmade quilts, made by a member's sister, to beautify the hallways and common areas. Members also painted the playroom, cleaned toys, rearranged the space, and brought in new toys, window treatments, and a sofa. The refurbishment of staff quarters is also underway.



After Hurricane Helene devastated Western North Carolina in September 2024, the club immediately started donation collections for those who lost so much, sending 16 large truck and trailer loads to several devastated areas. The club has continued to assist Western NC communities, serving three free chicken dinners since January in several mountain locations that fed thousands of community members and volunteers.

In March, the club hosted a district meeting to share ideas and explore opportunities to partner on projects with other clubs in the area. In May, the club awarded three \$1000 scholarships to deserving seniors at South Iredell High School.

Other club activities included partnering with the Troutman Parks and Recreation Department to sponsor a three-month community Run/Walk Club and participating in the town's Adopt-A-Street program to help keep the community clean.

News From Ruritan: **DAN RIVER District**

DISTRICT SHOWS COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Dan River District welcomed **Hurt Community** Ruritan as the newest club in the district. District convention auction proceeds were split between God's Pit Crew and Project FOCUS to help with the damages caused by Hurricane Helene. Lloyd Penn and Jerome Spencer were honored for their 50 years of service to the Carver Road Ruritan Club.

Members from **Woolwine Community, Ararat, Patrick Springs, Stuart, and Red Bank** spent several months meeting together to plan and organize the Patrick County Veterans Day Parade to honor their community's veterans.



AARONS CREEK CELEBRATES 60

In September, **Aarons Creek** celebrated its 60th anniversary with homemade cupcakes and ice cream. Halifax County Supervisor Keith McDowell presented a resolution to Club President BA Bowen, and 2024 National President Robin Davenport presented a 60-year certificate. District Governor Charlie Bowman and Club Historian Sandra Rister shared historical insights and stories of the club's community contributions, including scholarships, sports leagues, and festive events.

Other fourth quarter activities included the club completing its fall softball league, hosting a community trick-or-treating event, and honoring veterans. Club Vice President Michael Davis and Sandra Rister were each presented with a Tom Downing Award.



RANGELEY HONORS MOORE



Rangeley President Phillip Earles presented Fay Moore with the club's Ruritan of the Year award.

HYCO ROAD WELCOMES BUSY NEW MEMBER

Hycro Road has welcomed their newest and youngest member, 5-year-old Maximus Shelton. Max has already contributed to the club by helping install railroad ties in the parking lot, picking up trash along Hycro Road with his parents, Club Director Jerry Shelton and Amy Shelton, and assisting with stews and cleanups.



ARARAT WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Ararat Club President Michael Noonkester recently welcomed new members Gail Martiello, Dana Martiello, and Russell Brown.



The club presented their 2024 Ruritan of the Year award to Club President Michael Noonkester (left).

The club also participated in the 2024 Patrick County Christmas parade. Members had a great time working together on the float.



Club members helped celebrate Read Across America week by reading to the Blue Ridge Elementary School first and second-grade



students. Pictured is club member Pamela Smith. The club also participated in a Spring roadside clean-up along Ararat Highway.



STUART SHARES THE BEARS



Stuart provided Christmas gift bags for the Landmark Assisted Living Center residents. The club also donated Rudy Bears to the Stuart Volunteer Fire Department and the Patrick County Emergency Services Station 8.

The club also donated Rudy Bears to the Patrick County Sheriff's Office. Deputy Cody Fortner, pictured with club member Bill Hines, shared how he recently used a Rudy Bear to help calm an autistic child.

The club has adopted a road in the Stuart area as part of the Virginia Adopt-a-Highway program. During a recent roadside clean-up, they filled 29 bags of trash.



DRY FORK HONORS COMMUNITY HERO



Dry Fork Club Secretary Carla Kearin presented Jarrod Hoffman of Hoffman Heating and Air with the Community Hero Award at the District Ruritan Conference, recognizing his selfless community contributions and sponsorship of the Ruritan Color Run.

Club members David Crane, Marcella Heldreth, and Joyce Crane delivered Easter treats to patients at Chatham Health and Rehabilitation Center.



News From Ruritan: **DAN RIVER District**

MT. LAUREL SUPPORTS FIRST RESPONDERS

Mt. Laurel recently donated to the Social Services Food Pantry. The club also recognized club member Jimmy Anderson with a Tom Downing award.



The club donated Rudy Bears to the Halifax County Sheriff's Department and presented monetary donations to the Halifax County Rescue Squad and Triangle, Scottsburg, and Clover Volunteer Fire Departments.



News From Ruritan: **LINCOLNLAND District**

GEFF COMMUNITY SHOWS OFF

Geff Community hosted a successful Toy Tractor Show.



BARREN SPRINGS SHOWS COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Barren Springs Community kept busy helping their community by assembling and distributing Thanksgiving food boxes. They also volunteered as Santa's elves and delivered goody bags to the local nursing home.



The club also hosted their first community Easter Egg Hunt.



LEAD MINES NAMES "OF THE YEAR" WINNERS

Lead Mines named Butch Quesenberry as their 2024 Ruritan of the Year. Butch was recognized for his willingness to help when needed, and his contributions to the community and club. Butch is the organizer of club's Shot Tower Flea Market fundraiser.

The club named Malena Bailey and Lucille Cline their 2024 Citizens of the Year. Malena and Lucille own the New River General Store and are committed to their community. They also help the club sell their apple butter. Pictured (l-r) are Justin Cline, Lucille Cline, Butch Quesenberry, and Malena Bailey.



MOUNT TABOR HONORS FAMILY TRADITION

Mount Tabor honored club member Arnold Lafon with a Ruritan Forever for his dedication and consistent service. Arnold joined the club in September 1976 and has been active since. He has cooked thousands of pounds of fish for the club's fish fry fundraisers, supervised making thousands of gallons of the club's apple butter, and organized hundreds of highway cleanups, using his personal truck. Arnold's father was a charter member, and now Arnold's children and grandchildren are carrying on the family tradition.



RURITAN ROAD HOSTS EGG-STRAVAGANZA

Ruritan Road hosted the Easter Eggstravaganza for the Town of Pulaski. The event featured face-painting, free stuffed animals and other giveaways, giant Easter basket and bicycle door prizes, and 6,000 candy-filled eggs.

In addition to weekly Monday night Bingo, the club hosts a monthly Senior Lunch and Bingo, and a monthly Veteran's Poker Nite.



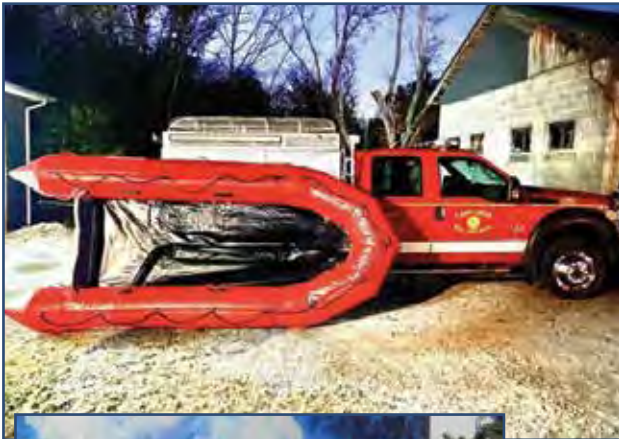
WYTHEVILLE THROWS FUTURE SHADE

To celebrate Arbor Day, **Wytheville** members planted a dogwood and a redbud tree at Homestead Park in Wytheville.



CAMP CREEK HOSTS SUCCESSFUL BENEFIT

In October, **Camp Creek** hosted a benefit breakfast, and 100% of the proceeds went to the Camp Creek Volunteer Fire Department. Thanks to the generosity of the community, the funds raised were enough to purchase a rescue boat, a critical addition to the department's equipment following Hurricane Helene's challenges. The fire department expressed their gratitude for the support, noting this achievement as the first step in their rescue goals. Pictured (l-r) are Cory Plemmons, Mike Somampong, Robert Johnson, and Club Treasurer Bob Johnson.



Club President Tim Smithson presented a check for \$10,000 to AidNet of Greene County representative and Ruritan Past National President Wayne Bettis. Wayne was a co-founder of AidNet in 2001. AidNet, which stands for Aiding in Disasters Northeast Tennessee, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that helps communities in Greene County recover from natural disasters.



The club also hosted pictures with Santa for the community. Attendees were treated to cookies and hot chocolate. Pictured with Santa is Jaxton Cunningham.



The club partnered with Greene County Resource Center and Goodwill Industries to host a clothing and shoe distribution truck for those impacted by Hurricane Helene. They also set up a food distribution event.

The club recently welcomed new associate business member Presidential View RV Ranch. Owners Jennifer Adamec and Glenn Merklin are active members in the club

TELFORD CELEBRATES COMMUNITY

Telford played a part in helping local victims of Hurricane Helene by organizing, collecting, and distributing needed clothing from their club's community room. Telford member Glen Walker led the effort.

In November, the club honored Washington County Sheriff's Officer Andres Cabrera with its annual "Officer of the Year" award. Deputy Cabrera is the School Resource Officer for Grandview Elementary School. Several of his fellow officers, the principal, and several school staff members showed their support by attending the meeting. Pictured is Club Vice President Linda Dunn presenting the award to Officer Cabrera.

At their BBQ Supper fundraiser, the club handed out gift bags and a free meal to local veterans in attendance. The club also joined with nearby community members to line the half-mile road running by the club building with American flags, in honor of Veterans Appreciation.

The club kicked off 2025 by welcoming four new members. Pictured here (l-r) are President Carl Daniels presenting pins and Ruritan information packets to Tim and Sandy Hastings and Laurie and Joe Toms. The four new members recently moved to the East Tennessee area and are excited to help their Telford community.



GIBBS CELEBRATES 75TH

Gibbs recently celebrated its 75th anniversary. The Knox County Commission honored the club with a proclamation. Pictured are club members with members of the Knox County Commission.



HIGHLAND PARK STAYS INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY

Highland Park hosted a Veteran's breakfast and helped a local elementary school with a donation with proceeds from their Friday night turkey shoots. They also partnered with their local police department to sponsor Shop with a Cop.



ELSMORE COMMUNITY HOLDS BRAGGING RIGHTS

Elsmore Community members Alice Bolin, Hellen Welch, and Betty Hawley were recognized with the Unsung Hero Award at the Thrive Allen County Annual Celebration. This award recognizes the contributions of those who are quietly working to make our community a better place but who typically are not acknowledged publicly for their work. Alice, Hellen, and Betty are primarily responsible for the club's food pantry program.

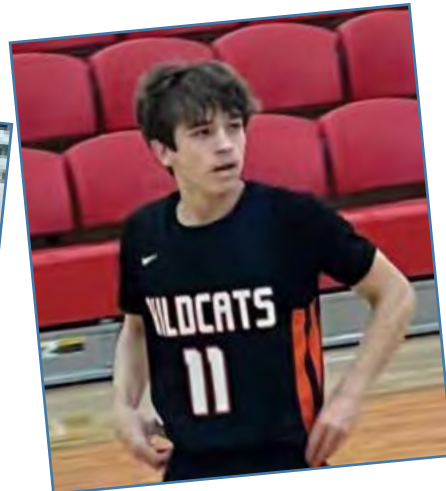
The award states that "recipients embody the spirit of altruism and the belief that small acts of kindness can create ripples of positive change. They often go above and beyond, driven by a deep sense of compassion and a commitment to the well-being of others. In recognizing these individuals, we celebrate the best of humanity and the extraordinary difference that ordinary people can make." The award brochure stated, "These three sisters have poured their energy, time, and hearts into ensuring that families and individuals across our community never go without the essentials. They don't just fill shelves and pantries; they fill hearts with hope and lives with

News From Ruritan: **MIDDLE AMERICA District**

possibility. Together, they are the heartbeat of this effort -- a force that works humbly, tirelessly, and compassionately toward a healthier community.”

The Unsung Hero Award is made possible by the generosity of the banks of Allen County, Kansas.

The club is proud and supportive of their youth members, Kenleigh and Marlee Westhoff, and Todd Stevenson. Kenleigh is a senior at Iola High School, involved in sports and yearbook publication, a member of the National Honor Society, and was chosen the 2024-25 President of the Iola Chapter of Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA). Marlee is a junior at Iola High School and is also involved in sports, yearbook preparation, FCCLA, and forensics. Both have assisted with the Iola Special Olympics and Unified Sports teams. Todd is a junior at Marmaton Valley High School and is the secretary of his class. Todd is involved in sports and Future Farmers of America (FAA), the National Honor Society, the Kansas Association of Youth (KAY), Special Olympics, the Drama Club, and the Pep Club. He participated in the 2023-24 FAA state convention. Kenleigh, Marlee, and Todd have helped with the club's annual Elsmore Day celebration and fundraising activities.



CHANCELLOR CHANGES HISTORY

Chancellor Club Secretary Bob Daniel welcomed new member Theresa Watts. Theresa has volunteered with past club activities and is the club's first female member.

Citizenship & Patriotism Chair Paul Scott presented a donation to Boy Scout Troop 847 members to help support their activities in Spotsylvania County.



Business and Profession Committee Chair Rick Holcomb presented a donation to Krystal Minter, an agent for Spotsylvania County's 4-H Youth Development. The donation was made in memory of Allan Thorburn, a Ruritan member of 57 years who recently passed away. Allan was an active member of the county's farming community and

often urged the club to support this organization. Pictured are Allan's daughter Karen, wife Pat, Krystal Minter, Rick Holcomb, Allan's daughter-in-law Jill and son, Mark.



JEFFERSON HONORS VETERANS

Jefferson VA recognized club members Paul Oesterreicher, Moses Berry, Harry Houckes, and Dave Lang at their Veterans Day celebration. The club also hosted a community Christmas party. Pictured are club member Celia and her friend Kristen.



BELMONT PROMOTES COMMUNITY SERVICE

Belmont achieved extraordinary success in fundraising and community service in 2024, raising nearly \$50,000 through four major events: Mardi Gras Casino Night, Mulch/Compost Sale, Ham & Oyster Dinner, and a golf tournament.



The club awarded \$12,000 in Educational Grants to six local high school seniors, donated funds to SAWs, hurricane relief, and community needs, and maintained their building with several thousand dollars.



Members also participated in wheelchair ramp building and road clean-ups and honored dedicated member Gary Crider with the Tom Downing Award.



WOLFTOWN OFFERS HELP TO HOLIDAY SEASON

Wolftown kicked off the holiday season and donated twelve Thanksgiving meals to Madison Social Services.

Club President Mike Carpenter was joined by Club Secretary Larry Morris in welcoming new member Susan Kennedy.



Club members participated in a VDOT road cleanup and collected four large bags of trash.

News From Ruritan: **RAPIDAN District**

THREE CHOPT WELCOMES NEW ENERGY

Three Chopt recently welcomed new member Mary Doyle (pictured with Past District Governor Greg Payne).



News From Ruritan: **GULF AREA**

MT. HERMON STRUTS THEIR STUFF

Mt. Hermon LA members stuffed over 600 Easter Eggs with candy and treats for their annual hunt for preschoolers and kindergarteners at the local elementary school.

The club also collected food and other items to help a neighboring community recover from recent tornado damage and recently hosted their 3rd Annual Chili Cook-off.



Hello to all our fellow Ruritans from the Growth Committee! We were given the opportunity to write to you in this Ruritan magazine, to better inform and equip you as valued Ruritans in our challenge to grow the organization. We are unveiling an exciting new technique to both break the ice and recruit new members for Ruritan, “elevator speeches,” that you can use quickly and effectively in multiple circumstances. Our committee has met almost every week, with individual members of the committee making valuable contributions to discussions on how to grow Ruritan, we look forward to addressing you in the next edition of the magazine as well.

One of the most important moments in recruitment is during the first point of contact. The following two speeches are ones that allow you to engage quickly with someone.

RURITAN IS A NON-PROFIT, COMMUNITY BASED SERVICE ORGANIZATION CONSISTING OF LOCAL RESIDENTS SUPPORTED BY A NATIONAL STRUCTURE THAT ALLOWS CURRENTLY MORE THAN 800 CLUBS THE FREEDOM TO RECOGNIZE NEEDS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES, DETERMINE THEIR OWN FUNDRAISERS, AND DISTRIBUTE THEIR MONIES WHEREVER THEY ARE MOST NEEDED.

RURITAN IS A VOLUNTEER-BASED NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION SERVING THE NEEDS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES. CLUBS CONSIST OF A CROSS-SECTION OF OUR LOCAL RESIDENTS RECOGNIZING AND ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE IN THEIR AREA. FOUNDED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF GOODWILL, FELLOWSHIP, AND COMMUNITY SERVICE, OUR GOAL IS TO SERVE THE IMMEDIATE NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY, MAKING IT A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE.

This final speech is the committee’s longest and is designed to actually ask the question about attending a Ruritan meeting, which is a major

step towards asking someone to join Ruritan. This speech should be used when you have more time and maybe even at a second or third point of contact with perspective members.

Ruritan is a national community service organization dedicated to improving communities, one project at a time. Every club selects projects that address the needs of their community, such as providing scholarships to students, improving local parks, or organizing food drives. Ruritan is different because we focus on local service—our members make decisions based on what’s best for their community. If you enjoy helping others and working with friendly, dedicated people, Ruritan is a great way to get involved. We welcome all ages and backgrounds because everyone has something valuable to offer their community. Would you like to come to a meeting and see what we do?

One Nation, Under God—Together

“I pledge allegiance, to the flag, of the United States of America...”

You know the rest. It’s burned into the muscle memory of so many of us, all the way through:

“One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

There’s plenty to say about the Pledge of Allegiance. I’m more than open to those conversations, the debates over where, when, and how it should be said, who says it, who doesn’t, and why. Then there’s the language itself: words that sound simple but land differently depending on your story. Words shaped by history, protest, the courts, and the reality that liberty and justice remain works in progress.

But that’s not what I’m writing about today.

Less than an hour ago, I stood in the community life center of my church and recited the pledge with 25 other men. It’s how we end each meeting of the **Chuckatuck** Ruritan Club. For those unfamiliar, Ruritans are part of a national civic organization rooted in a simple and powerful motto: *Fellowship, Goodwill, and Community Service*.

Our chapter in Chuckatuck, Virginia embodies that well. We open meetings by singing the first verse of “*My Country, ’Tis of Thee*.” We pray. We eat. We share stories. We get down to the business of serving our community. Tonight, we heard from a young man who’s receiving a scholarship we awarded.

And as we ended—standing together, hands over hearts, saying words we first learned in classrooms and scout meetings—I felt something I don’t always expect: comfort. Not blind patriotism, but rooted love. Honest love. The kind that doesn’t ignore flaws but keeps showing up. The kind that says: I see the gap between what we say and what we do—and I still believe in doing better.

In that room were people from different races, religions, economic situations, political affiliations, and yes, even rival college football teams. And yet, we stood together—men committed to something greater than ourselves. And for a few minutes, the words of that pledge meant something true to us all. Like the *Lord’s Prayer* on a Sunday morning, these familiar words became something more than rote. They became sacred.

I worry sometimes that we’ve lost the value of oaths in our society. Hands still rise and touch Bibles, but the words don’t always seem to carry weight. I’ve heard leaders publicly admit to not knowing or caring about the oaths they’ve taken. That’s not just disappointing, it’s dangerous.

But then nights like this remind me: we haven’t lost it entirely.

There are still folks gathering in Lions Clubs, Rotary halls, Kiwanis chapters, Ruritan Clubs, Izaak Walton Leagues, and more—men and women who still believe in service, who still find meaning in shared purpose. People who remember what it feels like to make a vow, to keep it, and to live it out.

That’s my good news tonight. That’s my hope.

So here’s my invitation to you:

Whatever pledge, oath, or creed speaks to your soul—even if the words aren’t perfect—find your people. Find those who are willing to work beside you for something bigger than themselves. Build fellowship. Spread goodwill. Serve your community.

That’s a good start.

And if we can start there, I truly believe we’ll be okay.

- Rev. Jason Stump, Pastor, Oakland Christian UCC, Suffolk, VA
Member, Chuckatuck Ruritan Club