



Ruritan

Volume 88, Spring 2023

*Meet Our 2023 **NATIONAL PRESIDENT**,
MICHAEL MORRISON! pg. 3*



"Put Ruritan in Your Heart!"

2023 National Convention

ReCap begins pg. 5

Make Plans NOW to Attend the
2023 **Summer Leadership Conference**

August 4-5

See pg. 8-9 for Details



Ruritan

Volume 88, Spring 2023

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Put Ruritan In Your Heart





National President Mike Morrison's Convention Speech

“Either write something worth reading or do something worth writing.” – Benjamin Franklin

I'm not good at writing fancy speeches and have been told that I am no public speaker and I'll agree with that, so I hope that what I do is worth writing about. I want to start by saying "Thank You!" to everyone for all that you are doing, have done and plan to do. I know that your communities are grateful and are much better because of it.

There are still many clubs that need and want help, and communities that we can reach out to. What can WE do to help them? WE can work to RETAIN members, RECRUIT new members, and BUILD new clubs in those communities. The Board and I can come up with ideas and plans for growth, but we still need your help to make it happen. We cannot do it alone.

For my project this year, I would ask that we honor and support our veterans and first responders. Many of them give so much and receive very little. Make sure to take pictures of your projects and send them to the home office with a description so they can be shared in the magazine. We will also have a First Family project. For this I am asking that each club try to sponsor at least one child with a college scholarship.

After much thinking during the many miles that I have traveled, I came up with my slogan of "Put Ruritan in Your Heart."

I know that you have Ruritan in your heart because you are already a Ruritan helping your community, but you can help put Ruritan in the hearts of others by doing a little work and asking them to be a part of our great organization. Invite someone to a meeting and/or event and let them participate. I don't like setting goals, but I want to challenge everyone to grow your club by at least 3% and to start at least one new club in your district.

YOU can do this.

WE can do this!

PUT RURITAN IN YOUR HEART!

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Executive Director Sarah Kelly



Greetings my fellow Ruritans!

I want everyone to sit a little taller and hold their head up a little higher and be proud, because you are important. You are most important to Ruritan National. Thank you for all you do for our incredible organization.

We can only create thriving communities through your efforts. And we can only create thriving communities by thriving ourselves.

You should be encouraged by reviewing the statistics. We have welcomed six new clubs into our family. We have had the lowest net loss of members in 15 years, so your bar is set for next year.

I point out that we do a good job bringing new members into our family. We gained over 2300 members in the last 12 months, so we just have to find a way to retain those new family members.

I commend the board and committees for meeting more frequently. The more time you work on the health of the organization the greater the chance that you will have a healthier organization.

I commend my team at the National Office for being reliable, responsive, empathetic and competent.

I commend the Budget and Finance Committee for meeting each month. The team continually looks for opportunities to reduce expenses to propose a balanced budget, but there are no longer expenses to be reduced without affecting the benefits that our members see/receive/experience. I challenge all of us to flip our mindset and focus on income generation. The only thing that fixes our budget is opening new clubs, welcoming new members into our current clubs and retaining the members that are in our clubs. Not only will that solve budget issues, which are just the tip of the iceberg, it also ensures that we will be a healthy, stable, thriving organization creating thriving communities for years to come.

We still miss Carroll Lowe's IT help daily at the office. He was instrumental in keeping MMS stable. We would be dead in the water if our membership database breaks down, so we are currently researching ways to ensure our membership database continues to function as needed.

The BSA bankruptcy case may be behind us, but the effects are still coming. The Methodist church has made the decision to pull all their charters from the boy scouts. That provides opportunity but also risk for Ruritan. Many clubs have been approached to take over being the charter organization for existing scouts. I advise every club considering being a charter organization to do their due diligence and ensure that a full understanding of what the roles and responsibilities of a charter organization entail.

Ruritan National is now the proud sole member of two 501(c)(3) charities. Ruritan National Foundation is our education arm, and the newly established Ruritan National Project FOCUS is our disaster relief and humanitarian aid arm. Project FOCUS received funds from the dissolved OWC to continue disaster relief for Ruritans. To support disaster relief in the future, please make checks payable to Project FOCUS. FOCUS stands for Funding Our Communities Under Stress.

Rudy turns 35 years old this year! We will be celebrating his birthday with special promotional items through Shumsky online. Ruritan National will be 95 years young. A special celebration is planned for Founders Day in May where the National Board will be on hand for its Spring meeting.

At the 2023 convention we tried something new by offering Ruritan apparel items by special order. Everyone received an order form in their registration bag. Selling apparel by special order ensures that we do not carry unsellable inventory or have to sell inventory at a loss, which is not fiscally responsible. Additionally, offering merchandise by special order will allow us to offer a larger variety of items in the future.

Ruritan will be turning 100 years old before we know it. Only together can we ensure that our incredible organization will be here to Create Thriving Communities through our first 100 years, and for many years to come.

2023 National Convention Recap



2023 National Convention Ballot Issues

Voted on by Delegates

Ballot Item 1 - Approved Board Motion 22-03-06 District Convention Delegate calculation—Adult clubs

Current: ARTICLE IV, Section 2 Paragraph D 2. Delegates –Adult Clubs.

Each adult club shall be entitled to one (1) delegate to the district convention for each 10 club members or major fraction thereof; provided, however, that each member club shall be entitled to at least two (2) delegates at any convention. In the absence of any club delegate from the floor of the district convention, the alternate delegate from the club of the absent delegate shall be entitled to vote.

Proposed: ARTICLE IV, Section 2 Paragraph D 2. Delegates –Adult Clubs.

Each adult club shall be entitled to **one (1) delegate to the district convention for each 5 club members** or major fraction thereof; provided, however, that each member club shall be entitled to at least two (2) delegates at any convention. In the absence of any club delegate from the floor of the district convention, the alternate delegate from the club of the absent delegate shall be entitled to vote.

RATIONALE: This change would bring District Convention delegates in line with National Convention delegates as listed in the National Bylaws.

DISPOSITION: PASSED

Ballot Item 2 - Approved Board Motion 22-03-07 Order of Parliamentary Authority

Current: ARTICLE XV Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the newly revised edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the meetings of Ruritan National in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not in conflict with these bylaws and any special rules of order which the Ruritan adopts.

Proposed: ARTICLE XV Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained within the National Bylaws, Policies and Procedures shall govern this organization in all cases. In the absence of guidance in the National Bylaws, Policies and Procedures the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order will apply.

RATIONALE: This proposes no change in policy but reordering of the current statement to properly show order of authority.

DISPOSITION: PASSED

2023 National Convention Ballot Issues

Voted on by Delegates

Ballot Item 3 - Approved Board Motion 22-03-08 Method of Notification for Bylaws Amendment

Current: ARTICLE XVI Amendment of Bylaws

Amendments to these bylaws shall only be made at a Ruritan National Convention by two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting, providing the proposed amendments shall have been presented to and approved by the BOD. Notice of any proposed amendment approved by the BOD shall be published in the Ruritan National Magazine at least 30 days before the opening of the next scheduled Ruritan National Convention.

Proposed: ARTICLE XVI Amendment of Bylaws

Amendments to these bylaws shall only be made at a Ruritan National Convention by two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting, providing the proposed amendments shall have been presented to and approved by the BOD. **Notice of any proposed amendment approved by the BOD shall be given to all Clubs at least 30 days before the opening of the next scheduled Ruritan National Convention.**

RATIONALE: The reason for this motion is to allow for multiple means of notifying delegates of proposed Ballot issues.

DISPOSITION: PASSED

Ballot Item 4 - Approved Board Motion 22-03-26 Mission Statement

Current: Article II, Section 2, Mission Statement:

"Ruritan National is a national organization dedicated to improving communities and building a better America through Fellowship, Goodwill, and Community Service."

Proposed: Article II, Section 2, Mission Statement:

"Ruritan is a National Civic Organization whose individual clubs are dedicated to surveying and fulfilling the needs of local communities."

RATIONALE: To provide a clearer and more concise Mission Statement. The motto will remain the same: "Fellowship, Goodwill and Community Service."

DISPOSITION: FAILED

2023 Ruritan Summer Leadership Conference Registration Form

August 4 and 5,

Registration Includes: Friday picnic, Saturday lunch buffet, and a conference shirt.
Conference materials are included.

Complete this form and include \$140 per person which includes two meals.

Every attendee will receive a Conference Shirt. Please include your shirt size.

Please have your registration turned in by June 23rd to ensure we can have your conference shirt ordered in time for the conference. Mail to Ruritan National, PO Box 487, Dublin VA, 24084, or email to crystal.andrews@ruritan.org

Name: _____

Title: _____ Member ID: _____
I am a District Governor, Lt. Governor, Zone, etc...

Address: _____

District: _____

Shirt Size: _____

Food Allergies: _____

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

I have _____ guests for the picnic on Friday at \$20 each = \$_____ total

I want to order my guest(s) a conference shirt at \$40 each = \$_____ total
Their shirt size is _____

I want to donate Rudy Bears (\$11 each) to the Rudy Bear
Toss to benefit Pulaski County First Responders \$_____ total

Check #: _____

TOTAL Enclosed \$_____

Credit Card Payment

Name on Card: _____

Card Number: _____ Billing zip code: _____

Expiration Date: _____ CVC: _____

2023 Summer Leadership Conference

August 4-5, 2023 - Dublin, VA

Current Lt. Governors are expensed to this conference. Lt. Governors are required to attend this conference to be eligible for reimbursement of one half of their National Convention expenses.

Current District Governors and Zone Governors are not required to attend this conference but are highly recommended to attend.

President Elect Robin and the Leadership Committee are planning the training around the theme: **"Ruritan Strong"**. There will be information that will benefit all Ruritans and how we can become better leaders.

The conference gives Ruritan leaders the opportunity 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. A separate MMS training will be provided Saturday after the conference for those wanting to know more. Please bring your personal devices for a more hands-on approach.

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

1. 2023 District Lt. Governors will be paid ½ of their expenses to the 2024 National Convention in Winston-Salem, NC, provided they complete the requirements below. (This will only apply if the current Lt. Governor becomes the District Governor in 2024.)

2. They attend the 2023 Summer Leadership Conference (unless excused in writing by the National President).

3. They attend the Governors' Training at the 2024 National Convention.

4. They attend substantially all meetings at the 2024 National Convention.

5. They assist the Ambassadors throughout the 2024 National Convention.

6. The district's form 990 has been filed with the IRS by the February 15 filing deadline for the fiscal year end of September 30.

****All expense vouchers must be submitted within 90 days after the 2024 National Convention.**



To Book Your Room Contact:

Quality Inn, Dublin VA

(540) 674-1100, Option 2

Cost: \$65/night - Single occupancy

\$97.95/night - Double occupancy

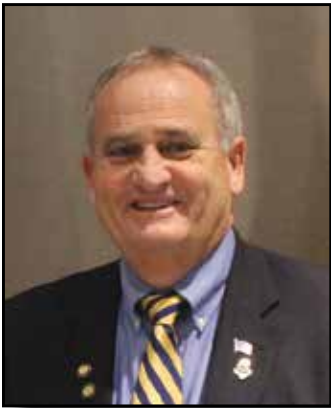
(+ applicable taxes)

2022 Ruritan National Growth Awards

District	District Name	Zone	Club #	Club Name	Status	1/1/2022	12/31/2022	Diff	% Diff
Large Clubs									
10	Potomac	3	625	Jefferson MD.	Active	98	106	8	8.16%
3	Rappahannock	1	252	Clarke County	Active	80	85	5	6.25%
2	Chesapeake	4	3	Abingdon	Active	134	136	2	1.49%
Medium Clubs									
22	Tennessean	3	110	Bloomington	Active	64	149	85	132.81%
13	Rocky Mt.-Durham	2	731	Lynns Crossroads	Active	40	61	21	52.50%
16	Spartan	1	39	Augusta Road	Active	41	57	16	39.02%
35	Davy Crockett	4	176	Camp Creek	Active	41	52	11	26.83%
33	Lincolnland	2	1516	Dubois	Active	39	48	9	23.08%
Small Clubs									
24	Georgia-N.Alabama	1	2070	County Line	Active	7	23	16	228.57%
12	Roanoke	2	297	Creswell	Active	10	21	11	110.00%
19	Upper West Virginia	3	1136	Spruce Mountain	Active	11	21	10	90.91%
35	Davy Crockett	1	1106	South Central	Active	24	42	18	75.00%
5	Peaks Of Otter	4	1238	Waidsboro	Active	16	28	12	75.00%



Message From 2023 Foundation President Phillip Bradshaw



Congratulations on Ruritan National Foundation's 55th Anniversary!

It is because of your support we have been able to spend the last 55 years funding the education of the youth in your communities. It is only with your support will we be able to continue this vital work.

The Trustees are happy to announce that if your club participated in the Build Your Dollars (BY\$) program during 2022, you will receive a \$650

check when you submit your claim form by June 30.

We currently have approximately 50% of Ruritan clubs participating in this program and we would like to see that number increase to 80% this year. To become a part of this phenomenal program, all your club needs to do is submit a deposit form along with \$300 postmarked by September 1st.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the auctions at the 2023 Kingsport Convention. Your generous bids brought in approximately \$14,000 dollars.

The Ruritan National website has the forms and information for all of the Foundation Programs. Additionally, I encourage you to contact your District Foundation leaders, Foundation Trustees, or the National Office for information, questions, or programs on the Foundation.

We are excited to plan a Fellowship weekend this year in the Williamsburg, VA area! There is much to see and do in this area.

Ruritan National Foundation

2023 Board of Trustees

President: Phillip Bradshaw

Vice President: Guy Cox

Secretary/Treasurer: Josh Adams

Trustee: Cleve Wright

Promotion Chair: Debra Knesal



Ruritan National Foundation Garland Gray Awards

HIGHEST PERCENTAGE-%-CLUBS DONATING

First Place at 52% Rockingham – Becky Lane

Second Place at 50% Spartan – Fred G. Payne

Third Place at 48% Lower West Virginia – Debra Bowman

MOST DOLLARS DONATED BY CLUBS

First Place at \$6,965.00 Potomac – J.J. Bernard Lerch III

Second Place at \$5,934.08 New River – Pat Davis

Third Place at \$2,968.00 Rapidan – Florence Bakke

HIGHEST AVERAGE DONATION PER MEMBER

First Place at 13.77 New River – Pat Davis

Second Place at 5.78 Potomac – J.J. Bernard Lerch III

Third Place at 5.39 Rapidan – Florence Bakke



Holland Ruritan Founders Day 95th Anniversary Celebration

May 20, 2023 10am - 8pm



10:30 am
Opening
Ceremony

11am
Annual Parade



10am -2pm
Crafters, Vendors,
& Family Fun

6 - 9:30 pm Banquet
Cost: \$15



For Information or Reservations
for the Founders Day Banquet,
please contact: Clay Byrum

Phone (757) 334-2530

Email at aba123321@aol.com



Host Hotel
Quality Inn and Suites
1620 Armory Drive
Franklin VA
(757) 740-5754

[www.facebook.com/Holland Ruritan Founders Day Celebration and Parade](https://www.facebook.com/HollandRuritanFoundersDayCelebrationandParade)

Grassfield Hosts Marine Corp



A local Marine Corps unit celebrated the Marine Corps birthday at the **Grassfield** club and honored charter member and Marine veteran Eddie Vincek and his wife of 76 years. Eddie was with the first landing on Iwo Jima and was on the island for the entire battle.



Past President Sue Abernathy (right) showed off the toys the club has collected for donation to Toys for Tots.

Holland Supports Community Service



Holland recently honored some of their local firefighters and police officers. Club President Curtiss Johnson (left) recognized those in attendance.

The club also participated in local food giveaway for the Holland community. They helped in preparing 215 bags of food to be distributed.



Pictured (l-r) are Ronald Daughtrey, Sue Anne Howell, Curtiss Johnson and Calvin Jones.



Windsor honored Club member Rebecca Duck (left) as their 2022 Ruritan of the Year.

News From Ruritan: Holland District

Smithfield Delivers!



Smithfield delivered 15 food baskets to individuals and families during the holidays. The baskets included ham, turkey, stuffing, canned goods, and more. Pictured is the delivery team of Skip Sharpley, Jeff Miller, Glen Schickenmeyer,

Lisa Schlickemeyer, Andrew Odom, Larry Odom, Elise Ring, Kirk Ring, and Julie Hopkins.

The club recently honored Susie and Tom Brett for their work with therapy dog, Captain Morgan. Captain Morgan visits patients at health care and veterans facilities.



Deep Creek Recognizes Teacher



Deep Creek recently honored the Deep Creek Teacher of the Year, Sandra Burdick, of Deep Creek Elementary School. Pictured (l-r) are Club President Buddy Husky, Deep Creek Elementary Principal Michelle Ferebee, Ms. Burdick, and Social Development Committee Chair Joe Noha.

News From Ruritan: Chesapeake District

Montpelier Supports Christmas Mother

Montpelier held its annual Ladies Night/Christmas dinner at the Pickle Barrel restaurant in Centerville, Virginia.

Club President Charles Stanley presented a donation to Hanover County Christmas Mother Michele Clements.



Gloucester Honors Veterans



Gloucester Club member and Korean War veteran John Northstein, was honored at the 2022 Gloucester Veterans Day ceremony. David Clements, Commandant of Detachment 1317 Marine Corps League, presented John with a certificate of dedication for his service. Senior Vice Commandant Michael Gilberti presented flowers to Johanna, Martha, Morgan, and Linda Northstein. Pictured (l-r) are Eldridge Northstein, John Northstein, David Clements and Michael Gilberti.

At the Gloucester County Veterans Memorial Wall, Club President Jackie Beyea laid a wreath from the Gloucester Ruritan Club, and Club Secretary Barbara Baur laid a wreath from the Gloucester County Veterans Memorial Committee.



In December, the club met to wrap presents for residents of community nursing and assisted living facilities. Santa (Tom Swankler) delivered 250 gifts. Pictured (l-r) are Santa Tom Swankler, Paul Bauer, Bob Beyea, Janet Leigh, Bev Thomas, and Janie Swankler. Not pictured, Barbara Bauer.



The club recently hosted members from the Salvation Army. Pictured (l-r) are Gloucester Salvation Army Office Manager Maria Post, Club Vice President Henry Thompson, and Lt. Willis, Executive Director and Pastor of the Salvation Army of the Peninsula. Ms. Post and Lt. Willis were presented with club mugs and gift cards for \$100. The club also collected food that was later delivered to the Gloucester Salvation Army office.

As part of the Adopt-A-Highway environmental project, the club recently conducted their first quarterly cleanup of their adopted section of Farys Mill Road in Gloucester County. They collected 20 bags of roadside litter. Pictured is Club President and project organizer Henry "Hurricane" Thompson. Other volunteers included members Harry Thomas, Barbara Bauer, Bunny and Mike Ekdahl, along with neighbors Danny and Susan Walton Fary.



News From Ruritan: Chesapeake District

Elliott Franklin Hogge, 74, of Achilles, Virginia, passed away at home on Thursday, December 8.

He retired from Naval Weapons Station, Yorktown, after 45 years of service, and for 20 of those years he also farmed, growing corn, soy beans, and small grains. He was a U.S. Army veteran having served in Viet Nam and having been awarded a Bronze Star medal.

He was a member and past president of Abingdon Ruritan Club, a former Governor of the Ruritan Chesapeake District, and past President of Ruritan National. He loved serving his community and was proud to have been a past president of the Guinea Heritage Association. He was a lifelong member of Union Baptist Church.

He was predeceased by his parents, Morris and Edith Hogge. He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Sandra Penn Hogge, daughter Andrea Kinser (Ricky), son Jeffrey Elliott Hogge; grandchildren Stephen Blake, Lauren Blake, Austin Hicks (Kimberly), Brittney Hicks, Jeffrey Elliott Hogge, Jr., and Katie Whitcomb; great grandchildren Waylon and Willie Hicks; and, dear friends Kelly Richards and Eva & Joe Whitcomb; brother Kenneth Morris Hogge (Irene), and sister Carol Joy Allmand (James).



News From Ruritan: Rappahannock District

Clarke County Supports First Responders

Clarke County presented a donation to John H. Enders Fire and Rescue Company. The funds were raised from the 2022 Ruritan Benefit Horse Show. Pictured (front row)(l-r) Barbara Byrd, Maria Zimmerman, Ruritan President Brad Broy, Jim Swisher, Horse Committee Chairs Corey Kirk and Megan Magaha, and Sam Miller; (back row) Larry Tavenner, Chris Braithwaite, Sheriff's Chief Deputy Travis Sumption, Club Vice President Ralph Ambrosio, Doug Lawrence, Philip Thacker, JC Blaylock, Gerry Boudreau, Berryville Town Mayor Jay Arnold, and Mike Crawford.



Stonewall District Rewards Longevity

Stonewall District Club President Wilson Gilbert (left) presented charter member Doug Butler (center) with a Ruritan Forever. Doug recently turned 98 years old and is still very active in Ruritan and several other civic organizations. Doug is also proud to have served his country as an Air Force gunner in WWII. Also pictured is club member Joe Hulver.



Bealeton-Remington Spreads Christmas Cheer



Rudy bear was full of Christmas spirit as the **Bealeton-Remington** club participated in the Remington Volunteer Fire and Rescue Annual Christmas Parade.

The following day, Rudy joined Santa and the fire department picking up toys for Toys for Tots.



Gainesboro Braves the Cold



Twenty members and guests of the **Gainesboro** club braved 22-degree temperatures to gather trash. The club filled 15 bags and picked up seven tires and two televisions.

Members and family gathered on a cold and windy afternoon to create a Christmas Parade float. Each member brought some of their own decorations and ideas to create a unique float.

It contained a gingerbread house made from pallets, Christmas trees made from tomato cages, and flashing light necklaces. They handed out nearly 1200 candy canes.



Sumerduck Has Busy December

In December, **Sumerduck** presented \$550 in gift cards to local families, and delivered 55 fruit boxes to local seniors. Mike Timm (pictured far right) won the Ugly Sweater Contest during their annual Christmas party.

The club also welcomed new members Tyrone and Pam Key.



News From Ruritan: Rappahannock District

Lovettsville Waterford Stays Busy, Busy, Busy!

Lovettsville Waterford ended 2022 with a bang. They participated in the Bluemont Fair, the Lovettsville Oktoberfest and the Lovettsville Community Center Trunk or Treat. November and December brought many opportunities for giving through local food drives and donations to needy families in the community. The club is currently promoting scholarships for local students by reaching out to the community and schools to make them aware of these opportunities.



Nokesville-Bristow Partners With Patriot High Ruri-Teens

Nokesville-Bristow and **Patriot High School Ruri-Teens** brought plenty of Christmas cheer to needy and forgotten members in their community. The NBR Club donated \$250 to support a toy drive. The club focused on gifts for teens and purchased magnetic dart boards, frisbee golf sets and gift cards. The club also supported a coat drive conducted by another service organization.



In December, club members delivered 30 Christmas gift bags to the residents at the Manassas Nursing & Rehabilitation Center. The club budgeted \$500 and met the goal of increasing the number of bags by 10. The gifts bags were filled with books, games, toiletries, other personal care items and accessories.

The Ruri-Teens sponsored 12 families this year with their 10th Annual Holiday Stockings and Family Fun Boxes project. Most items for the 34 students/youth and 17 adults were donated by the club members. Each box included items such as blankets, games, puzzles, art supplies, snacks/treats, and a grocery store gift card. Each child

also received a holiday stocking filled with treats, school supplies, socks, toiletries and personal hygiene items, and a Chick-Fil-A meal card. The teens wrapped the boxes, sorted and packed the items and delivered the boxes and stockings to the PHS Counseling Office for distribution to the families.

Members of both clubs participated in the Nokesville community tree lighting and the Christmas parade by serving as parade marshalls and riding on the Ruritan float, escorted by Rudy Bear and friends.



Sterling Steps In and Fills The Need

After the need was mentioned to a member, the **Sterling** club presented a check to a local elementary school to help them buy shoes for students in need.



Additionally, the club helped a local high school fund their "Breakfast with Santa." Each child in attendance got a new toy. The club also helped with the school's coat drive.



The club also brought out their food trailer and dished out goodies for the 2022 Sterlingfest.



Warrenton Celebrates 55 Years



Warrenton recently celebrated their 55th anniversary. Charter member William "Bill" Benner had the honor of cutting the cake. In November, the club honored Veterans and the U.S. Marine Corps birthday. Guest speaker, retired U.S. Marine Corps General and now Pastor Randy West spoke on citizenship, call to duty, and service in helping our veterans.

The club also honored Bill Benner with the Tom Downing award. Bill has been a steward of the club since its inception by helping the youth of the community through sports, agriculture, and other events over his lifetime. Bill continues to remain an active and faithful member of the club with near perfect attendance. Pictured is Bill receiving his Tom Downing pin from daughter Jennifer East.



Spout Spring Welcomes Business Memberships

Spout Spring has welcomed six Associate Business members, Appomattox Auto Works, Appomattox Drug Store, Appomattox True Value, Fire & Safety Equipment, Wilkes Jewelers, and Jamerson Building Supply.



Cartersville Cleans Up

Members of the **Cartersville VA** club, along with other community members, helped out an elderly resident by trimming overgrown trees and removing debris from her yard. The resident is known for her many years of help and service to the Cumberland County community.



Midlothian Celebrates 75!



Midlothian recently celebrated their 75th anniversary with a banquet at Mt. Pisgah United Methodist Church. Joining the festivities were 2004 Past National President John Hancock, who installed club officers for 2023, as well as 2015 Past National President Bobby Burton. The members enjoyed a catered dinner and cake, served by the members of Mt. Pisgah.



The club also celebrated the completion of a successful Christmas tree sales fundraiser.

Clifford Hosts Festival

Clifford recently hosted the Annual Sorghum Festival. The club also sold Brunswick Stew at the Apple Festival in Amherst, and sponsored a Veteran's Day event.



Glade Hill Gifts Veterans

Glade Hill President Gary Solomon (right) recently welcomed new members Agustin and Laurie Monroig.

Club members collected health and welfare items for veterans at the Franklin Health and Rehab Center.

Individual gift bags, along with a basket of miscellaneous items, were made for each of the veterans and delivered by Club President Gary Solomon, Vice President Ollie Fralin, and member Gus Monroig.



News From Ruritan: Southwest Virginia District

Atkins Hosts Santa

Atkins sponsored a “Breakfast with Santa” for about 100 children and their families from the surrounding communities. New members Steve and Janet Stanley (pictured) were on hand to help out as Santa Claus and the pancake maker. The group, *Front Porch Gospel Singers*, provided entertainment for the club’s Christmas meal and meeting.



News From Ruritan: Woodrow Wilson District

North River Honors Years of Service



Woodrow Wilson District Governor Doug Britt (far right) was on hand to recognize **North River** members Earl Reeves for 60 years of service to the club, Bill Simmons for 70 years, and Charles Horn Sr. for 60 years.



Lovingston-Rockfish Member Honored

Lovingston-Rockfish member and Vietnam veteran Ronnie Moyer was presented with a pin by First Vice Commander Wayne Parent, American Legion Post 17. The American Legion is an official partner of the Vietnam War Commemoration Commission.



News From Ruritan: Woodrow Wilson District

Weyers Cave Celebrates History

Weyers Cave recently honored and celebrated Fred Houff on his 96th birthday. Fred is the club's longest serving (and oldest) active member, having joined in 1956. He remembers establishing the Weyers Cave ballpark and lights at the Weyers Cave School, built in 1916–1917, now an historic landmark. In the mid-80s, the club purchased 25 acres where the Ruritan Park and Weyers Cave Community Center now brings the community together for a host of activities. Fred helped to raise funds with annual turkey/oyster dinners held in the school cafeteria. The club was also instrumental in bringing water, sewers, electric lines, and the first traffic light to the rural community.



News From Ruritan: Rockingham District

Bridgewater Grows!



Bridgewater has welcomed new members Hagan Elkins, Robbie McCammon, Liz McCammon, and David Gray (pictured left), as well as Logan Reusser (pictured right).

The club held their annual Christmas auction and raised over \$1100 for their

scholarship fund. Rick Wampler (left) was presented with

the club's 2022 "Glen and Nancy Thomas Ruritan of the Year" award by Ron Williams.



In January, the club recognized Tim and Leanne Kreps as their 2022 "Citizens of the Year." Tim and Leanne were responsible for organizing the *Connections Early Learning Center*.

The Center provides year-round daycare and early learning at a local church.



Fort Valley Stays Busy!



Fort Valley had a very busy winter. In November, the club participated in the Wreaths Across America program and hosted a Turkey Trot fundraiser (turkey feathers optional!). Club member Terry Plauger spearheaded a roof repair project for a local resident.

December included the club sponsored Fort Valley Christmas Parade and community tree lighting ceremony. The club also participated in the community Empty Stocking Project which helps needy families in Shenandoah County.

In January, the club recognized Charles Lichliter for 60 years of perfect attendance. Charles is a charter member who joined the club in 1959 but had to miss two years when he served in the US Army. Charles has held multiple club and zone offices over the years and has been instrumental in numerous club projects, especially the placing of flags on veteran's graves at Memorial Day and more recently the Wreaths Across America ceremony.

The club had Eileen and Tom Drinkwater, and Sandy and Larry Cave as delegates at the National Convention. Also in January, club members cut and split firewood to donate to local residents.



Cross Keys-Mill Creek Rewards Dedication

Cross Keys-Mill Creek Club Director Wayne Cupp honored Rebecca Holloway, General Manager of Rockingham County Fair, as the club's Outstanding Business Person for 2022. Rebecca was presented with a plaque recognizing her work in making the community a better place to live.



Zone Governor Judy Shirey presented Dean Boese with the club's 2022 Ruritan of the Year award in appreciation of his dedication to the club and the community.



McGaheysville club members Al Saufley and Bill Perless distributed candy during the McGaheysville Community Halloween event.



Maur-Brook-Olive Puts In the Hours

Maur-Brook-Olive spent about 2000 hours manning the concessions at the Tom's Brook Volunteer Fire Department weekly bingo. Funds raised went towards several projects the club has supported throughout the year, including scholarships to Strasburg High School students, donations to the Tom's Brook Volunteer Fire Department for the truck fund, a donation to the Shenandoah County Sheriff's Department for the Sheriff's Triad program, as well as donations to Hunters For The Hungry, the American Legion Boys State, the Strasburg Little League, and support for sending an FCCLA student to conference in California. The club also served about 35 children with the 2022 Empty Stocking Fund.



Other fund raising and volunteer activities included highway trash pick-up, holiday wreath making, and hosting the Tom's Brook Red Cross blood drive.

The club also honored club member Robert "Bobby" Funkhouser, in recognition and appreciation of the many hours he worked to get the bingo concession up and running each week.

Port Republic Honors Veterans

Three members of the **Port Republic** club recently participated in the Honor Flight – Top of Virginia. Army Veteran John Phalen, Navy Veteran John Wilson, and volunteer Debbie Morris, (pictured) were transported to Washington D.C. where they visited the National memorials and the Arlington National Cemetery. Mr. Phalen was honored to place a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. This was Debbie's second trip as a Guardian. Mr. Phalen has been a Ruritan for over 66 years.



The club recently held their 19th Annual Veterans Appreciation Dinner. The meal was served by the ladies of Grace Episcopal Church. Commonwealth Attorney Marsh Garst was the guest speaker.

Ruritan Forever is a Family Affair

West Shenandoah's oldest and longest standing member, Edgar E. Lamma, Jr., has celebrated 62 years with the club, having joined on July 1, 1961. His father was a charter member. Eddie recently gifted his three children, Edgar Lamma III, Cheryl Lamma Delawder, and Greg Lamma with Ruritan Forever memberships. He and his wife, Virginia, also gifted each other with a Ruritan Forever. Pictured (l-r) are Cheryl Lamma Delawder, Virginia Rupert Lamma, Eddie Lamma, Edgar Lamma III, and Greg Lamma. He hopes that these memberships will honor his father who served the community through Ruritan.



Eddie was recognized at the 2023 National Convention as the delegate having the longest membership in Ruritan and had the privilege of leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

Downsville Spreads Joy



Downsville spread the Christmas spirit by providing Christmas gifts for 37 children that were chosen by their local schools. They also provided complete Christmas dinners for two local families in need.

Rohrersville Honors Commitment to Service

Rohrersville recently honored Richard Haynes for 70 years of outstanding and meritorious service to the club and community. Zone Governor Wade Clem and Club President J R Smith presented Richard with a certificate of appreciation and a Tom Downing award from the Ruritan National Foundation. Pictured (l-r) are Wade Clem, Richard Haynes, and J R Smith.

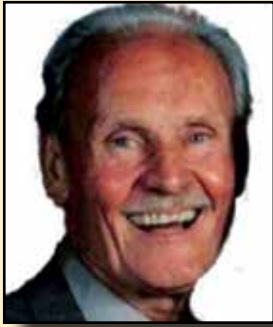


Lewistown Enjoys History Lesson



Lewistown welcomed retired Sheriff Richard Cutting (pictured left) as the guest speaker for their annual Ladies' Night dinner. Mr. Cutting provided an interesting history on the origins of the Pledge of Allegiance. He shared that the Pledge was written in 1885 by Union Army officer George Thatcher Balch with the purpose of healing the nation after the Civil War.

Club President Frank Warner also distributed donations totaling \$2,600 to Catocin High School Safe & Sane, Team Hope, Lewistown Fire Co, Lewistown Elementary PTA, Lewistown United Methodist Women, Thurmont Food Bank, and the 4H Therapeutic Riding Club.



J. Thomas (Tom) Benfield 92, of Myrtle Beach, SC, formally of Point of Rocks, MD died on December 15, 2022.

The son of the late Jason J. Benfield of Newton, NC and the late Velmer Summers of Statesville, NC; he leaves behind his wife of 69 years, Barbara LeMay Benfield; son, Chris Benfield (Laurie Gourley-Benfield) of Jefferson, MD; and daughter, Gail Benfield Shipley (Harry) of Waynesboro, PA. He is survived by eight grandchildren: Dawn Benfield (Guy Crutchley) of Brunswick, MD; Megan Gourley of Brunswick, MD; Matt Gourley of Jefferson, MD; Jeremy Benfield (Abby) of York, PA; Jason Benfield of Gettysburg, PA; Allen Shipley (Angela) of Frederick, MD; Michael Shipley (Lauriane) of Brunswick, MD; Christina Shipley (Lucas Claggett) of Frederick, MD. 11 Great Grandchildren, and a number of nieces and nephew. He was predeceased by his son, C. Douglas Benfield, and two sisters, Bettie Rogers and Barbara Benfield both of NC.

Born October 4, 1930 in Statesville, NC and raised in Newton, NC, he moved to the Maryland suburbs of Washington, DC during his service in the USAF. Following his military service, he worked for Potomac Electric Power Co., later ran his own business; managed a Ford Dealership and then went into business with his son before he finally retired to Myrtle Beach, SC in 1996.

Tom was very active in civic work, as a member of the Point of Rocks Ruritan Club he held several offices and was Zone Governor and District Governor of the Potomac District. He served on the Board of Directors for Ruritan National, and as V. President. He was National President in 1979 and is a lifetime member.

For many years he was Sunday School Superintendent of Epworth United Methodist Church in Point of Rocks as well as taught the youth Sunday School class and served on the church board. Managed the Point of Rocks Babe Ruth baseball team, served on the Board of Directors for the local chapter of the American Lung Assoc., was Fund Raising Chairman for the Francis Scott Key District, BSA; Assistant Scout Master, Merit Badge Counselor and Cub Master and served as President of the Carroll Manor Elementary PTA.

After moving to Myrtle Beach, he helped to form the South Strand Ruritan Club where he served as President and Vice President; and became very active with Habitat for Humanity of Horry County, both as a volunteer and later as Assistant Manager of the Habitat Resale Store. He was also active in the Surfside United Methodist Church and V.P. of the Glenmere HOA. At the time of his death, he was the President of his current HOA at Silver Creek and the Treasurer of the Surfside United Methodist Church.

Services were held at Surfside United Methodist Church, Surfside Beach, SC. Memorials may be made to the Ruritan National Foundation (scholarships), P. O. Box 487, Dublin, VA 24084; or to Habitat for Humanity of Horry County, P. O. Box 2492, Myrtle Beach, SC 29578.



News From Ruritan: Albemarle District

Durants Neck Collects for Good

Durants Neck recently held a blood drive and collected 12 good bags. Club volunteers Jenny Miller and Kim Harcum worked with the Red Cross phlebotomists to make donors feel comfortable.



The club also provided Christmas joy to less fortunate children by collecting over 100 toys. Pictured (l-r) are Club Vice President Cindy Berrio, and Club President Lynn Mathis. The toys were donated to the Perquimans County Sheriff's Department, who distributed the toys to local children in

Perquimans and Chowan Counties.

The club awarded their 2022 Ruritan of the Year Dan Gurganus. Dan was recognized for his untiring work for the Club. He managed the annual fundraising auction, coordinated Project Patriot, and managed the clubhouse rentals, among many other things.



News From Ruritan: Roanoke District

Robersonville Hosts Veterans

Robersonville hosted local veterans for their annual Veterans banquet. Pictured right are the attendees.



The club also presented Rudy Bears to the Bethel Fire Department. Pictured left is Club President Victor Long with Wayne Bryant of the Bethel Fire Department.

The club recently purchased a used metal ramp and put it to use for a community member that broke her ankle. Pictured is the installation crew.



News From Ruritan: Roanoke District

Bear Grass Braves the Cold for a Good Cause

Frigid temperatures didn't stop the **Bear Grass Ramp Crew** of Ashley Futrell, Timmy Hardison, George Holliday, James Lilley, Clayton Mobley, and Chad Terry from removing a ramp that was no longer needed so it can be repurposed for another community member in need.



News From Ruritan: Rocky Mt.-Durham District

District Invests in Project FOCUS

During a recent visit to Ruritan National, Rocky Mount Durham District Secretary Ron Reid, District Governor Johnny Johnson, Lt Governor Marshall Ross, District Treasurer Geneva Ross, and Assigned National Director George Brothers presented Executive Director Sarah Kelly and Project FOCUS Staff Advisor Kory Wirt, with a check in the amount of \$500.00, in memory of long time Rocky Mount Durham District cabinet member Jeanette Edwards and other district Ruritans who served on the cabinet. Pictured (l-r) are Marshall, Geneva, Ron, Sarah, Kory, Johnny and George.



Efland Honors Hard Work and Cares for Troops



Efland recognized Anthony Cecil as their 2022 Ruritan of the Year. Anthony has been instrumental in making sure that their rodeo fundraiser was a success. He was responsible for obtaining most of the sponsors, and organizing the preparation, setup, and people involved.



At their Christmas party, the club packed and mailed care packages for troops serving overseas during the holidays.

Needmore awards
Arthur Johnson as
2022 Ruritan of the Year



District Honors Service



2022 District Treasurer and Foundation Chair Corky Camin presented a Tom Downing Fellowship Award to **West Edgecombe** member Ron Kanthak to honor his many years of service to the Boy Scout troop sponsored by the club.

Oak Grove NC Feeds the Masses!

Oak Grove NC held their annual BBQ and Brunswick stew fund raiser. They cooked five pigs, 200 chickens and made 960 quarts of stew. They offered the community BBQ pork, BBQ chicken, slaw, hushpuppies and a big selection of homemade desserts.



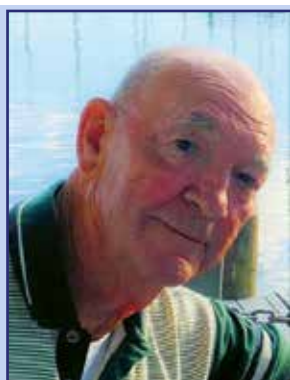
News From Ruritan: Greenville Goldsboro District

Pinetown Plays Santa

Pinetown members Sandra Watson, Myra Strickland, Jean Jones and Barbara Midyette are pictured with some of the items purchased for the club's Secret Santa 2022. The club was able to provide Christmas for 14 local youth.



News From Ruritan: Cape Fear District



Past Ruritan National Director Thomas William Davis, age 82, of Cameron, NC, passed away at his home on Tuesday, January 17, 2023.

He was preceded in death by his loving wife of 62 years, Carole Himmler Davis; parents, Frank and Alice Hardinger Davis and siblings, Betty Mae Barley (Earl-PeeWee), Shirly Jean Hawkins (Tom), Alice Dunkle (Sam) and Ronald Davis.

*Tom was born and raised in Cumberland, Maryland where he worked at Blue Ribbon Bakery while attending Fort Hill High (Class of 1959). He proudly served our country in the United States Air Force where he served as a Logistician working primarily in Base Supply. He retired as MSgt after 21 years and settled in North Carolina with his family in 1980. Following retirement, Tom worked at Mann's Hardware and McDonald Brothers Hardware. He was also the "Gopher" for nearly 30 years for his wife's real estate company, Carole Davis RE. Tom was a member of Cameron Baptist Church and **Johnsonville Ruritan Club** for over 36 years ultimately serving as a National Director for Ruritan National. He was instrumental in building the Johnsonville Veteran's Memorial at Hwy 24/27 and spearheading the annual Memorial and Veteran's Day celebrations at the site. He was an avid fisherman and golfer as well as enjoyed traveling in his RV to include cross country trips with his wife to visit family and friends.*

He is survived by his loving daughter Shawn Hickman (Frankie) of Cameron; son Thomas Davis Jr. (Lee Ann) of TX; granddaughters Amanda Tomlinson Smith (Mike) of Cameron, Kimberly Strange (Michael) of Morrisville, Natalie & Rebecca Zarzabal, of TX; Grandsons Thomas Z. Davis, of WA, Travis Hickman (Maggie) of Cameron. He is also survived by 5 great-granddaughters, 1 great-grandson, and 3 great-great-granddaughters.



Johnsonville Shows Community Pride



Boy Scout Troop 713 provided many helping hands in the refurbishment of the Johnsonville Veterans Memorial, which was built and has been maintained by the **Johnsonville** club since 2003. Veterans Day guest speaker was CSM Retired Brian Edwards, whose last assignment was Command Sergeant Major of the 1st Special Forces Command (Airborne).



The club took part in the annual Cameron Christmas Parade with two decorated pickup trucks full of Ruritans spreading Christmas cheer (and candy). Christmas meals and more were provided to over ten families in need.

The 2022 Cape Fear District Ruritan of the Year was presented to club member Mike Lancaster by Assigned National Director Ron Reid.

Lemon Springs Brings Cheer



Lemon Springs (and Santa) visited with children in a local homeless shelter and surprised them with toys and other gifts. The club also adopted two families to help for Christmas that were referred by their local elementary school.



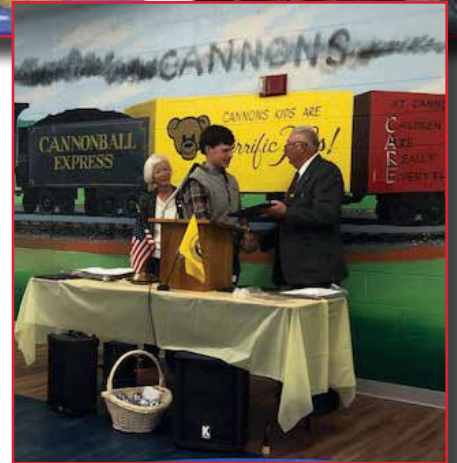
Cannons Camp Ground Celebrates Milestones

Cannon's Camp Ground recently celebrated their 70th anniversary. Past National President Glen Broadwater and First Lady Linda were present and assisted in presenting several awards, including the



club's Ruritan of the Year to Erich Sturgill (left), who also received a Tom Downing Award. Danny and Marcia Phillips and Cameron Gossett were presented with Ruritan Forever.

Also recognized was Lane Lytle (right), who was selected as the club's and Spartan District's Ruritan Youth of the Year.



A special recognition was given to 1966 Past Club President and World War II Navy Veteran John Fortune (left), who was also celebrating his 97th birthday.

Highlands Honors Tradition

Highlands continued their long-standing tradition of providing concessions for Lowry's old-fashioned Christmas parade. The parade only allows farm equipment and horses - no cars or trucks.



Gilbert Celebrates the Season

Gilbert celebrated the holiday season with delicious food, music, and fellowship at The Country Club of Lexington.



Entertainment was provided by Mark Forrester, Brenda Burkett, and Todd Long. Lisa

Keisler was recognized as the club's "Ruritan of the Year" for her dedication as club treasurer, and for

serving as the club's scout liaison. Guest speakers were Pam Humphries and Sheryl Price from Wittenberg Lutheran Church. They provided information about the unique Chrismon ministry at Wittenberg.



Sandy Run Adopts Service Projects

Sandy Run recently hosted South Carolina House District 93 Representative Russell Ott as a guest speaker who shared interesting information about state legislative issues. Pictured (l-r) Club President Jill Crim, Representative Russell Ott and Public Service Committee Chair Herbert Geiger.



The club also donated 22 boxes to the Samaritan's Purse

International Relief project. The boxes are sent to needy children around the world. Pictured (l-r) are Jill Crim, Becky Starnes, Amber Hardee, Alvin Haigler, Kay James, Howard Pees, Sandra Pees, Betty Geiger, Ginger Hardee, Lena Stabler, Teresa Helms, and June Kirkland.



The club joined the Sandy Run Fire Department, Sandy Run Museum, and the Sandy Run Coon Hunters' Association for the annual Adopt-a-Highway Clean-up on the Old Sandy Run Road 31. On the three-mile stretch from I-26 to



Highway 176, they collected 53 bags of trash. Pictured (l-r) are Gene Crim, Kelley Roche-Sanders, Teresa Helms,

Seth Gaites, Jill Crim, Cass Gaites, Becky Starnes and Ginger Hardee. Also pictured (l-r) are Lena Stabler, Hunter Pugh, Greg Matthews, Angie Culler Matthews, June Marie Fisher, and Les Cotton. Not pictured were Dennis Shanklin, Kay James, Ruben Mayer, John Culler, Gerald Starnes and Marshall Stabler.

Bean Settlement Receives Recognition

Bean Settlement was named as the 2022 Community Service Organization of the Year by the Hardy County Chamber of Commerce. The club was presented with the award at the September 2022 Chamber Awards Dinner. Pictured (l-r) are Chamber member Tessa Foltz, Club President Matthew Crider, Rodney Crider, Club Vice President David Workman, and Emily Funk.



Headsville Countryside Gifts Next Generation



Headsville Countryside member and Past National Director Eugene Tasker recently gifted a Ruritan Forever membership to each of his three daughters, Sheila Powell, Brenda Tasker-Boucot, and Karen Smith. They are all members of Headsville Countryside. Pictured (l-r) are Karen, Eugene, Brenda, and Sheila.

Ruritan National Service Awards

2022 Ruritan of the Year:

Gary Collier from the Bloomingdale Club

2022 Ruri-Teen of the Year:

Sarah Latham from the Chattanooga Central High School Club

2022 Rudy Youth of the Year:

Catelynn Flanagan from the Slanesville and North River Clubs

District Supports Local Charity

Lower WV District held their 2022 convention at The Dream Center in Beckley WV. District Governor Patty Hamilton welcomed over 50 members and guests as awards and special presentations were made. As a community service project, each attendee was asked to bring diapers for a donation to the Baby Pantry, a ministry of The Dream Center. The Center serves meals for the community and offers a food pantry, clothing



closet, food boxes and baby pantry. The baby pantry is stocked with items needed by new mothers with babies from birth to one year. Pictured (l-r) are Dream Center Director Shelby Warden, Co-Director Marsha Smith, Lower WV District Governor Patty Hamilton, and District Convention Chair Debbie Bowman.



Maxwelton member, Joan Vance (pictured), was honored as the Lower WV District Ruritan of the Year. Joan was instrumental in assuring the club's ice cream concession stand at the state fair was successful. Joan has volunteered with the club for many years, but just officially became a member at the beginning of 2022.



Nell Kessinger Jeffries, the first woman to serve as President of the Ruritan National Foundation, died at age 89 on November 16. She was also a Ruritan National Director from 2015 to 2018.

She was a member of the Concord United Methodist Church and had attended Fairview Christian Community Church on the Beckley Road in Princeton. She was also a long-standing member of the Athens Chapter #33 of the Order of the Eastern Star. Nell retired as an educator in the Mercer County School System with over 51 years of service. She served as a Ruritan National Foundation Trustee from 2004 to 2008 and served as the Trustee President in 2008.



In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her brother, Ted Kessinger. Left to cherish her memory are her loving and devoted husband of 68 years, Phil Jeffries. Three daughters, Phoebe (Brian) Meadows, Beverly Jeffries, Angela Jeffries (Debbie Chapman). Three grandchildren, James E. (Jed) Dempsey, Afton Meadows Linkous (RJ), Noah Chapman Jeffries. Five great-grandchildren, Riley Dempsey, Bodhi Dempsey, Jaxson Dempsey, Teagan Dempsey, and Jesse Linkous. Sister-in-law, Anne Calfee Kessinger. Very special "grand-dog" Dutch.

Funeral services to celebrate the life of Nell Jeffries were held on November 21, 2022, from the Chapel of Memorial Funeral Directory with Pastors Larry Dyer and Blake Bivens officiating. Interment followed in the Athens Cemetery.

Clubs Enjoy District Convention

National Director Joe Jaynes spoke at the Bluegrass District convention held in November at the **Finchville** Ruritan Club. Ruth Henry from **Choateville** received the District's Ruritan of the Year award, and **Cropper's** youngest member, Madison Baker, helped at the registration table.



Eubank Celebrates

The Bluegrass District Cabinet honored the **Eubank** club on their 75th Anniversary. Pictured (l-r) Zone Governor Bryan Franklin presenting a 75th Anniversary certificate and Membership Award to Club President Norman Rutherford, and Club Vice President John Rusin.



Ruritan Toggle Necklace

\$28.00

www.Shumskyideas.com/ruritan

Smithville Gives and Receives Recognition



Smithville honored Beth and Jesse Hamman with the Smithville Ruritan Citizen of the Year award. The Hammans are the owners of Berkey Trophies, Plaques and Engraving. The family-owned business was started in 1937 and has provided services to school systems and county fairs in Northeastern Ohio. Pictured (l-r) are Club President Rick Dilyard, Beth and Jesse Hamman, and Master of Ceremonies Tom Rolf.

The club was presented with a plaque from the Salvation Army in appreciation for ringing the Kettle Bell since 1991. In 2022, 14 club members took turns ringing the bell from 9 am until 9 pm for the kick-off to the Christmas season. Pictured (l-r) are Rick Dilyard, Henry Blubaugh and Cathy Rolf.



Washington OH Supports Scouts



Washington OH club has been supporting Boy Scouts for over forty years. Business and Professions Committee Chair Del Williamson presented \$400 to Life Scout Austin Wilson for High Adventure Crew Scouts 2177, and \$400 to Star Scout Noah Seaburn for Boy Scout Troop 2177 during the club's Youth Night in October. Scout leaders are Bill and Kim Robinson. Troop 2177 currently has forty members and has produced over forty Eagle Scouts.

Ruritan Large Tote

\$4.00

www.Shumskyideas.com/ruritan



Chesterfield Honors Seniors and Service

Chesterfield hosted its 37th Annual Christmas Supper for seniors in the community. The program featured a greeting from the supper's coordinator, Margaret Duckworth, an invocation from club member, Pastor James Johnson, and a devotional and meal blessing from Pastor David Orders. Attendees enjoyed a meal of country ham, sweet potato patties, green beans, coleslaw, roll, drinks, and homemade desserts. After the meal Margaret told some humorous Christmas stories and asked Rodney McFalls to accompany her on piano as the group sang several Christmas songs. Guests were also treated to Christmas gift bags of fruit and candy.



The club recently presented their 2022 Service Awards. Club member Mike Case received the club's Ruritan of the Year Award. Individual Volunteer of the Year Awards were presented to Joyce Johnson, Gayle Throneburg and Margaret Duckworth.



District Rewards Efforts

Leslie Gentry, Growth and Development Director, brought in six new members to the Western North Carolina District and won a plaque and \$100. He is pictured here with District Governor Shandy Gossett. Leslie is also president of the **Deep Gap** Club.



Collettsville Recognizes Community Service



Collettsville members filled and delivered 30 Christmas baskets, filled with fruit and snacks, to residents in the community.

The club recently recognized Fire Chief Trevor Key as Citizen of the Year and Mary Lou Vance as Club Member of the Year. The club annually honors a citizen who gives of their time and talents to make Collettsville a better place to live. The club also

recognizes a club member for their tireless support of club projects and their work throughout the community. Additionally, the club honored Anita Pinson with a Ruritan Forever. Pictured (l-r) are Anita Pinson, Club President Reuben Chandler, Mary Lou Vance, and Trevor Key.



Pungoteague Strives to Serve



Members of the **Pungoteague** club helped a local community member by building her a wheelchair ramp. Pictured (l-r) are Steve Sterling, Malcolm White, Jerry Phillips, David Shaw, Stacy Johnson, Jeff Proctor, Ted Sturgis, and Paul Custis.

Twenty members of the club helped pack and deliver boxes of food to needy families on the Eastern Shore of Virginia just prior to Christmas. The club has supported the Bank of Cheer program for over two decades. Pictured

(l-r) are Dennis Melson, Malcolm White, Paul Custis, Ted Sturgis and Stacey Johnson.



Clubs Honor Local Veterans

Sandy Ridge hosted 12 local veterans for a Veteran Appreciation Meal and Program, and delivered six additional meals to individuals who were unable to attend. Sandy Ridge Girl Scout Troop #2072 presented the colors, served the guests, and assisted with clean up. Musical entertainment was provided by local singer and songwriter Josh Hudson. Guest speaker, Stokes County Sheriff Joey Lemons, gave an inspiring speech which included a story about his late grandfather, Cleo Lemons. Cleo was a WWII Veteran and a long-standing member of the club. The club sponsored a Veterans Day coloring, drawing and essay contest at the local elementary school.



Two of the student winners were present for the program and one read her winning essay.

The club partnered with the Northeast Stokes Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department to host and sponsor the annual Community Christmas Tree Lighting. Santa arrived on a firetruck and led attendees in songs and dancing. The club accepted donations of toys and food items, which were distributed to needy children and families through a local church.



Union Grove honored area veterans with a Veteran's Day Dinner at the Community Building in Union Grove, North Carolina. Veterans of all the armed services and their families were invited to attend a dinner prepared by club members, which included Hawaiian chicken, mashed potatoes, seasoned green beans, coleslaw, and blackberry, peach, and apple cobbler.

Iredell County Commissioner Brad Stroud presided over the roll call of service branches and recognized each veteran in attendance, giving them an opportunity to speak of their years of service.



Ararat Supports Community Assistance Programs



Ararat recently presented donations to Gayle Wagoner (left) of the Patrick County Bookmobile, and to Jane Fulk (right) from Hunter's Chapel Church for their Thanksgiving Home Alone program. Club Treasurer Kevin Smith also presented a donation to Laura Hausler for the PARC Workshop, a non-profit organization



that provides work opportunities for mentally and physically handicapped adults in Patrick County.

The club also welcomed Chip Bondurant (right) as a new member. Chip's grandfather Porter Bondurant was charter member of the club.



The club accepted donations of toys from their bingo players, which were then donated to the Patrick County Christmas Cheer program. Kristy Hawks (pictured) accepted on behalf of the program.



The club recently celebrated their 70th anniversary. Special guests included National President Glen Broadwater and First Lady Linda.

Aaron's Creek Presents Awards

Aaron's Creek Club President Kathy Long and Dan River District Governor Barry Sides recently recognized Jamie Saunders as the club's 2022 Ruritan of the Year.



Seth Marshall (left) was recognized as the club's 2022 Rudy Youth of the Year.

News From Ruritan: Dan River District

Patrick Springs Honors Veterans and Outstanding Citizen

Patrick Springs recently honored Club Members and Veterans (l-r) Philip Plaster, Wilbur Walker, Past District Governor Roger Gammons, Bobby Pendleton, and Ronnie Mabe. Each veteran was presented with an engraved pocket watch.

The club presented their 2022 Outstanding Citizenship Award to Julie Walters Steele.

Julie has taken the leadership reins at the Reynolds Homestead in Patrick County. She and her team have initiated new outreach efforts, including the development of the downtown arts center, coordination of Leadership Patrick County, and the construction of a commercial teaching kitchen. Julie is also the driving force behind "Envision Critz," an organization working to develop a community center for the citizens of the Critz community.



News From Ruritan: Lincolnland District

Geff Awarded for Outstanding Effort

Geff club member Britt McNeely was awarded the Lincolnland District Ruritan of the Year by District Governor Beverly Tanner at the 2022 District Convention.



The club earned the Platinum Award for sponsoring the new Skillet Fork club. Club President Lois Moyer accepted the certificate from District Governor Beverly Tanner.

District Honors Dedication and Service

District Governor Beverly Tanner recognized several members for 50 or more years of service to their communities through Ruritan. Each were presented with a certificate and special name badge.



Hymera - Charter member Richard Riggs and Jerry Bledsoe



Haysville - Milton Mauntel



Jeffersonville Township - Jerry Traylor, Pat and Greg Dillon accepting for their father, Horace Dillon,



Allendale - Jim Johnson and Robert Cusick



Mt. Erie - Robert Bass, charter member Bruce Glover, and Gordon Endsley



Montgomery - Adam Greene accepting for Joe Traylor, Tony Showalter accepting for Paul Steiner, Tom Kane accepting for Jim O'Brien, Paul Miller, and Charles Kavanaugh.

Robert H. Bailey expired December 26, 2022, at the age of 95. He was preceded in death by his parents, William Dana Bailey and Allene White Bailey; sister: Elizabeth "Betty" Bailey; and brother: Roy Lyle Bailey; niece: Teresa McIntyre. He is survived by his sister: Jane Bailey Maxson and husband, William M. Maxson of Zephyrhills, FL; nieces: Margaret Carter, Gina Jourden, Melissa Moon; nephews: Craig Bailey, Jimmy Bailey, and Robert Maxson; numerous great-nieces and great-nephews.



Robert was an attorney since his admission to the Tennessee Bar on March 3, 1956. He graduated from Greeneville High School with honors in 1945. He attended Tusculum College, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1948. He was in the first call to military duty in 1951 with the Korean Conflict, serving two years, being Post Auditor at Fort Belvoir, VA. After honorable discharge, he entered the College of Law at the University of Tennessee, graduating with a Doctor of Jurisprudence Degree in August 1955. In 1960, he entered private law practice in Kingsport with branch offices in Church Hill, TN, for several years and then in 1987 opened an office in his home community of Baileyton.

In 1948, while employed with Greene County Bank, he became a charter member of the Greeneville Jaycees, his first experience with a civic club, where he held leadership positions. He became a member of the Free and Accepted Masons, out of which he learned more about character and leadership qualities, holding offices in the local Masonic Order, as well as Potentate of the Knoxville Shriners in 1976. For over 40 years, he served in the Imperial Shrine where budgeting for the 22 Children's Hospitals was formulated. In 1954, while a student at the College of law, he was elected to lead the local Chapter of Phi Delta Phi, a legal fraternity.

In 1956, on returning home, he became a member of the Baileyton Ruritan Club, a civic organization devoted to community improvement, later serving as its President. The next year he was elected Lt Governor, then District Governor in 1961; then three-year term as National Director, then National Vice President in 1966 and Ruritan National President in 1967. Through the years since, he continued support for the organization in assistance to Clubs and Districts as well as National Convention Chairman three (3) times, and other special assignments.

In 1962, he was elected President of the Tusculum College Alumni Association and served as Alumni representative on the College Board of Trustees. Subsequently in 1968 he was elected to the College Board, serving nine (9) consecutive years, two as the Treasurer and his final two years as Board Chairman.

He was honored by the College in 1984 with an Honorary Doctor of Laws; in 2005 with the Distinguished Service Award, and in 2011 made a Life Trustee of the College. Out of his experience at the College, he was requested to become a Board Mentor for the Association of Small Colleges and Universities and for several years mentored a number of small colleges in the Nation.

In 1974, he was appointed by Gov. Winfield Dunn to a term on the Tennessee Judicial Council and then in 1977, he was elected a Delegate to the Tennessee Constitutional Convention in Nashville. From 1968 to 1987, he also served as Judge for several preliminary Miss America Pageants in the Southeastern states and from 1972 to 1987, was a member of the Country Music Association and attended their CMA National Awards Ceremonies.

Mt. Pleasant Honors Service and Dedication



Mt. Pleasant TN recognized its members who are veterans of the United States Armed Forces. Each veteran was presented with a special Veteran tab to wear with their Ruritan membership pin. Pictured (l-r) are Donnie Reed (US Army), Shirley Yehl (US Air Force), Jim Yehl (US Navy), and Jimmy Townsend (US Army). Other veterans not pictured are Terry Murdock and William West (US Army).

Kimberly Carter was recognized as the club's 2022 Ruritan of the Year. She was honored for her tireless work on various fundraisers and service projects during the year. Pictured are Club President Bonnie Hartman, and Kimberly.



Club member Howard Whaley (center) was recognized for 57 years of perfect attendance. Howard is a charter member of the club and has never missed a meeting since the club was founded in April 1965. Pictured are Club Secretary Amy Harrison, Howard, and Club President Bonnie Hartman.



Leesburg Celebrates Milestones



Leesburg recently celebrated their 55th anniversary. Club member Lowell Simmons was also recognized for having perfect attendance for all 55 years. He was presented with a perfect attendance pin and an engraved plaque. National President Glen Broadwater was on hand for the festivities.

The club donated 74 turkeys to Grandview and Sulphur Springs schools for Thanksgiving and adopted two children from the Angel Tree at Grandview school.



Telford Celebrates Veterans

The **Telford (TN)** club collected items for and prepared 25 gift bags for Veterans Appreciation Day. The bags were given to veterans, along with a free meal, during the club's November fundraising BBQ supper. Included in each bag were snacks (including Betty Westbrook's homemade peanut brittle), pads and pens, flashlights, gloves, hand warmers, etc., which were donated by members and local businesses. The annual event is part of the Telford Club's support of veterans in their community.

Pictured (l-r) are Rick Chinouth, Club Treasurer Susanna Chinouth, Board member Betty Westbrook, Vice President Kayla Bennett and her son, and member Linda Dunn (back).



Camp Creek Boasts Busy Year

Camp Creek recently recognized JDR Excavating and Trenching for their service to the community. The company is owned by J.D. "Dusty" Ricker, a lifelong resident of Camp Creek. The community has been experiencing exceptional

growth in home construction and the company has been instrumental in that growth. Past Club President Allan Brown (left) presented Dusty with a Certificate of Appreciation.

The club also hosted a pancake supper and auction to benefit those affected by the recent flooding in Kentucky and Virginia. With Wayne Bettis (left) serving as both auctioneer and entertainment, the club was able to raise \$5,500. Also pictured are pancake flippers, Ric and Sherri Jones (right).

Club members Tim Smithson (left) and Ken Smith (right) were each presented with a Ruritan Forever in honor of their 40 plus years of dedication to the club. Both have worked very hard to help the club grow.

This year, the club has welcomed new members Julia Fanning, Sherri Jones, Ric Jones, Phil Lilja, Marie

Lilja, Chris Friesen, Marie Friesen, Mykhailo (Mike) Panchuk, Raylee Johnson, and Jason Mann.



Chancellor Supports Local Families

Chancellor donated the use of our building to MyFamm for their annual charity toy distribution. MyFamm is an organization that provides holiday assistance and back to school supplies for needy Fredericksburg area children and families. Pictured is just a small sample of donated toys. Club member and trustee Danny Pemberton was responsible for

coordinating the event with MyFamm.



Paul Neal (right), on behalf of the club, accepted a jersey given in appreciation of Chancellor's support of the Fredericksburg Challenger Baseball program. The program provides a way for boys and girls with physical and/or mental challenges, ages 5-18, to enjoy the game of baseball. The club provides funds to supplement the programs procurement of baseball hats and shirts.

Wolftown Collects for Food Pantry

Wolftown hosted a food drive and collected 68 pounds of food for Feeding Greene Inc. – The Food Pantry of Greene County. Pictured are a few of the items collected.



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Mount Hermon Boils Over!

Mount Hermon began a new tradition in the community by hosting its inaugural Shrimp Boil fundraiser. With tremendous effort made by members and overwhelming support from the community, the club plans to continue hosting the fundraiser each year.



The club recently donated \$200 to the Washington Parish Fire Department District 9 Christmas Toy Drive. Shaunna Freeman (pictured left) coordinated the program for the fire department and had shared with the club about the program and the needs that it meets in the community. Club Treasurer Steve Kerbow presented the check on behalf of the club.

Calendar of Events on the Website

Ruritan National is maintaining a calendar of Ruritan events and committee meetings as well as information on office closings and staff availability. This calendar, developed through Google Calendars, can be found under the “Events Calendar” link at <http://ruritan.org>. Clicking on many items provides additional detail and directions.

Districts are invited to submit items to include on the calendar by emailing diane.lawson@ruritan.org.

The Canaries



Time is an interesting thing. I would panic if you told me I had to get my blood drawn for 10 minutes. However, if you told me I could get a massage for 10 minutes, I would be disappointed.

If I had an upcoming flight and my ticket said it would take 31 hours to travel from St. Louis to South Florida, I would look for a new travel agent, but a 31-hour trip from St. Louis to South Africa sounds exciting.

So, was the year 1633 a long time ago? Compared to my time on Earth, yes. Compared to the dinosaur footprints I once visited in Bolivia, 1633 does not seem so long ago.

In February of 1633, Italian astronomer, philosopher, and mathematician Galileo Galilei was charged with heresy for suggesting – and believing – that the Sun stood motionless while the Earth revolved around it. As a result of this crime, Galileo spent the rest of his life under house arrest.

You read that correctly; just 400 years ago, a man was criminally charged for trying to help us see something differently.

The truth is, we have not evolved very much. As I work with teams in all industries, it is rare to find groups that allow individuals to share their perspectives openly. It is especially rare to find teams that welcome the voices of their newest team members.

I can confidently say that average teams don't value the experiences of their new members. Instead, they want individuals to acclimate to their culture before speaking up. In other words, they want you to become one of them before they value what you have to say.

Unfortunately, this ideology means losing the opportunity to learn from a fresh perspective. After a while, most of us find ourselves numb to the way things are done. Over time, we discover the window of opportunity to see and point out blind spots for others has closed, and this is precisely what average teams want. They have no desire to rethink their culture.

New team members have a unique perspective, and high-performing teams – unlike average teams – embrace and encourage that perspective.

I recently worked with a team whose head coach has won at every level. She is the best of the best. At the end of my visit, we sat in her office, and she said, “tell me everything I need to hear.” She craved a fresh perspective. I will admit, in moments like this, I work to suppress the voice within me that says, “But I just got here two days ago! What do I know?”

High-performing leaders and high-performing teams value different perspectives. Average teams require people to earn the opportunity to speak, and this is an element that keeps them average.

The clear eyes – those who have not yet given in to the “this is the way we do things here” mindset – function like canaries in a coal mine. For 75 years, canaries were taken into coal mines to help workers detect deadly invisible gases like carbon monoxide. The birds would show signs of distress and die long before humans could sense any danger. The behavior of a canary provided a clear signal of danger. They noticed what was toxic long before humans could.

Canaries were able to sound the alarm on what others did not notice. They literally saved lives. New team members can do the same. Unfortunately, average teams either silence the would-be canaries or allow them to depart to save themselves. In both cases, the opportunity for growth is missed.

Just 400 years ago, we were wrong. Collectively we believed the Sun revolved around the Earth, and sadly, we had no desire to consider other options.

What is happening within your team – committee, department, or organization – that in 400 years would seem ridiculous to an outsider? High-performing leaders will ask for the opinions of new team members early often. When we pay attention to new team members' behavior – including their distress – we can learn a lot.

Don't miss the unique opportunity to learn from someone your culture has not yet tainted.

Their perspective may be the very thing that saves you.

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Happy Birthday Rudy!



**Rudy Bear Turns
35
This Year!**

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**WANTED:
WINNING RURITAN RECRUITERS
4TH QUARTER 2022**

**Sharon Martin of the Dinwiddie Club
Appomattox District
Reta Phillips of the Camp Creek Club
Tennessean District
Sean Lydon of the Waidsboro Club
Peaks of Otter District**