



Ruritan

Volume 90, Spring 2025

**Meet Your
2025 Ruritan National President
Rebecca Lane**





Ruritan

Volume 90, SPRING 2025

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2025 National President Rebecca Lane



Our pledge states:

Ruritan pledge to support
Urban and
Rural communities
In
Times of stress
And
Need through Fellowship, Goodwill and Community Service

How exactly are we doing this?

Clubs are providing scholarships for further education, which in turn helps our communities, providing food for those in need, providing money and services to those who have lost everything in a fire or other disaster, relieving a small part of their stress, providing ramps for the disabled, providing community fellowship through dinners, fairs, etc.

Districts are organizing walks to help raise funds for mental health, holding golf tournaments to raise funds for various projects,

And the list goes on.....

How do we accomplish this?

Through Fellowship, Goodwill and Community Service

WE ARE America's leading Community Service organization

WE ARE the hope for the future

How can we continue to help our communities?

Again, through Fellowship, Goodwill and Community Service

We need to ensure that we are seen in our communities, that we are doing projects that help our communities, not just writing checks, and that we hold community activities such as picnics and dances.

ARE **YOU** WILLING TO DO THIS?

We need to advertise ourselves

Wear our Ruritan apparel, talk about Ruritan, advertise US

ARE **YOU** WILLING TO DO THIS?

We need to think outside the box to form new clubs.

We have luncheon clubs, breakfast clubs, and a motorcycle club—what about a virtual club for the more tech-savvy? Or a club in a retirement community? Or a club within a large company? The possibilities are limitless. We just need to break out of our current mindset of how clubs should look.

ARE **YOU** WILLING TO DO THIS?

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2025 National President Rebecca Lane -

We need to talk and respect each other, agree to disagree, shake hands, and walk away as friends. We need to put our differences aside. We need to work as a team, motivate each other, mentor each other, encourage each other, and support each other.

ARE **YOU** WILLING TO DO THIS?

Ruritan co-founder Tom Downing was once quoted as saying, "The main value of Ruritan is to get folks in a community to become civic-minded, to consider together their common problems, and to try to solve these problems."

ARE **YOU** WILLING TO MAKE SURE THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED?

My logo this year is a service dog with the slogan, "Serving our Communities." The dog represents my dog Tucker, who picked me up when I was at my lowest, has been with me through my good and bad times and has kept me on my toes (those who have heard Tucker stories, know what I'm talking about). And my slogan, Serving our communities. Well, that's self-explanatory... That's what we do as Ruritans.

The plan for this year is to continue with Ruritan's 5-year long-term plan to grow Ruritan. We will be starting the second year of our plan, and we will be able to accomplish even more. Our goal for the second year is to continue the 5-member gain per club and for each District to form **two** clubs. This past year, 71 clubs met the 5-member gain, and 7 districts formed 1 new club. Now that we have worked toward our first-year goal, are **YOU** willing to ensure we accomplish our second-year goal?

What you do when you leave here, today, and for the rest of your lives will make your communities and America a better place to live and work. The opportunities are unending.

For more than 95 years, Ruritan has survived. We have faced challenges throughout our history. We have survived trials within our very organization. We are in the process of surviving a changing society. So, if you get discouraged, remember that Ruritan has survived many obstacles much greater than those we face today.

A story I heard when I visited the Spartan District reminds us that we never know how our acts of kindness can influence another person's life. Fifty-five years ago, a gentleman in the Spartanburg Community (who drove a green 49 Packard) decided to invest in the life of a teenage boy by sending him to the 5-day Soil-Conservation Camp that was held at Clemson University. As a result of that camp, this young man became a lifelong conservationist. He has dedicated his time and talents to make certain that our natural resources are protected for future generations. Oh- did I mention that the gentleman who sent him to camp was a RURITAN? And that 55 years later the young man is one as well??? So, remember, one simple act of kindness within our community can result in a life-changing opportunity, and they too may return home to inspire new generations to go out and make a difference!

Above all else, Remember,

We WILL survive! We WILL continue to Make Ruritan and America thrive! Be proud of who we are, and be proud of being a Ruritan!

I look forward to seeing you in Lexington, KY on January 23 and 24, 2026 to celebrate all our achievements from this year!

"We exist temporarily through what we take, but we live forever through what we give."

- Douglas M. Lawson

DISTRICTS

- 1 - HOLLAND
- 2 - CHESAPEAKE
- 3 - RAPPAHANNOCK
- 4 - APPOMATTOX
- 5 - PEAKS OF OTTER
- 6 - SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA
- 7 - NATURAL BRIDGE
- 8 - WOODROW WILSON
- 9 - ROCKINGHAM
- 10 - POTOMAC
- 11 - ALBEMARLE
- 12 - ROANOKE
- 13 - ROCKY MT-DURHAM
- 14 - GREENVILLE-GOLDSBORO
- 15 - CAPE FEAR
- 16 - SPARTAN
- 17 - COLUMBIA
- 19 - UPPER WEST VIRGINIA
- 20 - LOWER WEST VIRGINIA
- 21 - BLUEGRASS
- 22 - TENNESSEAN
- 23 - CHEROKEE
- 24 - GEORGIA-NORTH ALABAMA
- 26 - HERMITAGE
- 27 - ALABAMA-FLORIDA
- 28 - OHIO
- 29 - WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
- 30 - DELMARVA-NEW JERSEY
- 31 - PIEDMONT
- 32 - DAN RIVER
- 33 - LINCOLNLAND
- 34 - NEW RIVER
- 35 - DAVY CROCKETT
- 36 - SMOKY MOUNTAIN
- 37 - MIDDLE AMERICA
- 38 - RAPIDAN
- 40 - TALL CORN
- 41 - OPPORTUNITY LAND



GALLOPING TOWARDS GROWTH



HOW TO WIN POINTS PER DISTRICT

Every 5 net new members per club =
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

Districts submitting their 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

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

Districts 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





Creating Thriving Communities Across America: How You Can Make a Difference

Ruritan's purpose is simple: to help people understand each other and make our communities better places to live and work by volunteering. This isn't just a nice idea—it's something we're meant to do. Think about the saguaro cactus. In the desert, the saguaro stands tall and helps life around it. Birds make nests in its branches, animals rest in its shade, and it stores water to share when times are tough. Like the saguaro, we can be a source of help and growth in our communities.

Each Ruritan club has its own "desert" to take care of. By figuring out what our communities need and working to meet those needs, we can create places where people feel supported and included. Our slogan—fellowship, goodwill, and community service—isn't just words; it's a promise we keep every day.

This work is so important. People today are becoming less connected. Communities are drifting apart, and fewer people are joining groups. This makes neighborhoods weaker. When you look at historical data of the US from 1900 to today, the chart of people joining groups from 1900 to the 1960s shows a steady increase and a steady decrease from the 1960s to today. The outlook is bleak. But there is hope—and that hope is you. The documentary *Join or Die*, streaming on Netflix, shows that when people join organizations and get involved in their communities, they build trust and connection. That's exactly what Ruritan does. We focus on what each community needs most, making our work personal and meaningful.

Living our vision starts with you. Our communities are strongest when they include people from all walks of life. Ruritan welcomes everyone—no matter their job, background, or viewpoint. This mix of people makes us stronger and better at solving problems.

Living our vision also means seeing service as more than just a task—it's a way of life. When we organize food drives, clean up roads, mentor kids, or simply listen to someone's concerns, we create ripples of change that reach far and wide. But to truly make a difference, we also need to build relationships. By fostering fellowship and goodwill—both in our clubs and with those we serve—we create trust and a sense of belonging.

This work can be hard. Like the saguaro, we face challenges and tough times. But remember, just like the saguaro's roots go deep and wide, we are supported by our purpose, our vision, and our community.

So, what needs do you see in your community? How can your club be a place of support? How can you inspire others to join us? Thriving communities don't happen overnight. They're built one step at a time—through acts of service, connections, and moments of fellowship.

Let's commit to standing strong, helping others, and creating places where everyone can grow. Let's lead with passion and believe in the difference we can make together.





Ruritan Convention Delegate Action

The delegates at the 2025 National Convention in Greenville, SC approved one ballot item and defeated another.

Ballot Item #1 - Adopted

ARTICLE I Name/Emblem/Politics Section 3. Has been changed from “This organization and its members shall be non-sectarian and non-partisan and shall take no action endorsing or condemning any candidate or measure which is to be submitted to the vote of the people” to “This organization shall be non-sectarian and non-partisan.”

Appeal of Board Action by Delegate – Failed

Move to appeal to the delegates of the 2025 Ruritan National Convention to rescind the board action approving BOD Motion 24-10-04 (including any amendments made before its passage in December 2024) which restructured the NBOD Standing Committees from seven to three (Growth, Training, and Communication) and changed the way the committee chairs were appointed. Further move to reinstate the original seven Standing Committees: Advancement, Bylaws, Growth Development and Member Retention, Leadership Development, Publications, Publicity and Public Relations, and Youth Activities.

The delegates also elected the following slate of officers to serve with incoming 2025 National President Rebecca Lane.

2025 President-Elect David Thompson (VA)
National Treasurer (three-year term) Donna Poulton (SC)
National Secretary (three-year term) Juliann Poff (VA)
National Director (one-year term) Marty Sewell (KY)
National Directors (three-year terms)
Garry Collier (TN)
Lynn Fillers (TN)
Timothy Garrison (NC)
Brian Grove (VA)
Rufus E. Hisghman (VA)
Marshall Ross (NC)
David Wingett (OH)
Foundation Trustee (five-year term) O.H. Bobbitt III

These officers were installed on Saturday night, January 25 at the Installation Banquet in Greenville, SC and took office at that time.

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
Radford, VA*

Friday Afternoon

- 4PM-6PM - Dunking Booth & Cornhole Tournament
All Proceeds will go to PROJECT FOCUS
- 6PM - Picnic
- 7:30PM - Training for Zone Governors & District Lt. Governors (Others are welcome to attend)

Saturday

- 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





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.

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)

2025 Foundation President Clinton Guy Cox



In sharing my first article as the Ruritan National Foundation President, I want to thank all of you who brought items to the National Convention and offered them for the Silent and Live Auctions. There were items that we would have preferred to be in the Live Auction, but because of time constraints, we were told to try to keep the Live Auction items to 15. I am sorry that we had to place your items in the Silent Auction. Please forgive us for not being able to place them where you wanted them.

I also want to thank all the individuals who volunteered their time to help serve with the Trustees before, after, and during the Auctions. We had a lot of fun serving you. I apologize to the Trustees because I had to spend a lot of my time giving speeches for Past Foundation President Phillip Bradshaw. As most of you know, there was a death in his family and he and Stella could not attend the convention. Congratulations Phillip for your leadership during the past six years while serving on the Foundation. You are an amazing leader.

We were able to make some changes this year that helped you, the Ruritan member, when it came time for you to pick up your items and get them paid for. We are also planning to make more changes next year to make the auctions go better and faster for check-outs.

I am in awe of those who have preceded me as the President of the Foundation. I fully recognize their deep commitment and genuine concern for the members of our organization. I hope to continue working on behalf of those who have given so much to the young people we work so hard to honor with scholarships. I want to be clear that it is your Foundation and I intend to serve you to the best of my ability. With that understanding, I want you to know that I am always open to suggestions from the membership.





Foundation Fellowship Weekend Blackwater Falls State Park Davis, WV June 13-15, 2025



Reservations: Blackwater Falls State Park Lodge, 1584 Blackwater Lodge Road, Davis, WV 26260-0490. **Call 304-259-5216** to make your own reservations, asking for a guest room or suite in the **Ruritan Block**, Guest room rate is \$144 each per night or Suites are \$194 each per night. A total of 12% taxes will be added per night. A two-night minimum stay is required. A deposit is required to be paid at the time of your registration. Cutoff date for Room Registration is **April 30, 2025**. This special rate is not available if you book online. Check in: 4 p.m. | Check-out: 11 a.m.

Event Venue: Milton Harr Conference Center at the Blackwater Falls State Park Lodge.

Friday after Lodge check-in: please register with our group. Bring your auction items and goodies for the hospitality room. Learn about the multiple events planned for Saturday morning and afternoon including a lunch provided by Upper West Virginia Ruritan District. Enjoy the Saturday night banquet meal, Silent and Live Auctions, and then the Entertainment.

Registration cost is \$65 for each person. Registration fee includes admission fees for Saturday events and the Saturday banquet meal. Send the below form with payment to **Ruritan National Foundation, PO Box 487, Dublin, VA 24084**, postmarked by **May 13, 2025**.

Name: _____

Member number: _____

Name Badge: _____

Spouse/Guest Name: _____

Member Number: _____

Guest Name Badge: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Payment Information

Check No. _____

C.C. No. _____

C.C. Exp. Date _____ Zip Code _____

Security Code _____

Cell Phone Number: _____

District: _____

Club: _____

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.



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.

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.



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.



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.



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."

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.



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 22nd.*)

MECHANICSVILLE FLIPS FLAPJACKS FOR CHRISTMAS MOTHER



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



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.

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. Members also helped with building beds for the non-profit Sleep in Heavenly Peace.



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.



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: **PEAKS OF OTTER** District

CLIFFORD HOSTS FESTIVAL

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



News From Ruritan: **SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA** District

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.



News From Ruritan: **NATURAL BRIDGE** District

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.



News From Ruritan: **NATURAL BRIDGE** District

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.



News From Ruritan: **WOODROW WILSON** District

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.



News From Ruritan: **WOODROW WILSON** District

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.



News From Ruritan: **ROCKINGHAM** District

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 1LT 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.

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.



News From Ruritan: **ROCKINGHAM** District

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.



News From Ruritan: **POTOMAC** District

BEDINGTON SUPPORTS COMMUNITY

Bedington ended the year on a high note by presenting donations to several local organizations. Pictured (l-r) are Club President Jeff Adams, Meals on Wheels Director Diane Waldron, Bedington Volunteer Fire Department representative Erica DeHaven, Principal Nicole Krause from Spring Mills Primary School, Missi O'Brien from Potomack Intermediate School, Principal Amy Haderer from Spring Mills Middle School, and Principal Shane Shaffer from Bedington Elementary School.



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.

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.



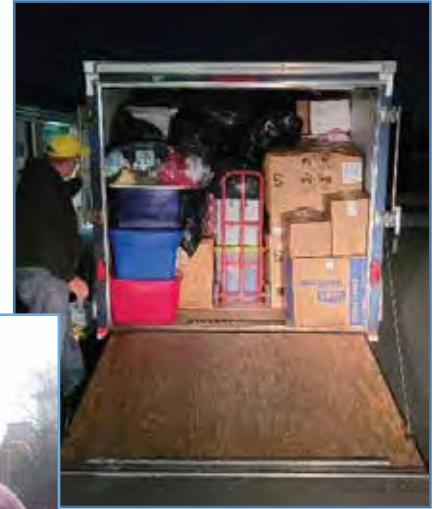
ROHRERSVILLE COORDINATES HELPFUL EFFORTS

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.



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.



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 installed a ramp for a local resident.



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.



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

LYNNS CROSSROADS BRINGS JOY TO RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE

The Rocky Mount-Durham District and **Lynn's 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.



News From Ruritan: **GREENVILLE-GOLDSBORO District**

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.



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.

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.

News From Ruritan: **COLUMBIA District**



Environment Committee Chair Becky Starnes organized an Adopt-A-Highway cleanup. Members of the Sandy Run Ruritan, 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 (l-r) are Beth Jourdain and daughter Gabby, Jammie Hayes, son Connor, Teresa Helms, Cassy, mother



Christie Thompson, and Club President Sheila Shanklin.

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.



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.



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.



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.



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.



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.

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.



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 the veterans and plans 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.



CLUBS BRING THE HEAT!



Pole Tavern hosted a Pulled Pork Lunch.



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

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!



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.



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.



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.



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.



AARON'S CREEK CELEBRATES 60

In September, **Aaron's 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.



STUART SHARES HOLIDAY JOY

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.



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.



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.



RANGELEY HONORS MOORE

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

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: **NEW RIVER District**

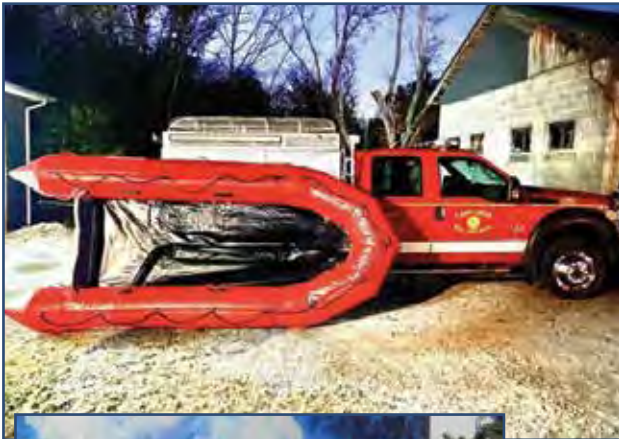
BARREN SPRINGS COMMUNITY

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.



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.



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



News From Ruritan: **DAVY CROCKETT District**



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.

News From Ruritan: **SMOKY MOUNTAIN District**

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.



News From Ruritan: **SMOKY MOUNTAIN District**

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.



News From Ruritan: **MIDDLE AMERICA District**

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 possibility. Together, they

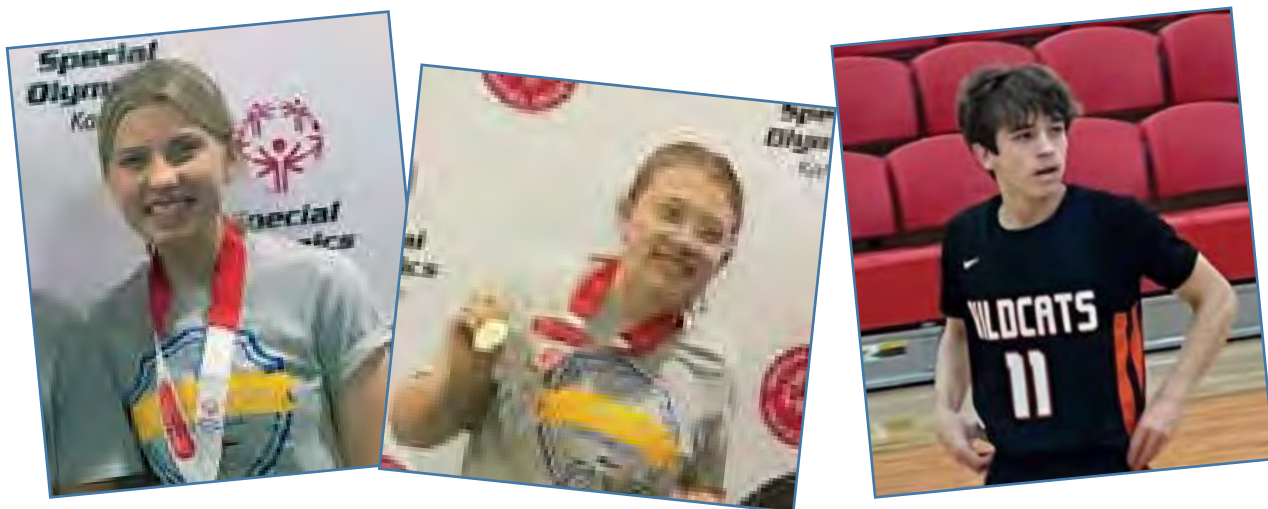
are the heartbeat of this effort -- a force that works humbly, tirelessly, and compassionately toward a healthier community.”

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

News From Ruritan: MIDDLE AMERICA District

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 (FFA), 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 FFA state convention. Kenleigh, Marlee, and Todd have helped with the club's annual Elsmore Day celebration and fundraising activities.



News From Ruritan: RAPIDAN District

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.



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.



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.



*Send Your Club and District News to:
diane.lawson@ruritan.org*

Magazine Submission Deadlines:

Spring - February 1

Summer - May 1

Fall - August 1

Winter - November 1

2025 Ruritan National Convention Greenville SC



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2025 Ruritan National Convention Greenville SC



2026 Ruritan National Convention

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