

Executive Director Sarah Kelly



Surging Forward: Building Thriving Communities Together

Across America, people are finding their footing again after a season of uncertainty. The recent federal shutdown reminded us how quickly our daily routines and local services can be affected. As President Becky shared in her message, *this is our moment to surge forward*. Ruritan has always been about stepping up when times are tough, neighbors helping neighbors, and communities standing strong together.

As I mentioned at the beginning of the year, like the mighty saguaro cactus standing tall in the desert, Ruritan clubs must remain rooted and resilient. Even when the landscape feels dry, our fellowship, goodwill, and community service provide the shade and sustenance others need to thrive. Each club tends its own “desert”, a local place where needs are met. Whether that means mentoring youth, supporting seniors, or responding to sudden community needs, every act of service is a sign that hope still grows here.

But to continue thriving, we must also adapt and grow. Our “**2 + 5 to Thrive in '25**” and “**3 + 5 Keeps the Dream Alive!**” initiative challenges every district to plant new seeds of service by starting two clubs in 2025, then three clubs in 2026, and adding five new members to each existing club. Growth isn’t just about numbers; it’s about ensuring that every community has the chance to experience what Ruritan brings: belonging, purpose, and the power of working side by side.

As we look ahead, let’s also remember that keeping our current members engaged is just as vital as welcoming new ones. *Keep them, don’t sweep them.* Call the member you haven’t seen in a while. Invite them to lend a hand with the next project. Celebrate small victories together. The relationships we nurture are what keep our organization strong.

Now is the time to move forward with confidence. The challenges of recent months may have tested us, but they’ve also proven our resilience. When we surge forward together, we don’t just recover, rebuild, renew, and help our communities shine even brighter.

