

2020 National President Linward Hedgpeth



*We Will Get Through
This Together -
Because We Are
Ruritans!*

Ruritans Resilience

I hope this letter finds each of you safe and in good health. We are having a once in a lifetime crucial experience, but our faith and hope remain strong. We as Ruritans accept this time of continuous change as an OPPORTUNITY. A time to find new ways to engage our communities. During uncertain times people are looking for hope or a way to help in their neighborhoods. RURITANS have the experience to promote hope, goodwill, and provide services. It is an opportunity to develop not only new relationships, but embrace new ways of communicating, which will help prepare our organization for the future.

We have endured this COVID-19 challenge thus far. And while those working on the front lines and essential workers have been praised for bringing us through the crisis, there have also been unsung heroes, the Ruritans. I could not be prouder of these unsung heroes. Your actions and support have enabled those on the front lines to keep fighting. Your willingness and your courage to take this opportunity to serve your communities even more, exemplifies your Eagle spirit.

Despite the danger this virus presents, Ruritans have learned the benefit of volunteering and are continuing to find ways to pay it forward. When volunteering you are making a commitment to share that most precious of resources -your time- to make life better for those who are in need. Your helping-hand and the kindness you show makes the greatest difference in the lives of the individuals who are touched by your generosity. It does not matter how you choose to volunteer. **Just by being a Ruritan member**, you are supporting the organization and its cause, you do make a difference.

Our staff has been relentless in leading the way, assisting the Ruritan National Board in taking advantage of the unpredictable situation we are facing, meeting nightly with the different committees, managing their staff responsibilities, and keeping our National Office operational.



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The Ruritan Executive Committee has been meeting bi-weekly since March via Microsoft Teams to stay current on the COVID-19 impact and risk. The committee has focused on confronting the challenges to keep the organization functioning while continuing to support the members and communities with least disruption. The National Committees have been working tirelessly, spending countless hours weekly via Microsoft Teams to determine action plans, setting goals, and develop strategies to help prepare the organization for the short term and for the future during these uncertain times.

The Ruritan Committees

- Budget & Finance
- Leadership
- Bylaws
- Advancement
- Publications
- Youth
- Publicity & Public Relations
- Growth and Development
- Nominating
- Restructuring



Because of the Pandemic we've had to reconsider how we carry out our Board of Directors meeting to minimize the virus exposure to the members. The meeting was held on August 8, 2020. We met via Microsoft Teams and some board members met in person at the home office. We limited the in-person participation so we could comply with the Virginia's social distancing rule and for the safety and well-being of our members.

PANDEMIC

COVID-19 is still a real threat, let us continue our prayers not only for Ruritans but for our nation that we may soon have a cure. For now, all we can do is protect ourselves and each other. What we know now is that washing your hands, wearing a mask and social distancing is the only weapon we have. So, I pray we all use them to protect each other.

GONE TO SOON

In remembering the many wonderful dedicated Ruritans that have "gone too soon" in 2020, I offer these verses of comfort for the families and friends, from Matthew 5:3: "Blessed are the pure in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted, amen."

We are very enthusiastic for those districts where some clubs are starting to physically meet and have limited activities, and we wish you the greatest of success. We look forward to the day we all will be back to a more normal Ruritan routine. If your district is meeting virtually or in person, please continue to follow the guidelines provided by your local government agencies. And remember to **wash your hands, wear your mask, and social distance.**

*Ruritans Working Together to Soar to New Heights,
Linward Hedgpeth*