

2024 National President Robin Davenport



I can't believe summer is here, and half my year is almost gone. To be honest, I have been working harder at listening to concerns and problems that we all have, so I decided that my letter to our membership should address this. Listening to one another is essential for effective communication and fostering understanding, empathy, and cooperation. When people listen to each other, they validate each other's perspectives, feelings, and experiences, which helps build trust and stronger relationships. Here's how communication and listening tie into the principles of "Ruritan," an acronym that can guide us in effective communication:

- 1. Respect:** Show respect for the other person by giving them your full attention when they're speaking. Avoid interrupting or dismissing their ideas.
- 2. Understanding:** Seek to understand the other person's point of view, even if you disagree. Ask questions to clarify and show genuine interest in what they have to say.
- 3. Reflection:** Reflect on what the other person has said to ensure you understand them correctly. Paraphrase their words and ask for confirmation if needed.
- 4. Inclusivity:** Create an inclusive environment where everyone feels comfortable expressing their thoughts and opinions. Encourage participation from all parties involved.
- 5. Transparency:** Be honest and transparent in your communication. Avoid hidden agendas or misleading information that could hinder trust and openness.
- 6. Active listening:** Practice active listening by focusing on what the other person is saying without thinking about your response. Please pay attention to both verbal and nonverbal cues to fully understand their message.
- 7. Nonverbal cues:** Pay attention to nonverbal cues such as body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice, as they can provide valuable insight into the other person's emotions and intentions.

By following these principles, people can communicate effectively, foster mutual respect, and build stronger relationships, clubs, and communities based on understanding and empathy. Listening to one another is not just about hearing words but also about understanding their deeper meaning and responding in a way that acknowledges and respects the other person's perspective.

I hope you, as a Ruritan member, have a great rest of the year. Let's continue to grow by the 5 and 1 plan: each club will add 5 new members, and each district will open one new club.

#RuritanStrong