

2021 BRCO Officers and Board Members

Officers

- President: Mike McLean
- Vice President : Greg Christopher
- Secretary: Beth Cook
- Treasurer: Stephanie Quis-Garrett

Board Members::

- Frances Adamson
- Tom Kolaski
- Lucas Sorrells
- Pat Carr
- Mike McLean



A Word from our president, Mike McLean



As we enter the month of August, our community is awake and continues the challenge of living life during the pandemic. What I notice is that most Bethel residents are active and engaged in some version of life previous to the onset of the pandemic. We all have challenges, some more than others, but those challenges do not stop the desire to live our lives as a community.

Currently, under the strong leadership of Evelyn Coltman, we are telling the BRCO story in facts and data in response to the WNC Communities' George H.V. Cecil Honors Awards Application requirements. This year, the WNC Communities' redesigned and re-titled Award program will recognize rural communities for implementing programs or projects to enhance the quality of life for their residents. As in previous years, this effort will celebrate WNC ingenuity and hard work, but this year it will have an increased focus on community best practices and continuous improvement. BRCO is fortunate to have Evelyn and her ability to digest our feedback in the annual program. While recognition is certainly appreciated, the true reason BRCO applies and assembles extensive details about our annual efforts is to share this with other communities. The details of what we do may create ideas that work for another community like the Saunook new community that is reviewing the BRCO model as they begin their journey to unite their residents.

Today, along with other Waynesville Rotary Club members, I helped guide the contestants in the Lake Logan Multisport Festival to turn onto Poindexter from Sonoma Road. Visitors to our area and residents alike were invited to this two day challenge. Today the participants began at daybreak with a 500-meter swim in Lake Logan, a 12-mile bike ride through Bethel, and a 5K run to finish the day. Full of "Thank You's", an intermittent stream of bicycles made that turn over a 2 ½ hour time period. I watched the riders as they leaned into the turn, but what really caught my eye was the cars, trucks and residents of Bethel that also passed through this intersection. Deputy Cody of the Haywood County Sheriff's staff and I were there for the event but Bethel was there for living life. Whether going to church or going to see family or going to work in some cases, the residents came respectively with curiosity about the event. Some asked, but all waved. I looked across the valley towards Lake Logan and the mountain range surrounding it, and saw the typical "smoke" for which the Smoky Mountains get their name. The sun was just breaking through the morning fog, and I knew that I was lucky to be in this beautiful part of the world with this community.

Just like our new banner that is being planned for Hwy 276 at Sonoma Road, this area always says to me "Welcome to Bethel".

Mike McLean,

Thank You

BRCO sends a big “THANK YOU” to Evelyn Coltman for her tireless work compiling, writing, and submitting the WNC Communities Honors Award application.

The WNC Honors Awards are built on 71 years of history recognizing the achievements of organized communities for their work on behalf of their residents. The WNC Honors Awards Program is an opportunity for community clubs across the mountains to come together to celebrate and receive recognition and cash awards for the work they have accomplished during the year.

BRCO has received the highest award - Community of Distinction - first in 2007 and then every year from 2013-2019. In 2020 (due to Covid-19) WNC Communities awarded \$500 to the 70 Communities who submitted applications. Each year, Evelyn spends countless hours of work for this endeavor and this year is no exception.

Thank you Evelyn!

Coming Soon



A temporary “Welcome to Bethel” Banner on BRCO’s property at Sonama Road and Highway 276 will be erected in the near future.

NCDOT’s plan to re-work the intersection has been delayed and no start date for the project has been set. BRCO plans to install a permanent sign once NCDOT completes their work at the site. In the meantime, a temporary banner will be erected. Thanks to BRCO members Ted Carr and Lucas Sorrells who are spearheading the project. So as you travel Highway 276 from Waynesville toward Bethel be on the lookout for the new banner!

Mark Your Calendar

August 21-22 - BRCO will join Haywood County Historical & Genealogical Society at the Blue Ridge Heritage Festival Weekend at the Shelton House, Waynesville.

BRCO Board Meeting - Tuesday, September 7 at 7:00 p.m.

BRCO Membership Meeting - Tuesday, September 14 at 6:30 p.m.

BRCO Committee News

Race – Lucas Sorrells, Chair

The date for the BRCO 2021 Half Marathon and 5k race is set for October 9, 2021. If anyone would like to be involved, please let Lucas know. Volunteers will be needed on race day on the course and also in the gym. If you are interested in helping, please contact Lucas. Work has been started on the registration site and social media.

Rural Preservation – Carol Litchfield, Chair, is inviting everyone to monitor pollinator gardens in their neighborhood and around the county in the coming weeks and let her know when and if they see significant numbers of butterflies. During 2020, butterfly sightings were down from previous years. "I was not seeing many butterflies last month, but during August, I have seen an abundance of Swallowtails," says Carol. Monarch butterflies should be arriving during August with the greatest numbers apparent by mid-September. If you see butterflies, make note of their location and which flowers they were attracted to. In early August, Carol took these photos of a Pipevine Swallowtail on Tall Garden Phlox and a Tiger Swallowtail and Monarch butterfly on Joe-pye-weed.



Pipevine Swallowtail Butterfly



Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly



Monarch Butterfly

Historic Preservation — Evelyn Coltman, Chair

Lisa Leatherwood, Administrator of Silver Bluff Villages, met Historic Preservation member, Evelyn Coltman, and Department of Natural and Cultural Resources representatives, Annie McDonald and Jennifer Cathey, at the Pigeon Valley Assisted Living facility for a tour of the historic site to determine if the structure is suited for National Register of Historic Places designation. The history of the location is tied to the "County Home" movement in North Carolina and was originally a location for individuals who found themselves in indigent situations. The bottom floor periodically housed overflow from the penal system. The program was originally established to be a working farm that would provide shelter and food for those housed at the County Home. Over 100 years old, the three-story building is architecturally and historically impressive.

BRCO Committee News (continued)

Historic Preservation Committee Report (continued from page 3)

Doug Chambers, Edie Burnette, Carroll Jones, Wendy and J.R. Rogers, and Evelyn Coltman filmed a segment of our *Historic Schools of Bethel* DVD at the Hargrove/Rogers House on Highway #215. The Rogers couple has salvaged a wonderful historic location with plans to restore it with historic integrity. The filming also focused on Hargrove family that has played such a prominent role in Bethel history from the 1800s forward.

Rikki Rogers, member of Piney Grove United Methodist Church in Stamey Cove has provided a history of both the church and the adjacent cemetery. This information adds another layer to our investigation of Bethel Cemeteries that will eventually lead to a website listing of all of the known cemeteries in the Bethel/Cruso region. Carol Litchfield has driven to many of the cemeteries already researched in order to calculate accurate directions.

NCDOT has granted Bethel Rural the right to place signage at Truss Bridge #79, NC's oldest metal truss bridge, located on Lake Logan Road. In 2019, Carroll Jones secured the National Register of Historic Places designation for the bridge; BRCO, government leaders, and community citizens celebrated with a ceremony. Carroll Jones and Evelyn Coltman met to select a location. Carroll created a map, wrote the inscription, and Evelyn submitted the application.

The list of Bethel Writers and Media Contributors listed on our website continues to grow with the addition of the following: Kevin Duffus has received NC Historian of the Year Award, the Edward R. Murrow Award, George Foster Peabody Award, Joel Gradin Award of Excellence in Public Humanities, and World Hunger Media Award presented at the United Nations for his research, film documentaries, books, articles, and documents that focus primarily on the North Carolina coast and Blackbeard. Eric S. Brown is a renowned author in the field of horror and science fiction, having published hundreds of short stories and over 100 books, with his material used for a film. Wanda Mathews Taylor is a former newspaper columnist who has gained local fame, not only for her writing, but also for her acting and directing of plays at HART.

We continue to do upkeep and mowing at the Pigeon Gap Watering Hole atop Waynesville Mountain - thanks to the services of Dave at McCarson's Mowing and Landscaping. This is the site of a crossover stopping point for Bethel residents going over Waynesville Mountain as far back as the 1800s. The Historic Preservation Committee supervised an Eagle Scout project to restore the location and the 1924 historic marker at the site.



Pigeon Gap Watering Hole

History Buffs



DID YOU KNOW?

In the early 1900's children could be mailed through the US Postal System?

On January 1, 1913, the US Postal Service began accepting parcels weighing over 4 lbs. The regulations for mailing parcels were somewhat vague and people began “testing” the new service. There have been seven recorded instances of people mailing children between 1913 and 1915. It was cheaper than buying them a train ticket on a passenger train. One Idaho family paid 53 cents for the stamps to put on their five year old daughter's coat and mailed her to her grandparent's house 73 miles away. The longest postal trip for a child was in 1914 when the six year old girl's parents mailed her from Florida to Virginia—720 miles. By 1920 the Postmaster General put a stop to the practice of sending children by mail. Click the link below if you are interested in learning more about the practice:

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/brief-history-children-sent-through-mail-180959372/>

During World War II, several German Prisoner of War Camps were located in North Carolina?

While none of the camps were located in Haywood County, German POW camps were located in 18 places in North Carolina including Hendersonville and Swannanoa. At the time most people did not know about the POW Camps because the government wanted to keep the program hush-hush to prevent public outcry. According to various accounts, the prisoners were treated fairly and were used as farmworkers to fill the void created by American able-bodied men who had gone to war. One of the camps in Henderson county is now the site of East Henderson High School in Flat Rock. For more information click on the following link:

<https://www.boldlife.com/hiding-in-plain-sight-pows-in-henderson-county/>

Interesting Facts About Haywood County

- Haywood County has 13 peaks above 6,000 feet.
- Haywood County has the highest average elevation of any county in the east.
- In 1891, Haywood County got its first library when a group of Waynesville women started the Waynesville Library. In 1915 the Canton Library formed under the guidance of the Canton Women's Club.
- Haywood's rivers and springs are its own: all water in Haywood County originates here.