

Bethel Rural Community Organization Newsletter

www.bethelrural.org

June 2020

2020 BRCO Officers and Board Members

Officers:

- President: Mike McLean
- Vice President: Carroll Jones
- Secretary: Beth Cook
- Treasurer: Stephanie Quis-Garrett



Board Members:

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

A Word from our president, Mike McLean



As we face new challenges in our Nation, the solace of participating and relying on our Bethel residents and BRCO members gives us comfort and hope. The word “community” is defined as *“the people with common interests living in a particular area”*. The Community of Distinction Award from WNC Communities is our shining star among many organizational achievements in recent years, but the real community is made up of our dedicated volunteers and members that drive our committees with planning, action and concern for all. The BRCO team is made of all that either seek assistance or those that provide assistance. We all know how hard life can be for many, and the current crisis of disease and unrest provides a further challenge.

I can assure you that crisis or not, your officers and Board members continue to talk, meet and discuss the 2020 goals for our organization. Although we cannot hold our regular membership meeting, program and meal, we continue the critical assistance to our residents organized by our Benevolence and Food Pantry committees. These committees focus on public programs that range from food supplies and provisions to individual family needs. Julie, Stephanie, and Lucas have these efforts well in hand. In addition, we received a Grant this year that will enable more effective access to the Fellowship hall, which will benefit everyone. This project is moving forward under the guidance of the Beautification Committee, working with local service providers and resources.

We are hopeful to begin our membership meetings again, but in the meantime let’s just be a community aware of each other’s challenges and willing to help where necessary. Thanks to all for what you do, and keep your spirits high knowing you are part of a real community.

Mike McLean
President - BRCO

BRCO General Meeting - July 14, 2020

Our next regularly scheduled meeting is July 14, 2020. **In the event that the limit on the number of people allowed to gather is extended, you will be notified by email about any changes to the scheduled general meeting.**



COVID-19 Resource Guide

Southwestern Commission has compiled a comprehensive list of resources pertaining to the COVID-19 response. They will be updating this guide regularly, so please click the link below for the most recent update.

<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/COVID-19-Update.html?soid=1127920557861&aid=xbcXXjwTpxg>

JUNE SPOTLIGHT: BRCO's Beautification Committee

(note: Each newsletter will spotlight the work of one of the BRCO Committees)

The BRCO Beautification Committee is responsible for the appearance of the home of BRCO, an historic Bethel church as well as the newer meeting rooms, kitchen and large fellowship hall.

The committee meets every two months to prepare the hall for the General Membership meetings. Preparations include setting tables, the buffet line, drinks and desserts table. Floral arrangements are provided by our member, Kaye Riddle. The arrangements are sold at the meetings to offset the cost. Additionally, the members meet in the fall and spring to do a thorough walk-through of the entire property, inside and outside. We make note of any issues related to maintenance, cleanliness, and general upkeep, especially in the historic building. The final report is sent to the Executive Board for action, as needed. Committee members include: Nancy Armstrong, Chair; Susan Baxley, Evelyn Coltman, Karyn Kolaski, Carroll Jones, Kaye Riddle, Roger Riddle.



Historic Bethel Presbyterian Sanctuary

In the past 4 years the following improvements have been made: New buffet cabinets and granite counter tops; all new energy efficient windows installed; new refrigerator; hall repainted; new Levelor shades installed on all windows (except restrooms and kitchen); new hall entrance rug purchased; Bethel sign refurbished and painted; conference table and chairs donated to small meeting room.

In a few weeks we will see the new driveway. This will allow one-way travel, safely and conveniently, to unload food pantry stock as well as dropping off handicapped persons attending an event at BRCO and the church. The landscaping will follow combining native evergreens, perennials and rock.

If you'd like to help out, meet your neighbors and enjoy a little fellowship, come join us. We are a warm and friendly group, and we will welcome you! (submitted by Nancy Armstrong, Chair)



Dining Hall set up by the Beautification Committee for BRCO general meeting.



One of the table decorations made by Kaye Riddle, Beautification Committee

BRCO Committee News

Rural Preservation Committee - submitted by Carol Litchfield, Chair

The BRCO Rural Preservation Committee recently received \$1000 in donations, including \$500 from the Haywood County Farm Bureau and \$500 from Haywood Electric Membership Corporation (HEMC). The donations are much appreciated and will help ensure that families in need will be able to obtain fresh produce from farm produce stands in the Bethel area. BRCO provides fresh produce coupons to families who visit the BRCO Food Pantry. The families then visit local farm stands and exchange the coupons for fresh produce, and the produce stand operators later receive reimbursement from BRCO for the coupons they have collected. It is expected that demand for the coupons will be greater in 2020 as more families experience the economic impacts of COVID-19.



NEW COMMITTEE - BUILDING AND GROUNDS

At the January BRCO Board meeting a new committee was created—Building and Grounds. This committee will work with the Beautification Committee, but will focus primarily on issues involving maintenance of the building and its exterior. We are still seeking an individual to chair this committee. If you would be interested in chairing this committee or serving on the committee, please contact Carroll Jones at ccrymes.jones@gmail.com

Other News

Work is underway on the semi-circular drive in front of the Fellowship Hall. Steve Miller with Rabbitskin, LLC, is charged with excavation/development of the driveway; Josh and Steve Sorrells with Cold Mountain Nursery will provide the landscaping. BRCO Beautification Committee member Karyn Kolaski designed the project, while Nancy Armstrong, Karyn Kolaski, Lucas Sorrells, Carrol Jones and Tom Kolaski will oversee the work. —submitted by Evelyn Coltman, photos by Tom Kolaski

Update: Grading is scheduled to begin the week of June 7th (depending on the weather).

Photos below show the marked-off area for the semi-circular driveway.



BE LOYAL BUY LOCAL

Support our Local Businesses

In this unprecedented time of coronavirus, we need to be there for our local businesses. Businesses in the Bethel Community have been supportive of BRCO and now we need to, more than ever, support them. So “Be Loyal, and Buy Local”. For a list of businesses in the Bethel Community, check out our Bethel Businesses on our web page at the following link:

<http://www.bethelrural.org/about-bethel-community/bussiness-in-the-bethel-community.html>



Haywood County is ranked #62 of the 100 NC Counties with a response rate of only 48.5%. This is going to impact federal funding and much more for the next 10 years. We need to get everyone counted. Think of it in this way, each person equals \$1600 per year. Over the course of 10 years that is \$16,000. Ten minutes of your time to complete the census impacts our

Haywood County funding by \$16,000 per person.

Please respond online or by phone: MY2020CENSUS.GOV or 1.888.330.2020

Congratulations



Each year WNC Communities awards Journey Scholarships to western North Carolina high school graduates. This year two scholarships were awarded to Haywood County residents and both recipients are from the Bethel area. Congratulations to Brooks Valentine and Lilly Ensley. Brooks Valentine was selected to receive the Pat Brinkley Memorial Scholarship for leadership that is a \$500 award in addition to the \$1000 Journey Scholarship.

DID YOU KNOW?

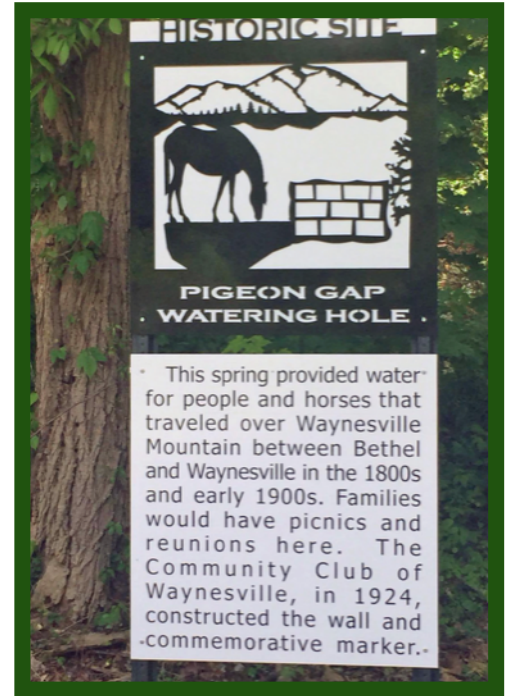
In the February BRCO Newsletter, we highlighted the four State Historical Markers located in the Bethel community. Many people, places, and events that are of local importance are not eligible for the state signage program. To direct attention to notable local history, BRCO's Historic Preservation Committee developed its own marker project. To date, the committee has placed five local historic markers along roadsides in Bethel Community.



OSBORNE BOUNDARY OAK



BETHEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



PIGEON GAP WATERING HOLE



LENOIR'S CREEK FARM



CALVIN FILMORE CHRISTOPHER