

### 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



#### 2021 – A New Year

As we enter 2021, it's a completely new world of experiences that none of us anticipated. The year 2020 is over, but the pandemic is not. We all have hopes that the vaccines will bring us back to normal, but normal has been re-defined. With this in mind, we should now focus on the challenges of our community and ways to meet them, rather than our previous model.

We all have questions – Will we have a race again? Will we have face to face meetings again? What about sharing of our favorite recipes at those meetings? How can we recruit new neighbors and encourage their membership in BRCO? What programs should we conduct when communication and interface is typically Zoom, emails, and conference calls? Will our Food Pantry clients increase in 2021?

The answer to all of these questions rests with you. The leadership of BRCO has asked all of these questions and is planning new approaches and methods under the circumstances we are facing. That being said, I am sure that many of our members have ideas and needs that can be shared for discussion. So, this is an open invitation for all members and potential members to submit ideas to the leadership of BRCO. One idea was to have an outdoor gathering (with social distancing and other precautions) with shared food. In this newsletter, you will see the details of our May gathering that is in the planning stage. Personally, I look forward to seeing our membership in person so this was an easy suggestion to adopt as a 2021 effort. At the gathering, and others to come, we will interact as a community once again.

In many ways, nothing has changed, since the Bethel Community will always have unmet needs that someone shares and a few residents step up. What BRCO represents is the way to share the needs of you and your neighbors knowing that someone is willing to help. Let us know your desires and all ideas are welcome. The BRCO of the future is the BRCO of the past – “Preserving yesterday - Helping Today - Planning for Tomorrow.”

Mike McLean, President BRCO



## Fund Raising Committee

As you are aware, BRCO's fund raising activities were impacted by the Covid 19 restrictions during 2020. In an effort to offset the negative impact, the BRCO Board is establishing a new committee -- Fund Raising Committee. The focus of this committee will be to explore alternative fund-raising activities, including applying for grants that may be available for organizations such as BRCO. If you

would be interested in serving on this committee or if you have experience in writing grants and would be willing to help, please contact Tom Kolaski and/or Mike McLean to let them know of your interest.

The small business center at Haywood Community College is sponsoring an online seminar -- *Strategic Planning: The Beginning-Nonprofit Summit - Build a Resilient NonProfit*. The date for this seminar is February 24 from 9am-11am.

The second part of the seminar is *Grant Writing 101: Nonprofit Summit* and will be held online on February 25 from 9am-11 a.m. This seminar reviews the questions nonprofits need to answer prior to searching and applying for grant funds, outlines the 7 basic elements of most proposals, and shows participants how to match their needs to funder priorities. Participants focus on the major questions that need to be answered prior to a grant application and incorporating these answers into research and ultimately a competitive proposal. There is no fee for the seminars. *Grant Research* will also be held on February 25 in the afternoon from 1pm to 3pm. All of the seminars are at no cost. All you have to do is register and then attend the seminars online.

Here are links to the seminars for more information and registration.

[Strategic Planning: The Beginning- Nonprofit Summit- Build a Resilient Non-Profit \(Online\)](#)

[Program Designs that Pack a Punch \(Online\)](#)

[Grant Writing 101: Nonprofit Summit- Build a Resilient Non-Profit \(Online\)](#)

[Grant Research: Nonprofit Summit- Build a Resilient Non-Profit \(Online\)](#)

## May 11, 2021—Think Spring!

Due to the Covid 19 restrictions we have been unable to have in-person/in-door meetings for the past year and we have missed being able to get together for our general meetings. So, BRCO has reserved the Rotary and Kiwanis pavilions at the Canton Park for Tuesday, May 11, 2021. This will be an outdoor general meeting but more importantly a time for us to renew fellowship. More information will be forthcoming but for now **mark your calendars and plan to join us for a safe time of family fun, food, and fellowship.**



## Historic Preservation Committee Receives Award

After 3 cancellations and postponements, the NC Society of Historians finally held its 2020 awards ceremony via ZOOM. What was supposed to be a 2 hour program turned into a 4 hour presentation, but it was exciting to see the variety of awards representing different genres. Out of hundreds of applications, 40 applicants received the Award of Distinction. There were 5 "Lighthouse Awards," a new category this year. There was also the President's Award and the Historian of the Year Award.

BRCO's Historic Preservation Committee was honored with the Award of Distinction as well as the Lighthouse Award for outstanding achievement for our art collection that represents a bridge, churches, farms, houses, schools, a patent drawing, a logging map, a grist mill, a train-depot/post office, a store, a bird, and a tree. The collection of 24 art prints utilized the following mediums: acrylic, oil, watercolor, pencil, colored pencil, scratchboard, painted photograph, and black and white photographs. The art prints hang in our community center, are on our website, and have been featured in 4 art shows. The procurement of our art collection has engaged artists, photographers, individuals, families, and a museum. Hundreds of hours have gone into collecting, documenting, photographing, framing, reproducing, selling, and showing the art collection.

This makes 5 NC Society of Historians Awards earned by the HP Committee and its members (6 if we count the special Lighthouse Award). —submitted by Evelyn Coltman,

## BRCO Wins 2020 Tinsel Trail Favorite Tree



Press release from the Shelton House: "The 2020 Shelton House Tinsel Trail has come to an end! The Shelton House Board of Directors and Staff want to thank all of the sponsors and visitors that contributed to the preservation of the History, Heritage and Crafts of Shelton House either by sponsoring a tree, purchasing a "Preservation Ornament", or giving a donation. We also thank all who walked the trail and voted for their favorite tree! All of the trees sponsored by local businesses, organizations, and individuals were so beautiful and creative and lent a festive air to the end of a difficult year. Thank you all for helping to bring a little bit of joy to 2020. All of the trees were special and the voting for Favorite Tree was very close but only one can claim bragging rights as the **2020 Tinsel Trail Favorite Tree**. And now...the winner of the 2020 Shelton House Tinsel Trail, voted on by our many visitors, is... **Bethel Rural Community Organization!**

Bethel Rural Community Organization (BRCO) is known for their preservation and support of the beautiful places and people of Bethel, NC. Located just 5 miles from Shelton House, Bethel is an exceptional example of the history and heritage of Haywood County. Congratulations to Bethel Rural Community Organization for bragging rights as "Winner of the 2020 Shelton House Tinsel Trail".

Thanks to BRCO members Kara and Tom Kolaski and other members for decorating BRCO's Tinsel Trail Tree at the Shelton House.

## BRCO Committee News

### **Beautification – Nancy Armstrong, Chair**

Committee members Carroll Jones, Evelyn Coltman, Nancy Armstrong, Tom and Kara Kolaski plus Ted Carr (from Building and Grounds) completed refurbishment of the entry ramp to the Hall. Sanding, pressure washing, a new threshold and painting have greatly improved the appearance of our property. We have purchased paint to apply a second coat in the Spring. Thanks to the Dogwood Health Trust, the graders, the landscapers and our volunteers, the completed circular drive and entry look very attractive and will safely and conveniently provide good access to the Hall.

Looking forward, we have a long list of projects to improve and enhance the buildings and grounds. Plus, several projects were deferred from last year due to Covid 19. We hope to be able to complete at least two major projects in 2021—one, a new single front door and two, new ceiling lights in the Hall.

### **Maintenance – Ted Carr, Chair**

The new water treatment system that was installed in December to replace the failed system - originally installed in 1985 - is working well. The defrost circuitry for the 6 year old heatpump failed during some frigid temperatures in December. A service call was completed in two days. The steel pipe rail for the ramp to the Sanctuary is a safety issue and will be the next repair item. Ted reported that he will be working with Nancy Armstrong, chairman of the Beautification Committee to prioritize maintenance needs 2021.

### **Education – Lucas Sorrells, Chair**

The Education Committee will soon begin the process of accepting scholarship applications for the 2021 award.

### **Race – Lucas Sorrells, Chair**

The date for the 2021 Half Marathon and 5k is set for October 9, 2021. The Race committee is planning to proceed under the assumption that we will be able to hold the race this year.

### **Food Pantry – Julie Green, Chair; Stephanie Garrett, Co-Chair**

Stephanie reports that the pantry provided food for 305 families in 2020. This is a 56% increase from 2019 when 196 families were served. There was a total of 811 individuals within these families.

In addition the food pantry has given out \$935 in produce coupons supporting not only our clients but also our local farmers.

The BRCO pantry volunteers work an average of 68 hours per month.

In 2020 the Pantry received \$4,760 in monetary contributions from local churches (Riverside Baptist, Encouraging Word), individuals and organizations. Local grocery stores Food Lion and Ingles also supported the pantry during 2020.



## BRCO Committee News (continued)

### Historic Preservation — Evelyn Coltman, Chair

The Historic Preservation Committee filmed Ann Crawford and Brenda Raulerson with information about Cruso School, the 20th century grade school that fed into Bethel School. Several other filming sessions about Bethel's historic schools will follow this year.

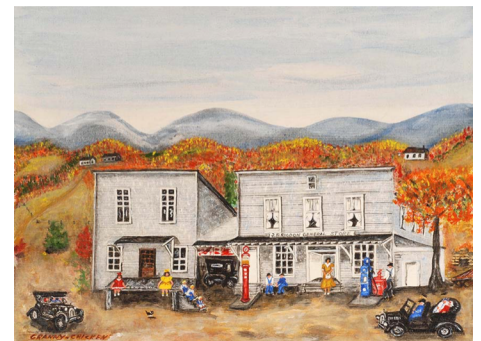
The committee will contract Nick De Paolo to do a painting of the Blanton/Reece log cabin that is listed on deed records with an 1821 date. The cabin is located between Lake Logan and Sunburst Campground. The history of the Reece family is documented in Book 5 of *Legends, Tales & History of Cold Mountain*, and the Blanton connection is detailed in Book 6. The building is one of the oldest standing structures in Haywood County.

The committee is planning to install a historic marker at Truss Bridge #79, North Carolina's oldest metal truss bridge for which committee member, Carroll Jones, wrote the successful nomination to the National Register of Historic Places in 2019.

The Historic Preservation Committee and chair, Evelyn Coltman, have received the "Award of Distinction" for the collection of 24 historic art prints. BRCO was one of forty recipients among hundreds of nominations. We have also been notified that at the postponed Zoom awards ceremony later this month we will receive one of five special awards. (see article on page 3)



The pictures shown are six of the 24 historic art prints that the HP Committee has collected. Prints of these and other historic art work are available to view and/or purchase on our website: <http://www.bethelrural.org/catalog.html>



## Did You Know?

Post offices played an important communications role in early Haywood County. Poor road conditions necessitated that mail be carried weekly by horseback from Asheville to Murphy and points between. Haywood County's first post office was established in 1831 in Waynesville. Forks of Pigeon, Bethel's earliest post office, came ten years later in 1841. Simultaneous with the arrival of the railroads in the late 1800s, additional post office locations developed in the Bethel/Cruso area: Cecil, Chinquapin Grove, Cruso, Forks of Pigeon, Garden Creek, Lavinia (Inman), Little East Fork, Livingston, Retreat, Sonoma, Springdale, Spruce, Sunburst, and Woodrow. A total of 14 post office operations existed in Bethel during a century's time, beginning in 1841 and ending in 1942.

When Rural Free Delivery began in Haywood County in 1901, the need for so many rural post offices dwindled. A person needed a petition of 100 signatures to request service, thereby allowing delivery close to home without having to travel to the post office for the mail. At this point, mail carriers became more significant in rural regions than postmasters and postmistresses. In addition to letters, rural carriers often relayed news about current events and weather forecasts while also delivering newspapers, magazines, and catalogues. The last post office in the Bethel/Cruso area (for which we have dates), Cruso, closed in 1942. After that date, Bethel/Cruso mail was directed to post offices in Canton or Waynesville while rural delivery continued and expanded.

For more information on historic post offices in the Bethel community click here:  
<http://www.bethelrural.org/about-bethel-community/historic-bethel-post-offices-.html>

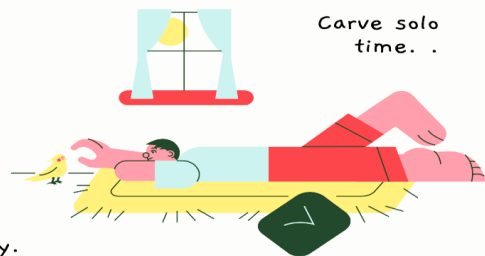
## MENTAL WELLNESS DURING QUARANTINE

Taking care of yourself while staying at home

Bond with your pet.  
Take lots of photos.



Learn a new hobby.  
Knitting can be fun.



Carve solo  
time. .



Lie down and read.  
Start reading the books you  
bought.



Check out BRCO's website  
at [www.bethelrural.com](http://www.bethelrural.com)