

Bethel Rural Community Organization Newsletter

www.bethelrural.org

June 2021

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



Together Again

On May 18th, for the first time in over a year, an in-person meeting of BRCO was held. One comment I heard was “I saw people smiling”. Yes, the fact that a group from our community center were able to meet and share their lives was a reason to smile. Who ever thought that this would be considered something special? While the journey is not over, it is apparent that the ability to meet in-person as a regular gathering is now underway. We will continue to practice safe methods when meeting, and the planning for our next BRCO meeting in person is underway. More to come on this in the next few weeks.

An observation about Haywood County is that the real estate market is booming. Many new residents are moving to Haywood County and certainly Bethel will get its fair share. To share the values and preferences of our community, we should encourage any new resident to try out BRCO. We continue to seek new committee members and leaders, such as the Fundraising Committee. So, if you meet someone new to Bethel, don't forget to invite them to the next Membership meeting. The program will be about the new Museum in Haywood County, the Haywood County History Museum at the Shook-Smathers House. All the townships and Community Clubs will be represented at the Museum, which features an overall chronology of Haywood County from the time of the Cherokee to the present day. Although the intimate details of each historical asset will only be realized when you visit the specific area of interest, the new Museum will acquaint all visitors with our Heritage and what each community focuses on currently.

Hope to see all of you soon at the next BRCO gathering.

Mike McLean

President

Bethel Rural Community Organization

BRCO May Picnic

On Tuesday, May 18, BRCO held its first in-person meeting in over a year with a picnic at the Canton Recreation Park. Although it was a little cool and windy for May, the rain held off. Everyone who attended enjoyed a time of good food and fellowship with BRCO members and guests. Our guest speaker was the new Folkmoot Director, Glen Fields. After a short business meeting, we were entertained with music provided by Glen Fields, Emolyn Liden, and Travis Stewart. A total of 27 members and 8 guests attended the picnic. (Below are a few pictures from the picnic.)



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.

Education – Lucas Sorrells, Chair

The Education Committee selected Sarah Ann Mease to receive the 2021 BRCO Scholarship. Sarah is the daughter of David and Leisa Mease and a 2021 graduate of Pisgah High School. She plans continue her education at Western Carolina University and pursue a career in nursing. Congratulations Sarah!

The BRCO/Dave Curphey STEM Award presents \$50 each to the 5th grade students at Bethel Elementary who achieved the highest scores on the end-of-year testing. The 2021 winners are:

Highest Score in Science - Kampbell Kruk, Jackson Rathbone, Raven Williams

Highest Score in Math - Kampbell Kruk, Layla Melton

Most Growth in Science - Aidon Norton

Most Growth in Math - Khloe Lanning

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

For the period January - May 2021, the food pantry as served 224 families and 575 individuals.

Rural Preservation – Carol Litchfield, Chair

We received a letter from Haywood Waterways Association thanking BRCO for its support and its contribution of \$50. The BRCO fresh produce coupons are now available to families in need. The coupons can be used to obtain fresh produce from area produce stands beginning in June. BRCO will reimburse the produce stand operators for the coupons they collect. Carol showed everyone a cage that had been built by the Bethel Middle School FFA students. BRCO funded this FFA project in which the students built 7 cages that can be used to protect Monarch butterfly caterpillars while they are eating milkweed and transforming into butterflies. Carol will provide a cage to anyone interested in using one to educate others on the important role that Monarch Waystations play in sustaining the Monarch life cycle.



One of the butterfly cages built by the Bethel Middle School FFA students. (photo provided by Carol Litchfield)

BRCO Committee News (continued)

Historic Preservation — Evelyn Coltman, Chair

The committee has conducted a good bit of research about the following cemeteries in Bethel: Burnette Siding (Old Spruce) Cemetery, Bethel Community Cemetery, Cathey Slave Cemetery, Cecil Community Cemetery, Cecil School Cemetery, Center Pigeon Cemetery, County Home Cemetery, Edmonston Slave Cemetery, Gwyn/New Cruso Cemetery, and Piney Grove Cemetery. We have consulted with both WCU's Mountain Heritage Center and the Department of Natural & Cultural Resources in Asheville for a better understanding of how to conduct the research as well as the appropriate manner for listing cemetery information and directions to these cemeteries. Community member, James Duncan, has assisted with driving to cemeteries to pinpoint locations. Thanks to the following people for contributing to cemetery information or making contacts for us: Mike Clark, James Duncan, Bill Holbrook, Carolyn and Ron Janey, Carroll Jones, Carl Ledford, Carol Litchfield, Linda and Blain Parker, Ricki Rogers, Alan and Kathy Warren.

As a part of the slave cemetery research, we have printed a list of Bethel Slave owners as listed in both the 1850 and 1860 Slave Schedules. Colonel Joseph Cathey owned a slave cemetery adjacent to Highway #110. Ninian Edmonston owned the slave cemetery off of Lake Logan Road. Thanks to James Duncan and Bill Terrell who provided photos and research about Ninian and Polly Edmonston and the Edmonston family.

Bill Terrell contributed photos and information about the Reverend Jesse Stalcup and wife Florence Kelly Stalcup. The Reverend Jesse Stalcup built Bethel Presbyterian Church, home of BRCO, as well as several other prominent houses in Bethel.

Doug Chambers filmed a segment of our *Historic Schools of Bethel* DVD with Wayne Woody at Laurel Grove Baptist Church on Schoolhouse Road off of Little East Fork. The school and church existed in the church building from 1920 – 1930, replacing the earlier Panther Branch School that existed on Little East Fork in the late 1800s. Laurel Grove merged with Burnette Siding, Ivy Hill, and Sunburst/Spruce Schools to form Cecil School on Lake Logan Road in 1930. That school merged with Bethel in 1954, but the rock building still exists as a lovely home.

Doug Chambers filmed a segment about the Hargrove family and Hack Hargrove's role in early schools in Bethel. Filming occurred at the home of J.R. and Wendy Rogers at the former Hargrove homestead. Edie Burnette and Carroll Jones relayed data about the Hargrove family, and Edie detailed her childhood memories of the Hargrove homeplace on Highway #215.



Fundraising Committee

The BRCO board is soliciting members and a chair for the newly formed Fundraising Committee. The Committee will look for grant funding opportunities and other general fundraising activities. All committees have been asked to submit their list of items and projects that they would pursue if money was available. All members are also welcome to submit their ideas for consideration. If you would are interested in serving on this committee, please contact Mike McLean or Tom Kolaski.

Art Print Addition

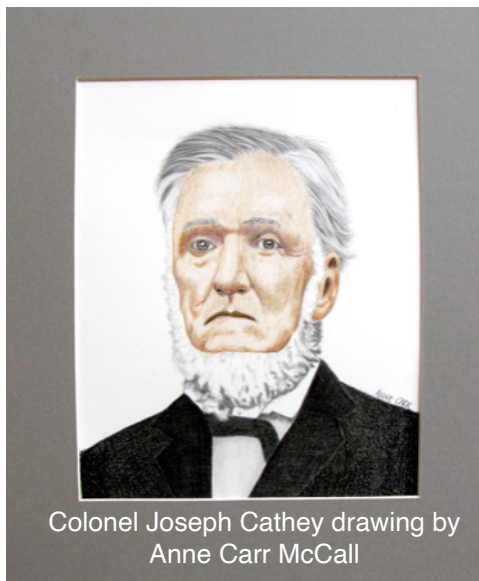
Anne Carr of McCall, Idaho, recently gifted Bethel Rural Community Organization's (BRCO) Historic Preservation Committee with a black and white pencil portrait of one of Bethel Community's most prominent founding citizens – Colonel Joseph Cathey. Anne is the sister of committee member, Ted Carr, and does hyper-realistic black and white pencil drawings of western themes, animals, portraits, and giclee prints.

Colonel Joseph Cathey (1807 – 1879) was a mercantile proprietor, postmaster, miller, church and civic leader, miller, farmer, and state legislator. The BRCO art collection includes three other Colonel Cathey related paintings. Colonel Cathey's granddaughter, Nettie Vance Penland, created late 1800s paintings of his house that was situated near today's Silver Bluff Village and his mill that was located at the end of the bridge on Max Thompson Road in Bethel. Jason Hawkins created a painting of Colonel Cathey's son's house, the Joseph Turner and Martha Anna Iva Killian Cathey House, that was built in 1860 and remains today on Highway #110.

The Cathey pencil drawing is the first portrait in the collection that includes 24 other art prints which can be viewed at www.bethelrural.org. The BRCO art collection received two awards in 2020 from the NC Society of Historians.



HP Committee members (l to r) Bill Terrell, Evelyn Coltman, Chair, Ted Carr, Frances Adamson, Carol Litchfield



Colonel Joseph Cathey drawing by Anne Carr McCall