

Bethel Rural Community Organization

Newsletter

www.bethelrural.org

October 2020

2020 BRCO Officers and Board Members

Officers

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

Board Members::

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



October 10, 2020: BRCO Virtual Half Marathon and 5K Race

Next BRCO General Meeting - November 10, 2020

Make plans to attend our next general meeting, Tuesday, November 10, 2020. If current COVID-19 restrictions on mass gatherings are still in effect, we will plan to have another Zoom meeting. We will keep you updated about plans for the meeting.

A Word from our president, Mike McLean



2020 – BRCO Support and Collaboration

As we enter the 4th quarter of 2020, it feels like the first, second, and third quarter. Every day we learn that there are new challenges facing us – how we meet in person, whether we meet in person, and how we meet the needs of our families and neighbors. There are no easy answers and we must all decide how we face these challenges. Keep your priority on your health, your family, and your community. That focus will give us the best chance of creating some form of normality in our future.

In November we vote. There are many ways to vote from the traditional in-person method to absentee voting to early voting. What is important is to vote. No matter what you feel about the choices, what is important to know is that your choices are personal and influential to our common future. Our founding fathers created a system of government that has served us well for almost 250 years, and there is no reason to believe that it won't continue. Treasure this and teach your children of the importance of the vote. As future voters, they will be future leaders who represent the basis for how our country provides and maintains the freedom we all enjoy.

In September we tried using Zoom virtual meetings for our Membership meeting. The bulk of your Board of Directors and Officers met in person (with social distancing), and took turns presenting their updates to our membership. It was not perfect, but it was effective in sharing current efforts. Future use of Zoom will be planned along with programs. Stay tuned and encourage all to participate, whether you are camera ready or not. Sharing knowledge and essential information will always give beneficial results to the participants.

The key word for BRCO is collaboration. In August, we collaborated with the Shelton House as part of their Blue Ridge Heritage Weekend at the Haywood County Historical & Genealogical Society (HCH&GS) tent. In July, August, September and now October we are collaborating with WNC Communities and the Dogwood Fund for 2020 Census encouragement. This has brought over \$1000 of new funding to BRCO. Collaborating with our own Food Pantry process, we made this activity dual purposed. Not only did we emphasize the importance of the Census that brings funding to our community, but we increased the amount of families and individuals that we support with food and supplies. As a Community of Distinction for 5+ years with WNC Communities, the support to our community is our priority. (continued on page 2)

A Word from our president, Mike McLean (continued from page 1)

Finally, we have an opportunity to support other communities. The newly emerging Saunook Community has reached out to BRCO for guidance. Besides sharing our Bylaws and operational efforts, they have asked for guidance in financials. We will help them grow with that support and they will have the benefit of learning from our evolution as a well-established community. In addition, HCH&GS has reached out to BRCO to assist in their effort with the North Carolina African American Heritage Commission. They are working on a project in collaboration with the Conservation Trust of North Carolina to create an NC African American Heritage & Culture Asset map as a tool for the public to explore the diversity of cultural sites around the state. The Bethel community will contribute our own information on sites of this nature, so let us know if there are areas in Bethel that you have knowledge. More to come on this as the effort gets underway.

Mike McLean
President – BRCO

Beautification Committee Completes Circular Driveway Project



We are pleased to report that the landscaping of our new driveway is complete. Drive by and take a look! Combining boulders, river rock and specimen plants, an attractive and virtually maintenance-free area now complements BRCO's entrance. In the coming weeks, watch as foliage on the Mt. Airy Fothergillia turn brilliant orange and red. Thanks to Joseph Cathey of Walnut Cove Farm for the good job.

Our October project is to refurbish the entrance ramp and rails. It needs a few repairs, sanding and paint. Stay tuned for more on this!

Picture at left of Mt. Airy Fothergillia in the fall



Selecting the boulders



Placement of the boulders



And now for the plants



Adding additional rocks



COMPLETED PROJECT!!



Meet Lake Logan's New Director of Facilities, Grounds, and Environmental Stewardship

Brice LeFiles became Director of Facilities, Grounds, and Environmental Stewardship at Lake Logan in August 2020. Brice graduated from Georgia College and State University with a BBA in Management. Brice has worked in facilities management his entire career, including five years as Head of Maintenance for Camp Mikell in Atlanta. He enjoys spending time outdoors in WNC with his wife Jessi and daughter Anna. They live on-site at Lake Logan to help meet the needs of Lake Logan guests and Camp Henry campers. Jessi serves as Lake Logan's Director of Camp Henry and Outdoor Programs.

Carol Litchfield, Rural Preservation Committee Chair, met with Brice at Lake Logan on September 16. Brice wanted to learn more about BRCO and also get an update on which Hemlocks had been treated when BRCO sponsored the Hemlock Restoration Workshop at Lake Logan on November 9, 2019. Carol showed Brice some of the sites that were treated, and they also reviewed the sites with Bruce Pace (Brice's predecessor). Brice is looking forward to becoming a member of BRCO. He has already viewed the BRCO Sunburst DVD which he enjoyed very much.



Brice LeFiles (on left) with Bruce Pace at Lake Logan on September 16

Article submitted by Carol Litchfield, BRCO's Rural Preservation Committee Chair

BRCO Committee News

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

We served an average of 18 families and 42 individuals from January to March. We are now serving an average of 31 families and 84 individuals. Our pantry availability has been advertised on various sites and announced on our local radio station. To date the pantry has received \$3720 in donations.

We have also assisted in providing emergency boxes and delivery if needed. We are providing food to any family or individual who may be suffering from food insecurity. Please give a big thank you to Julie and Danny Green for all their hard work during these difficult times.

Race – Lucas Sorrells, Chair

Lucas reported that this year's race will be a virtual race. Runners can either participate on our course whenever they choose or they can run from another location. They will submit their times to the virtual site. Tee shirts will be provided to participants but no awards will be given.

Benevolence – Lucas Sorrells, Chair

The committee has not received any requests for assistance but as utility cut-off notices are issued, requests are expected to come in.

BRCO Committee News (continued)

Beautification – Nancy Armstrong, Chair

In June a closet at the back of the church was refurbished to create the BRCO Library and Archives. The room was painted, linoleum removed to reveal the original wood flooring, and the electrical service was upgraded to include an outlet, a light switch, and a new energy saving decorative lighting fixture. New curtains and Historic Preservation Committee art prints completed the redecoration. Shelving and files are now organized for each BRCO committee. Thanks to all who donated their time, supplies and talent: Nancy Armstrong, Ted Carr, Evelyn Coltman, Glen Garrett, Carroll Jones, Karyn Kolaski and Tom Kolaski. (FYI all labor and supplies were donated by the above members)

In July the committee implemented Phase 1 of our new driveway. First the area was graded, and then a good gravel surface was laid. Then boulders were delivered to delineate the drive and protect and enhance the plantings. A huge shout out to Karyn and Tom Kolaski for coordinating the delivery! Phase 2, plantings, will begin when it cools down, in the fall. We have engaged Joseph Cathey of Canton. He has developed an attractive, no maintenance, seasonally colorful plan. (See pictures on page 2 of the various stages of work on the project.)

Rural Preservation— Carol Litchfield, Chair

The “Buy Haywood” 2020-21 Agritourism Guide was published and made available county-wide during the summer. The Guide acknowledges the vital support provided by BRCO. BRCO donated \$500 to help cover publication costs. The Guide is available in hard copy or by downloading it from the BuyHaywood.com web site. Many of the agriculture-related businesses in the Guide are located in and around Bethel.

Families in need have been using coupons from BRCO to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables from produce stands in the Bethel area. BRCO reimburses the produce stand operators for the coupons they collect.

Historic Preservation — Evelyn Coltman, Chair

The Historic Preservation committee began filming its next DVD: “Historic Schools of Bethel.” John and Phyllis Gaddis allowed us to film at the former Mountain Grove School in Lovejoy which has been converted into their home. The school opened in the 1870s and closed in the early 1900s.

New Orleans artist, Bethel native, Jason Hawkins has painted several paintings of historic homes in Bethel: the Pingree Priestly and Charity Haseltine Osborne Plott House, the James Henry and Flora Kinsland Plott House, and the Joseph Turner and Martha Iva Anna Killian Cathey House. His mother, Yvonne Hawkins, donated one of the original paintings and allowed us to photograph the other two for our art print collection. All 3 are available for purchase from the BRCO website.

During the pandemic break, the Historic Preservation Committee, with assistance from the Beautification and Buildings & Grounds Committees, created a file library in a former storage closet. We have collected files about all sorts of historic topics about Bethel, including Bethel families and historic sites. Research data collected by the Historic Preservation Committee members has examined the following topics: the history of Bethel Community Organization and Bethel Rural Community Organization, the six community organizations that existed in Bethel in the mid-1900s, the Pigeon Valley Fair that was a successful event of the West Pigeon Community Development Club in the mid-1900s, and the history of canneries and the Bethel Cannery that existed after World War II. Committee members also transcribed the Flora Kinsland Plott Diary which was written during the mid-1920s.

Phyllis and Bob Barnett have been selected to receive the Pigeon Valley Award for Historic Preservation for 2020. They were overseers of the Inman Chapel restoration project. When live meetings reconvene, the couple will be guest speakers.



OCTOBER SPOTLIGHT: BRCO's EDUCATION & BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEES

EDUCATION COMMITTEE: Lucas Sorrells, Chair

Committee Members: Bonny and Ron Chamberlain, Dick and Evelyn Coltman, Carroll Jones, Laura Ivey, Eleanor Porter, Randy Thompson, Kathy Tomassi

BRCO's Education Committee's primary focus is to provide a scholarship to a Pisgah High School graduating senior. In 2019, the scholarship amount increased to \$1,000. The scholarship is based on accomplishment and need. Past scholarship award winners include:

- 2020 - Lily Ensley
- 2019 - Gracie Yeargin
- 2018 - Sydney Smith
- 2017 - Rhiannon Goodwin
- 2016 - Cassie Parris

Other awards include:

The Dave Curphey STEM award. This award presents \$50 to the Bethel Elementary School male and female fifth grade student who achieved the highest scores on the end-of-year testing.

Citizenship Award. This award is granted annually to a Bethel Middle School graduating 8th grader selected by the faculty.

BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEE: Lucas Sorrells, Chair

Committee Members: Dick Coltman, Carroll Jones

Bethel Rural Community Organization supports local schools, other non-profits, and individuals-in-need through financial/utilities/humanitarian assistance. Projects have included vision and dental assistance, aid to families suffering flood damage, childrens' Christmas funds, support for families who have suffered the loss of a child, and aid to children in transition who find themselves without permanent housing. BRCO also contributes annually to the Center Pigeon and Lake Logan Fire Departments.



Did You Know?

The building pictured at left, is the Bethel cannery. The building is located on Poindexter Road adjacent to the Bethel Community Recycle Center.

The Bethel cannery, as well as canneries in other parts of Haywood County and North Carolina, provided a significant community service at the end of World War II. Changing notions and legal restrictions about the extent to which school personnel and school funds could be used for a program that primarily benefitted residents and visitors caused the Haywood County canneries to shut down by 1961.

Historic Preservation Committee member, Gail Guy, suggested that the committee research the history of the Bethel cannery. The structure has occupied a place in Bethel since the early 1940's.

Tracing the history of the Bethel Cannery involved scouring *The Waynesville Mountaineer* archival data from 1944 - 1976. Carol Litchfield, Historic Preservation Committee member and Rural Preservation Committee Chair, conducted the research, compiled yearly data into hyperlink attachments, and added summary commentary.

Evelyn Coltman, Historic Preservation Committee Chair, utilized *The Waynesville Mountaineer* data collected by Carol Litchfield, along with internet searches, including *Encyclopedia.com* and "U.S. Can Sizes and Equivalents," published by *Gourmet Sleuth* for information about the Works Progress (Projects) Administration, canning history, and canning equipment. The article is a general analysis of canning in Bethel and Haywood County as well as a year-by-year account of available documentation of the Bethel cannery. The article about the Bethel cannery, including a year by year history of operations can be found on BRCO's website using the following link: <http://www.bethelrural.org/about-bethel-community/bethel-cannery.html>

Recollections of the Bethel Cannery by Bethel Rural Community Organization Historic Preservation Committee members:

Mike Clark: My family, working through the East Fork Baptist Church, used it every summer in the Fifties.

Evelyn Coltman: My grandmother operated the J.B. Rigdon General Store in a location near to the cannery. Sometimes when sitting on the front stoop of the store I could see the constant coming and going of people to the cannery during farming season. As an elementary school student at Bethel, I recall standing by my mother at one of the sinks at the facility while glancing around to take in the sights and sounds. Through a small child's eyes, the place seemed massive. I was impressed with the continuous clanging of strange-looking equipment and the sounds of pressured steam. After the awesomeness of the experience diminished due to the attention-deficit-disorder typical of a second grader, I found some friends whose mothers were also busy canning, and we went outside and played.

Bill Terrell: 1950 - I remember helping my mother canning in the fall during the World Series. When she needed help, I would go in and help her. When she didn't, I went to the car and listened on the radio. The Yankees beat the Phillies 4 straight: 1-0, 2-1, 3-2, and 5-2. That is the only World Series I can remember much about!

—Evelyn Coltman, Chair, Historic Preservation Committee

HAYWOOD COUNTY HISTORICAL & GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY SILENT AUCTION

***BIDS
ACCEPTED
UNTIL
OCT. 17***



***ITEMS
AVAILABLE
FOR
VIEWING***

Haywood County Heritage Dining Room Set

Miscellaneous Artifacts



TO SCHEDULE VIEWING



contact us at

(828) 246 2187 or (828) 476 0048



LOCATION

**Shook - Smathers House (178 Morgan
Street) in Clyde**

HAYWOOD COUNTY HISTORICAL & GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY FUNDRAISER

DATE
OCTOBER
23/24



HOURS
8 am to 1
pm

Many items from pencils to furniture will be available and so much in between.

If you have any items you would like to donate to benefit the HCH&GS, please contact us at (828) 246 2187 or (828) 476 0048



LOCATION
Shook - Smathers House (178 Morgan Street) in Clyde