

2021 BRCO Officers and Board Members

Officers

- President: Mike McLean
- Vice President : Greg Christopher
- Secretary: Beth Cook

Board Members::

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



A Word from our president, Mike McLean



Springtime in the mountains, what a wonderful time of year! The waning of the winter weather and the awakening of flowers, trees, birds and other creatures reminds us that life has a survival plan for all. Longer days and warming temperatures bring optimism about 2021 and the recovery ahead. We are well positioned and ready to resume our most important activity – sharing of food with friends and neighbors. Make sure to come to our first in-person gathering at the Canton Park on May 18th. There will be detailed information about this in coming weeks, so stay tuned!

Your Board has diligently met during the last year in order to provide stability and direction for the issues at hand. Our monthly membership meeting (without food and a Program) has continued by Zoom. Our Finances are sound, our Board and its committees are fully staffed (except for the Fundraising Committee that needs a chair), and together with our Officers we have strong Leadership. Let's use this first in-person event, since Covid-19 restrictions, to begin the effort to meet regularly in some form of in-person sharing (with food of course).

Finally, some of our membership have had personal challenges, some lost family members and all have added caution to their daily lives. We will continue with the caution but let's gather like previous times to share our families and needs with a willing community. I look forward to seeing all of you in May.

Mike McLean

President-BRCO

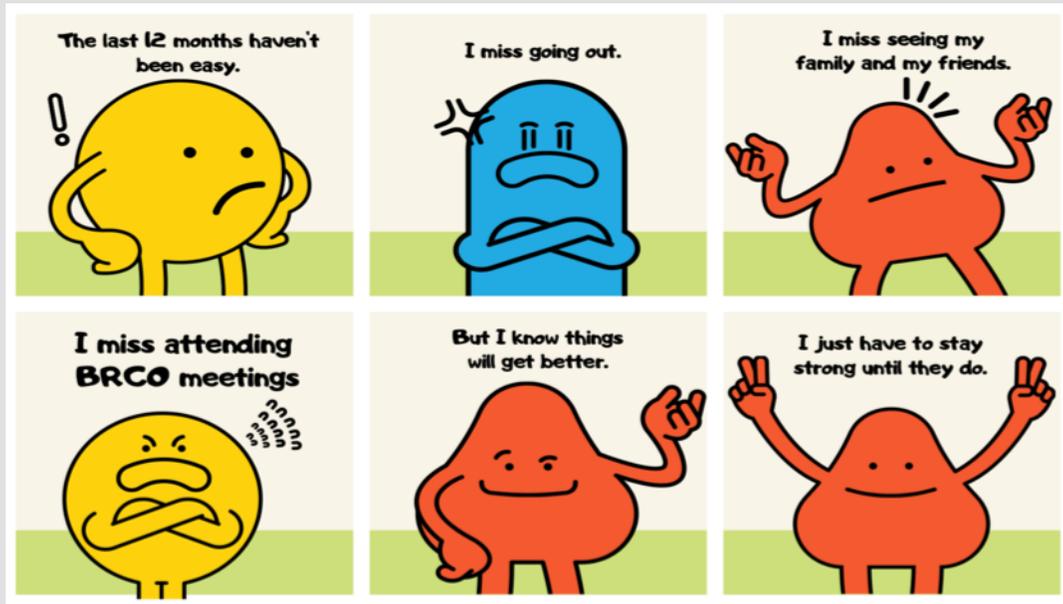


Fund Raising Committee

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.

May 18, 2021—Hello Spring!

The May general meeting (picnic) at Canton Recreation Park has been rescheduled to May 18. 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.**



Little Free Pantry at Bethel Grocery

Ted Carr reported that a bin has been set up outside of Bethel Grocery to address scarcity in the community. It is intended to hold emergency supplies. Community members are invited to "give what you can, and take what you need." According to the sign posted on the box, perishable food items cannot be accepted.

BRCO Committee News

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.

Education – Lucas Sorrells, Chair

The Education Committee has distributed scholarship applications to Pisgah High School and Haywood Early College. The committee will be reviewing submitted applications later this month.

Rural Preservation – Carol Litchfield, Chair

In 2020, the Bethel Middle School FFA students built 7 cages that will be used to protect Monarch butterfly caterpillars while they transform into butterflies. BRCO supported this project with a donation and will use the cages to educate the public on the important role that Monarch Waystations play in sustaining the Monarch life cycle. If you know of someone who would like to use one of the cages for educational purposes, contact Rural Preservation Committee Chair, Carol Litchfield at CLTCHFLD@aol.com. Carol will be bringing the cages to the BRCO picnic in May. The three photos show how a cage is used. First, a cutting of milkweed with Monarch caterpillars is placed in a jar of water in the cage. Second, after each caterpillar has eaten all of the milkweed it wants, it will hang upside down from the top of the cage and form a chrysalis. Third, after the new Monarch butterfly emerges from the chrysalis, it will be ready to release from the cage into the garden. (Photos provided by Carol Litchfield)



The BRCO Rural Preservation Committee contributed \$500 to "Buy Haywood." BRCO will be listed as a sponsor when the "Buy Haywood" brochure is published and distributed for 2021. The brochure is an agritourism guide for Haywood County that includes a number of agricultural producers in the Bethel area. A BRCO contribution of \$50 was also made to the Haywood Waterways Association.

BRCO Committee News (continued)

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

Stephanie reported that the pantry made food available for 35 families in January, 42 families in February, and 49 families in March. A total of 331 individuals were served. During the month of March, the USDA Farm to Families program provided 32 pound food boxes containing a large bag of carrots, potatoes, oranges and onions. The boxes also contained a gallon of milk, a half gallon of yogurt, a pound block of American cheese, a pack of ball park franks and about 3 pounds of cooked chicken legs. The boxes were distributed on Monday's during the month of March. This weekly USDA Farm to Families program is a generous supplement to our continuing monthly distribution program. These food boxes will also be available every Monday in April beginning at 1:00 p.m.

Historic Preservation — Evelyn Coltman, Chair

The Historic Preservation Committee continues to list additional names to our Bethel Writers and Media Contributors portion of the website:

Dr. Chris Bramlett, Dr. Larry Cogburn, Mary Hargrove, Betty Jones, Dr. Don Lymon, Wanda Matthews Taylor, Ronnie Mills, Bill "Tater" Phillips, Rev. Richard Ploch, Jimmie Cochran Pratt, Rev. Steven Pressley, Ida Reid, Dr. Garrett Smathers, Caleb Smith, and Jim Van Cleve. These people are either Bethel natives or else they moved to Bethel. In addition, we have added Carol Adams and Mike McLean, affiliated with BRCO and owners of *Vicinitus*.

The committee is beginning its research of the twenty plus cemeteries that exist in the Bethel/Cruso region. We are using sources such as the George A. Miller, Sr. book *Cemeteries and Family Graveyards in Haywood County, NC*, American Cemeteries, Find a Grave, and Haywood County, NC, Cemetery Records, LDS Genealogy, and Visit NC Smokies - Haywood County's Historic Cemeteries – all online services. Members plan to contact owners and visit some of the cemeteries. This information will eventually be available on the BRCO website.

Anne Carr has recently donated a wonderful colored pencil drawing of one of Bethel and Haywood County's founding fathers, Colonel Joseph Cathey. He was a mercantile owner, farmer, miller, civic and religious leader, and a state legislator. We are appreciative of this wonderful donation by Ted Carr's sister.

In addition to the Multi-Media Award of Excellence, the committee was one of five entries to receive the Lighthouse Award from the NC Society of Historians for our collection of twenty-four art prints that include photographs, drawings, paintings, a map, and a scratchboard.

Benevolence – Lucas Sorrells, Chair

BRCO assisted six or more people with power bills in January and February.

Remembering Nick De Paolo

by Evelyn Coltman



From the beginning of BRCO's Historic Preservation Committee's quest to secure art pieces depicting historic locations and topics of Bethel, we have also included commissioned paintings by local artists with impeccable artistic skills. The most frequently used artist was Nick De Paolo who produced three paintings for us: Bethel Presbyterian Church's original exterior (now the BRCO community center), the three historic school buildings that were twentieth century educational facilities in Bethel, and the Woodrow Depot/Post Office. The Woodrow Depot/Post Office existed in Bethel in the early twentieth century (1914-1927) and was named for the president at the time, Woodrow Wilson. To this day, Bethel is listed as "Woodrow" on maps because of that building.



Nick De Paolo was such a gentleman, so easy to work with, and so talented. Nick's artistic ability was accompanied by his desire to capture accurate details that made his paintings precise replications of the structures that either no longer exist or that exist with a changed appearance. When we decided to capture the Woodrow structure for our art collection, we could find only one photograph of one end of the building. Western Carolina

University's Heritage Center sent us another photo of a man loading apples onto one of the Woodrow train cars. Since the committee voted that we wanted a painting of the entire building, Nick spent weeks researching the various types of combination depot/post office structures built during that era. He meticulously matched the facade, roof, cornice, moldings, and design of that one end of the building in the photo to similar structures constructed during that era. He was able to make an impressive recreation of the station that included train cars, tracks, and people appropriately clothed for that time. And, of course, there was the man loading apples.

The Historic Preservation Committee had commissioned De Paolo to paint Bethel/Haywood County's oldest standing log structure - the Blanton/Reece Log Cabin (1821) that still exists beyond Lake Logan on the road to Sunburst Campground. Nick was eager to begin and requested a tour of the cabin interior in order to sense the history so that his imagination could transfer an accurate vision to canvass.

Sadly, Nick De Paolo passed away prior to that final art piece. We can only imagine how he would have drawn the cabin, not just with accurate details, but with lyrical enhancements that would have made it not just a painting but a work of art. We will miss his genteel personality and his ability to teach his craft to others. Most of all, we will remember the ease with which he was able to envision something from almost nothing and his capacity for turning a partial photograph, a visionary idea, or an imaginary concept into not just a painting, but a lovely artistic rendering infused with poetry.