



“Along the Gooney”

Browntown Community Center Association

August, 2025

Vol. 33 No. 08 Editors: Jackie Hodgkiss Jackie.BCCA@gmail.com & Tom Lacombe tomlacombe@comcast.net

BCCA Board of Directors - 2025

President	Martha Buracker	540-671-6349
Vice. Pres.	Mary McKinney	540-635-4725
Secretary	Kristin Pence	540-230-1155
Treasurer	Nancy McDermott	703-975-8668
Trustees	Allan Brockway	540 635-7783
	Denny Pennington	540 635-5568
	Wes Deavers	540-631-0016

Aug. 11th Mon. BCCA Public Meeting 7:30p.m.

Aug. 18th First day of school

Aug. 27th Deadline for September newsletter

Browntown Baptist Church

12 Browntown Road
Bentonville, VA 22610

Pastor: Sherman Kaipha Brown

Worship Service @ 11 a.m. Fellowship @ 12 p.m.

Check out Browntown Baptist Church’s new website:

- Watch/listen to sermons
- Send in a prayer request
- Log on to Bible Study every Wednesday night
- Read about the history of our church
- See calendar of events

Much appreciation to church member, Tracy Abbott, for his hard work on our website. Stay tuned for more updates. Below is the link:

[**browntownbaptistva@gmail.com**](mailto:browntownbaptistva@gmail.com)

Cool Spring Church of God

Pastor: Jeff Fletcher

Sunday School at 9:30 and Worship at 10:30.

Limeton Community Church

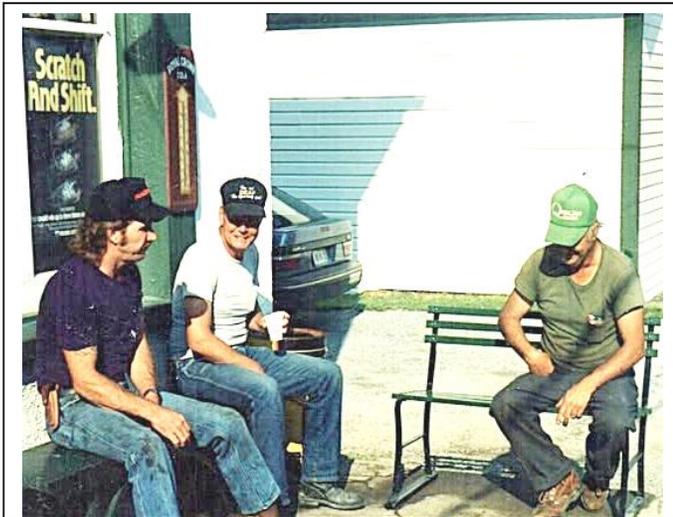
9 Limeton Main St. Bentonville, VA

Pastor Lorne Fyfe

SS at 10 and service at 11

Obituary

Russell “Junior” Deavers (1942-2025), husband, dad, grandfather, brother, stepfather, and friend, 83 of Browntown passed away Monday, July 7, 2025. Junior grew up in Browntown working for local folks along the way, later, working for VDOT, Riverton Stone Quarry, and after retirement he worked years for Warren County at the Bentonville Transfer Station. Below is a photo of Junior with his cup of coffee, his stepson Leon Jenkins on the left, and neighbor Lloyd Smelser to the right. The photo is from about 1990.



2026 Historic Browntown Calendar “Under Construction”

The photo to the right is just one of the treasures we have uncovered. We are currently trying to line up sponsors. These sponsorships sell for \$50 and entitle the sponsor to a two line ad in the calendar. Lots of folks have found another treasure we have created is our website, which features in-depth stories regarding photos in the calendar. The photo to the right will most likely be on the website. By the way, this photo is of Lizzy and Louie Smelser.

O.J. Rudacille Gen. Mdse.

Check us out on Facebook for
Browntown History
Phone 540-636-2149

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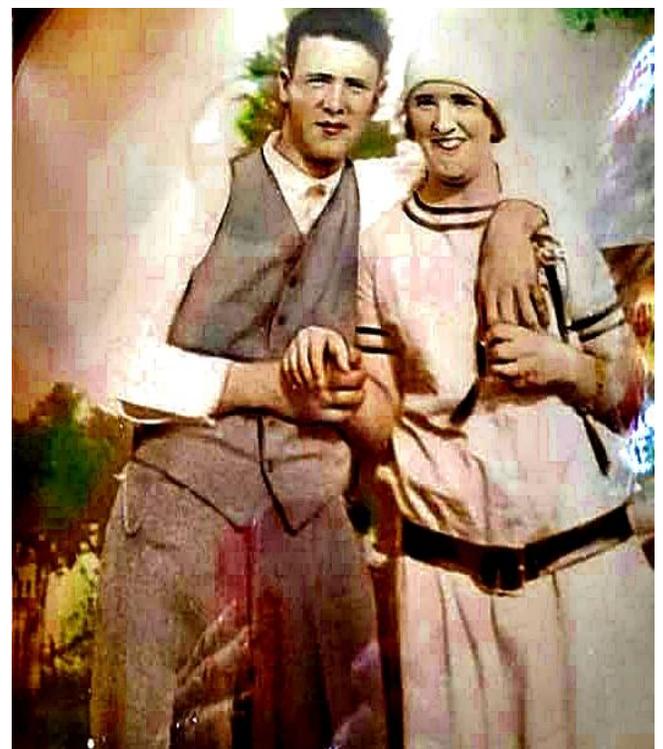
Deadline for Sept. News: Aug. 27th

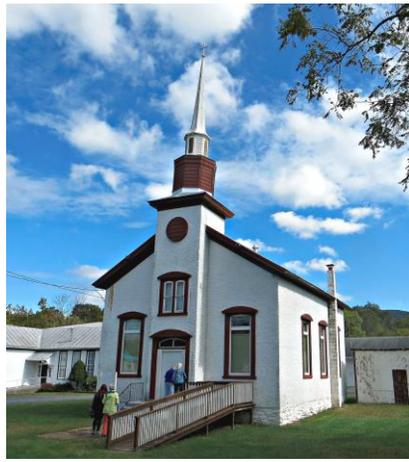
Make A Note: Patsy Pennington is the person to contact if you need to use the Center. Patsy’s number is 540-635-5568

Leave Home A few minutes earlier

Please Slow Down, Enjoy the Ride

Remember, our roads aren’t designed for the amount of traffic they carry these days. My Dad drilled this in to my head. “Leave one car length between you and the car in front of you, for every 10 miles an hour you are driving!”





Last March a strong wind brought down the steeple of this wonderful 1882 church. Since then, unfortunately, the gap in the roof created by this event has been open to the elements. This has been one of the wettest springs in years and it seems likely that a lot of water has entered through this gap and has caused further damage.

The church is the responsibility of the Browntown Baptist Church who are also part-owners of the property. Recently they have asked for help in repairing the gap in the roof. They have very limited financial resources and are unable to complete the work themselves.

We, (i.e. the members of the Gooney Valley History Club), have offered to find qualified specialists who can do this work and can provide some financial assistance -- we are hoping this initial repair work can be carried out before the end of August and that any internal damage caused by water entry can also be addressed.

Unless we are able to find specialists who are willing to provide their services, free or for a reduced fee, this work is likely to cost quite a lot of money. Many members of our community have already offered financial help and we hope that it will be possible, shortly, to set up a fundraising mechanism so that the Baptist Church can begin accepting donations to help cover the costs for this work.

“DON’T THROW IT OUT!”

If you have any old copies of local newspapers, photos, or other local family or historical artifacts please let Tom Lacombe know, or simply bring them along to his store.

****VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE TO READ MORE STORIES ABOUT THE HISTORY OF OUR VALLEY AND ITS PEOPLE****

<https://gooneyvalleyhistoryclub.com>

Greetings Fellow Browntowners

Well, here we are in the midst of summer. Our super saturated veggie garden is finally producing, so it's now officially canning season and Dave and Jessie have been sweating it out pulling weeds and picking veggies. I'm in charge of actual canning, but so happy to have Jessie's help. It's a lot of work, but such a great feeling to see the filled jars on the shelves.

We've had a fairly busy summer at the BCCA. Two Kids Art Camps were held by local artist and instructor Jessie Sprouse. The kids had a great time and we plan to do this again next summer! We've got camp pictures posted on our Facebook Page and on our website www.browntowncommunity.com. We also had a community Yard Sale in July where individuals could rent space to sell their treasures. This event went well and was well attended. Thanks to everyone who rented a space and to Roxanne Campbell, Mary McKinney and Cyrus Cornwell for manning the kitchen!

Our Trustees and Buildings and Grounds Committee have been doing an assessment of our property to ensure that it stays well maintained and available for use. Keep in mind that this is an over 100 year old schoolhouse, so there is always something! Our team consists of Trustees Denny Pennington, Wesley Deavers and Allan Brockway and our Building and Grounds is spearheaded by Jim Sylvester along with Steve Merz, Brian Wilkinson, Bill Lacy and Damon Sutton.

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Special thanks to Damon Sutton for bringing his tractor and grader attachment to the center and leveling up our parking lot! No more potholes! At least for the moment. They've also been addressing some roof leaks and just when we thought everything was sealed up, another leak has popped up. Ugh. Hopefully we can find the spot and get that taken care of soon. The stage on our grounds has also seen some love this month. They've sealed up the ceiling to prevent birds from nesting and have prepped the wood for a new coat of paint. Barring any other rain events, they plan to start painting the first week in August. In addition, our back boiler room/storage area is getting cleaned out and organized, that is a big task! If you would like to be on the work team, just send Jim Sylvester an email at jamesesylvester@gmail.com It's so nice to see progress on our work list!

We have a new volunteer to keep our Browntown website up to date and he's been busy doing just that! Thanks Gene Raymond for all your fresh ideas and hard work! And thanks to George Hodgkiss for creating our website and manning it for so many years. George is now Gene's backup so we have everything covered there. One thing Gene has done is to create a volunteer tab, with an "interest" form you can fill out. We have meetings every month, and some folks don't want to go to meetings, but still want to help. Here is your chance! We need help in many areas and are also open to new ideas for functions and events. For example, one of our current areas that needs help is our monthly newsletter. Jackie Hodgkiss has coordinated this for so many years and she wants to retire. Anyone out there want to jump on board and do this? Tom Lacombe helps with articles and we provide the flyers for events and other information. You would need to be the coordinator that puts it into newsletter format and makes sure it gets out on time! Jackie is willing to train you! We also are in need of someone to coordinate and keep inventory of our "Browntown" Items that we sell at OJ Rudacille Gen Mdse and at BCCA Events. Again, we would help you get started.

The Gooney Valley History Club will be printing their 2nd Calendar in September. Last years' Calendar was a big hit, so they dove in and got this 2026 Calendar done and it's full of local history and pictures. Don't miss out! You can pre-order for \$18 each by September 1, or if you wait till later they will be \$20. They make a great Christmas gift!

Our website guru, Gene Raymond, has proposed an Amendment to our BCCA By-Laws that he feels will make our BCCA publicity more cohesive. Please take a minute to read the proposed Amendment; it is included in our Newsletter. It is also available to read at OJ Rudacille Gen Mdse, in Browntown, and at the Community Center. We will vote on it at our September meeting.

Our next big Event will be our Fall Yard Sale on Friday, September 19 and Saturday, September 20 and then again on the 26th and 27th. If you would like to help Roxanne Campbell and Mary McKinney get the items sorted and set up, please contact Patsy Pennington at 540-635-5568. Patsy and Denny have had some major hiccups in their health this summer, so they've been recuperating at home. Patsy hasn't been able to help at the BCCA physically, but she's good with coordinating things on the phone. She will get the messages out! So if you can help, call her. Ditto if you have donations for our Yard Sale. We have some great items so far, but we have room for more and we appreciate all your donations! Sorry for the long letter, but glad we had lots of news to share!
Take care, Martha Buracker, President BCCA



Martha Buracker, Realtor
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Front Royal, VA



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AUGUST, 2025 UPDATE - THE BEARR GROUP "KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY SAFE"

THE BEARR GROUP IS NOW ONLINE at BEARRGroup.com

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911 REFLECTIVE SIGNS -- HAVE YOU GOT YOURS YET?

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IT'S NOT TOO LATE! For anyone who has already bought one of our reflective signs but not yet installed it, please contact us asap. We will be happy to install it for you at no charge (except cost of a new post, if required)



Allan Brockway reports Warren Fire & Rescue have had to rescue several people in recent weeks who have tried to drive thru flooded roads. **Fortunately, no one has drowned (yet!).**

- Monitor NOAA Weather Radio (see below), or your favorite news source
- If flooding occurs, get to higher ground.
 - Get out of areas subject to flooding. This includes dips, low spots, drainage ditches, canyons, washes etc.
 - Avoid areas already flooded, especially if the water is flowing fast.



If you don't have one, consider buying an **Emergency Crank Weather Alert Radio**. ("You don't need, until you need it.") **This will work even if you have lost power & wifi and the crank enables you to recharge your smart phone.** You can find a range of models on Amazon, starting at \$30. If you can stretch to \$69, consider the [Midland ER310](#) which the NY Times describes as "the best emergency radio for most people."



Kids in Warren County go back to school on Monday, August 18

*** Please slow down when driving through Browntown***

(Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death for children, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration)

Master Gardener, class 2019, is collecting Garden Books & Magazine for Samuel's Library. Please contact Gina at 540-305-5611 or mail ginawolford55@gmail.com for pickup time. Master Gardeners are assisting the Greenline at Warren County Govt. Center Extension Office on Mondays 10:00 am - NOON. Upcoming events at Samuels Library: mini garden lessons and Sept 13th will Celebrate National Houseplant week at Samuels Library.

Beekeeper

"So You Want to be a Beekeeper?" is a two hour class for those who want to learn about the pros and cons of beekeeping, before committing to a more in-depth class. Anyone who takes this free class will be given priority placement in the Beginning Beekeeping class taught over 7 weeks next winter. "So You Want to be a Beekeeper is offered on two Saturdays (August 16 and 23) from 10 - 12 AM at the Warren County Community Center, on Villa Avenue in Front Royal. The class is free and no registration is required. Children are welcome to attend with an adult, and the same material is covered on each Saturday.

Proposed Amendment to BCCA Bylaws

July 28, 2025

Overview

In accordance with Article XI of the Bylaws of the Browntown Community Center Association, I, Gène J. Raymond, put forth the following proposal to amend the current bylaws. It is my intention to post this notice at the Community Center as well as at O.J. Rudacille's as of the date noted above. A copy of this notice will be provided to the President of the Association to ensure its inclusion in the August 2025 newsletter. The proposal will be put forth as New Business during the regularly scheduled meeting of August 11, 2025. The proposal should be eligible for vote during the regularly scheduled meeting of September 8, 2025. Approval of the proposed amendment will create Amendment VI, Section 1.

Amended Text

Sec. 1: Publicity Committee - The Publicity Committee, under the direction and guidance of the Executive Board, shall be responsible for increasing awareness of the organization and its activities. Key tasks include:

- the development and implementation of plans promoting awareness of the organization's goals and projects through various media including, but not limited to, printed material, the website, and social media
- the creation of unified content to be distributed across those media channels, separately or in tandem, in accordance with campaign plans
- collaborating with other committees to ensure consistent messaging and effective promotion
- where possible, track media channels to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of publicity efforts
- prepare reports on publicity efforts and their impact to be made available to the membership at least once quarterly

Goals

1. **Codification of Responsibilities:** The current bylaws contain a brief clause for several standing committees, but not for others. The proposed amendment seeks to add similar wording in terms of the Publicity Committee.
2. **Consistent Messaging:** Currently, the BCCA has at least three media channels all operating separately. The proposed amendment seeks to place oversight of all of them under a single unit, and to promote and enhance cross-media messaging.
3. **Planning and Reporting:** The proposed amendment encourages advanced planning of media campaigns, whether large or small, highlights the need to be able to measure the effectiveness of actions, and calls for occasional reporting of the plans, actions, and outcomes to the general membership.

Questions?

Please feel free to contact me by e-mail at gene.j.raymond0@gmail.com or connect with me at the BCCA general meeting on August 11, 2025



Browntown
Community Center

Fall YARD SALE

8 AM - 2 PM

Fri Sept 19 & Sat Sept 20
&
Fri Sept 26 & Sat Sept 27

RAIN OR SHINE

96 BROWNTOWN RD,
BROWNTOWN, VA 22610

How to safely be rid of weeds or unwanted grass!

It's the time of year that many of us are dealing with weeds on our lawns and gardens. If you are among those who use commercially available (toxic) chemicals, such as Weed-Be-Gone, Roundup, etc., you should know that there are alternatives to these chemicals, and are much less harmful to the environment and to our bodies. One such alternative uses natural ingredients, found in most households; here's the recipe for an effective weed killing, (and/or grass killing), alternative:

1 Gal. Vinegar, 2 Cups Epsom Salt, ¼ Cup Dawn Detergent.

Dissolve Epsom Salt in the Vinegar first. Then add in the Dawn. Stir

Browntown Community Center Assoc.
96 Browntown Road
Browntown, VA 22610
Return Service Requested

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Rain, Rain, Rain

This photo was taken on July 16, after we had a little over 3" of rain. Where the Gooney narrows in front of the Union Church you can see the east bank is very narrow. This is an area that washed out in the flood of 1995. VDOT restored and reinforced the bank with big metal baskets, (Gabion Baskets), filled with rubble from the creek bed. At the time I didn't think this was the answer. But, it has worked well. It's scary to think that 3" of rain can cause the creek to rise to this high; what happens when we get 5 or 6" of rain?

