

# THE NEWS-RECORD

## Second Section

MARSHALL, N. C., MAY 19, 1955

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# Beech Glen Community Is Example Of Progress

WELCOME TO  
BEECH GLEN  
COMMUNITY



Through the united effort of the people, the Beech Glen School lunchroom was equipped with modern appliances. Principal Huey Ray displays the new freezer.



This new brooder house was built by Ralph McIntosh. Chickens in broiler flocks increased from 23,000 in 1953 to 64,000 in 1954. Egg flocks more than tripled during the same period.



Beech Glen residents are proud of the project to better the appearance of their church. Floors were refinished and the interior was painted. A painting by a well-known artist was acquired. A new furnace was purchased and rest rooms were added.



Each family in the community lists improvements made and those planned on a family score sheet. These are used as a basis for compiling the total of community improvements. Herbert Metcalf is shown working on his score sheet.



Beautification of the Beech Glen School grounds was another community project.

By WILSON AYERS  
In The "ENKA VOICE"

For a little more than five years now a powerful movement has been sweeping through the hills and coves of Western North Carolina.

The movement is rural community organization and development. To find out just how the community organization program works, the VOICE visited the community of Beech Glen in neighboring Madison County.

Beech Glen is inhabited by less than 70 families. It is a typical Western North Carolina mountain community. A majority of the people make their living by farming. Tobacco is the chief crop.

In 1952 the citizens of Beech Glen decided to enter competition in the Western North Carolina Rural Community Development Program which is sponsored by the Asheville Agricultural Development Council, Inc.

Things have been picking up around Beech Glen ever since just as they have in every community which has entered the program. In 1954, 104 communities in 13 mountain counties and the Cherokee Indian Reservation took part.

Purpose of the development program is to stimulate better farm and home practices and improved family and community living. Results are achieved primarily through group action and community teamwork. Unbounded community spirit and enthusiasm are the hallmarks of such and every project. Perhaps the greatest accomplishment of the program has been the way people of rural communities have learned to work and

Several thousand Western North Carolinians are reaping the benefits of their own efforts. They have improved the appearance of their communities through entrance signs, painted mail boxes and roadside beautification. Many hundreds of homes have been painted or remodel-

ed. Farming operations have been modernized to an almost unbelievable extent bringing increased crop and livestock yields. Improvements to schools, churches and in public health have been realized.

The development is the outgrowth of the Asheville Agricultural Development Council which was formed in 1949 by Asheville businessmen and industries interested in the development of rural areas. They contribute approximately \$15,000 per year for its operation. From the beginning American Enka Corporation has been a substantial contributor. W. F. P. Coxe, Enka's Director of Purchases, is first vice president of the council.

Morris L. McGough, the energetic executive vice president, and a secretary, are the only paid, full-time employees of the Council.

Early in December of each year, the 10 communities which have shown the greatest improvements in farm and farm home living and in their community in general, receive prizes ranging from \$100 to \$500 each at the Community Awards Meeting in Asheville. In 1954, \$8000 in prizes were awarded.

Beech Glen community has won its share of awards. The community placed second in the contest in 1952 and 1953 and ranked among the top ten in 1954.

Just what has Beech Glen done to improve its community? To state each and every project would require several pages so we shall make note of the major projects.

To begin with, "Welcome To Beech Glen Community" signs were erected on roads into the community. Uniform mail box supports, painted white, were erected. Community beautification included clearing roadsides, banks and ditches. An abandoned school lunch room was made into a community center for regular meetings of community residents and was equipped with a kitchen.

Improvements, both exterior, and interior, were made to the church and

school. Lawns were grassed and shrubbery was planted. Walls were painted and floors refinished. Equipment for the Beech Glen school lunch room was purchased and installed.

Five cemeteries in the community were badly in need of attention. They could not be reached by car as roads had never been built to their locations atop knolls. After cleaning and grassing all cemeteries, roads were constructed and the State cooperated by graveling the five approaches.

Community residents called in college specialists to help make long-range farm and home plans. These plans were made at community meetings, attended by an average of over 75 citizens. And every time there was a meeting there was a big feed. Residents became acquainted with community people they had never known before. Friendships were made and everyone joined in as a team to plan and work for the betterment of the community.

As all this was going on a spirit of neighborliness was developing in the community such as had never before been known. We would like to cite several examples.

Last fall a tobacco grower was bedridden with illness at the time his crop was ready for harvest. The plight of the neighbor was spread throughout the community and on a certain day over 50 men in the community gathered at his farm to put up his crop.

A bridge was badly needed so that several families could gain access to their homes without fording a creek. Requests that the State construct the bridge had been in vain for several years. A group of people in the community took a project to erect the bridge. At a cost of several hundred dollars the bridge was built by the people of the community.

Recently there was a death in a family in the community. The family was without sufficient financial means. Within less than 24 hours after the death almost \$300 was contributed to aid the family in this

community which has less than 70 families.

These are shining examples of the spirit of the community of Beech Glen and the regard its citizens have for their neighbors.

At the end of 1952, Beech Glen counted up its improvements to see what had been accomplished. The results included 15 houses painted, eight houses remodeled, nine families seeded lawns, over 20 thousand quarts of food had been canned, 12 families installed running water in their homes, 150 acres of Ladino clover had been planted, 91 acres of idle land had been returned to cultivation and six tractors had been purchased.

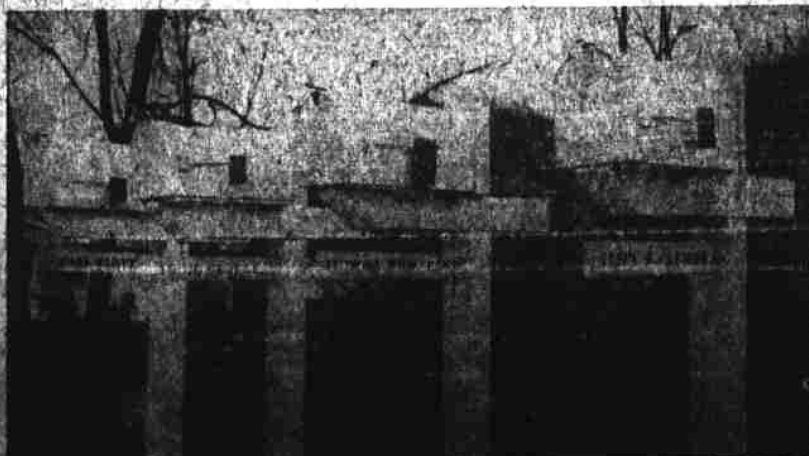
By 1954, 58 families had made long-range farm plans, new egg flocks were increased in number from 673 to 2211, between 1953 and 1954, nine farmers seeded hybrid corn for the first time. On and on the list goes. More diversification of crops and livestock has been a result. The community is a more attractive one, homes are better, living standards have improved, and the people of Beech Glen say they have just scratched the surface.

All have learned that the many working together succeed far more than the individual working alone. Community leadership has been developed. Various organizations have become more active within the community. The churches are outstanding in this respect. The use of educational and technical services has become more widespread.

The movement is not only alive in Beech Glen . . . and in Little Snowbird, Brasstown, Francis Cove, Deep River, Carfootchaye, Bill's Creek, Tip-top Hill, Balsam Grove or Dunn's Rock . . . but in over 100 mountain communities.

The people of these communities are proud of their accomplishments and face the future with confidence.

They have done an excellent job . . . through the helping hand of the Western North Carolina Rural Community Development Program.



Trademark of the Rural Community Development Program is the uniform mail box and support. All are painted white. You'll see them in each of over 100 mountain communities taking part in the program. The above boxes are in the Beech Glen community.



Burley tobacco has been the chief crop of Beech Glen farmers for many years. Since the community entered the program in 1952, 58 farm families have made long-range farm plans which call for greater diversification of crops so as to increase their income.



In the Beech Glen community there are five cemeteries located atop knolls. Prior to the development program they could not be reached by car. Roads have now been constructed and all cemeteries have been cleaned and grass has been planted where needed.

A community project was construction of a bridge over a creek. It enabled several families to gain access to their homes without fording the creek. The bridge was erected at a cost of several hundred dollars, but was paid for by the people of the community.