

# BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

SELLING THE BILL: Blackburn talks specific impacts regarding ‘Big Beautiful Bill’

PAGE A6



WINNER: Bearcats open football season with victory

PAGE B1

Saturday, August 23, 2025

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‘THE REAL GOAL ... IS TO CHANGE LIVES’

## \$5.88M TARGET



EMILY BALL, BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

People gather at Hard Rock Live at Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Bristol on Thursday afternoon for the United Way Kickoff event.

### United Way agencies come together for annual campaign kickoff

DAVID MCGEE  
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

BRISTOL, Va. — Seven regional United Way agencies hope to collectively raise over \$5.88 million this year, but organizers say it isn’t about the money but the services and support those funds provide for thousands of area residents.

Hard Rock Live hosted over 400 agency representatives, business owners, officials and campaign leaders on Thursday who are beginning the annual ritual of raising funds to support programs managed by dozens of health and human service agencies across Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia.

“Raising dollars, raising money, is really

important. But the real goal of United Way of Bristol — every single day — is to change lives,” said Patrick Cashman, president of USAntibiotics and community chairman of this year’s campaign for the United Way of Bristol Tennessee-Virginia. “We do that through innovative programs that meet people where they are. Programs like Ride United, which helps people get to and from work when they don’t have reliable transportation.

“Or Resource United, where more than 500 calls come in every month, from people needing help with food, utilities, rent or safe housing,” Cashman said. “In 2024, our

Please see UNITED WAY, Page A4



**WATCH NOW ONLINE:** Patrick Cashman, campaign chair for United Way of Bristol TN/VA, talks about the annual regional campaign kickoff event held on Thursday afternoon. Point your smartphone camera at the code and click or visit this story online at [HeraldCourier.com](https://www.HeraldCourier.com). **NEWSVU**

### Bristol, Tenn. spent hundreds of thousands on stadium projects

ROBERT SORRELL  
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

BRISTOL, Tenn. — Between engineering contracts at Whitetop Creek Park and architectural work at Tod Houston Field, the city of Bristol, Tennessee, committed hundreds of thousands of dollars toward a stadium project that has now ended with Boyd Sports.

In 2023, the city contracted with an engineering firm for design and surveying work at Whitetop Creek Park, which was initially considered as the stadium site. Community Relations Director Jon Luttrell said much of that work centered on stormwater management and general field improvements that would have been needed whether Tennessee High School or the State Liners ultimately used the site.

Earlier this year, the school system also hired Community Tectonics Architects to design potential upgrades at Tod Houston Memorial Field, the second proposed site for the project.

Under the agreement, the firm would be paid 8% of the project’s total cost. A school spokesperson said the district remains responsible for payment.

In addition, several paid city employees have worked on the project.

The total amount paid by the city during the planning stages was not immediately available Friday.

Luttrell confirmed the city learned in late July that Bristol, Virginia had approached Boyd Sports with an offer, but did not know an agreement had been reached until Wednesday, the day before the public announcement. Until then, he said, city officials were still working with Boyd Sports on a possible deal.

With Boyd Sports out of the picture, the future of Tod Houston Field, which is located off Bluff City Highway, now rests with both the Bristol Tennessee City Council and the Bristol Tennessee Board of Education.

“This will be a matter for City Council to discuss given this week’s development and the loss of a significant private funding partner,” Luttrell said.

Council rescinded its earlier agreement with Boyd Sports in June after school leaders raised concerns about the project, as well as the Melrose recreation center property, which the city purchased in 2022. At the time, council members said they still intended to pursue improvements at Tod Houston.

The City Council recently has given the school system the opportunity to acquire the Melrose property at no cost. The Board of Education has delayed its

Please see STADIUM, Page A4

Hargett, lawmakers disburse over \$49,000 in library grants **PAGE A6**

#### Inside

CALENDAR	A2	OPINION	A12-A13
COMMUNITY	A3	REGION	A6
DEATHS	A4	RELIGION	A10

#### Weather

Humid, stray t-storm  
**High 81**  
**Low 65**  
FORECAST • A14



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