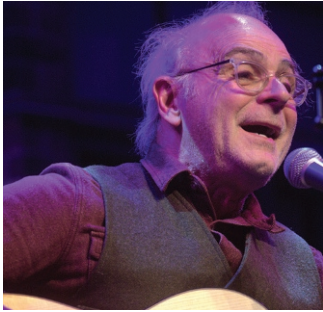


BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

SHORT TAKES:
24th Bristol
Rhythm & Roots
Reunion returns
Sept. 19-21

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**V-T GAME
RETURNS:**
The Battle of
the Bearcats
and Vikings

PAGE B1

Thursday, September 18, 2025

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SEPT. 19 TO 21

WEEKEND OF MUSIC



EMILY BALL, BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

Workers hang lights up at the Cumberland Square Park stage on Tuesday evening as the setup begins for Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion this weekend.

Rhythm & Roots is back in downtown Bristol

DAVID MCGEE
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

BRISTOL, Tenn. – It's that time again. Time to put away racing shirts and earplugs, break out the cowboy boots and spend the weekend downtown soaking up the sights and sounds.

The 24th annual Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion returns to its traditional third weekend in September for a one-year engagement, bringing about 100 musical performances to 13 outdoor and indoor stages on both sides of the state line.

Music begins Friday at 5 p.m., when southern rockers Hippies and Cowboys storm onto the State Street stage and the tunes keep percolating until Steep Canyon Rangers close down Cumberland Square



WATCH ONLINE NOW:

Birthplace of Country Music's President of Board of Directors Brent Treash talks about the 2025 Bristol Rhythm and Roots lineup. Point your smartphone at the QR Code or go online to heraldcourier.com. **NEWSVU**

Park Sunday with the weekend's final set at 5:30 p.m.

In between, State Street and its surrounding side streets will remain blocked off to vehicle traffic so thousands of music fans can meander around to find their favorites.

About 40,000 attended last year's festival, organizers said.

Please see **RHYTHM & ROOTS**, Page A4

RECOVERING FROM HELENE

Rebuilding going strong in Damascus

DAVID MCGEE
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

DAMASCUS, Va. – A handful of bicyclists rode across trestle 16 in Damascus Tuesday, past the park where town and area officials discussed their progress since flood waters raged through downtown last Sept. 27.

In Septembers past, that trestle might be overflowing with cyclists, runners and others as part of the Virginia Creeper Trail which historically brings 200,000 visitors to the region annually and winds through the town.

But thanks to Hurricane Helene – a 17-mile segment of that trail in the National Forest remains closed, significantly impacting the local business economy in this tight-knit community of about 800.

It has been a difficult year for Trail Town, USA, but leaders there say the recovery from Hurricane Helene continues with the expectation the Virginia Creeper Trail will be fully operational in another year.

"Helene came in with a vengeance and she may have damaged and destroyed our structures, but she did not shatter our Appalachian mountain virtues, our love for our town and the appreciation we have for our visitors," Mayor Katie Lamb said.

The 17-mile trail segment between Abingdon and Damascus was quickly reopened and the town has tried to add other events.

Lamb said it has taken the combined efforts of the town, its residents, local, state and federal governments, first responders, rescue teams, missionaries, volunteers, friends and neighbors that came together over the past 11-plus months to clean up, restore and rebuild.

"Tourism is our lifeline. It is essential for economic stability and we love all the adventure seekers coming here," she said.

Town Manager Chris Bell said they adopted a three-part strategy to deal with the hurricane. The first was to support both its citizens and other nearby residents impacted by the storm. The second was to "champion" the business community to repair, reopen and "pivot" to deal with the trail's closure. The third was to further embrace visitors.

Please see **REBUILDING**, Page A4



Bristol's Tudor named Tennessee Superintendent of the Year **PAGE A6**

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Weather

Sunshine and delightful
High 81
Low 56
FORECAST • A10



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