

Riverwalk bridge remains closed

October 17, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: FROM STAFF REPORTS | Section: News | 121 Words OpenURL Link

Hickory's Riverwalk bridge is closed until further notice due to damage caused by Hurricane Helene, according to a press release from the city of Hickory.

The bridge trailhead and parking lot at 1580 Old Lenoir Road NW will also remain closed, the press release said.

The Riverwalk section that goes over the water is closed due to damage caused Sept. 27 by the remnants of the hurricane, the press release said. A section of handrailing was damaged by debris and must be replaced, the city said.

"At this time, the reopening date is unknown," the press release said.

Other parts of the Riverwalk trail, including sections that are elevated over land and the paved greenway within Rotary-Geitner Park, are open, the press release said.

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Powell, Phillip

October 17, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: Staff Writer | Section: Obituaries | 371 Words OpenURL Link

Phillip Earl Powell

January 30, 1942 - October 7, 2024

Phillip Earl Powell, 82, of Winston Salem, NC and formerly of Hickory, NC passed away peacefully on October 7, 2024 surrounded by his family.

Phil was born in Shelby, NC on January 30, 1942 to Thomas Cecil Powell and Fuchia Beam Powell.

While attending Polkville High School, Phil was an avid outdoorsman who loved to hunt and fish. This love of nature and animals would continue throughout his life. During high school he was very proud to receive his Eagle Scout Award. He attended East Tennessee State University where he received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemistry. In college he married his high school sweetheart, Dianne Falls. In September of this year, they celebrated their 61st Wedding Anniversary.

After college, Phil and Dianne moved to Charlotte where he worked in sales for Unocal Corporation from 1965 to 1976. It was here that they started a family and had three daughters. In 1976, they moved to Hickory, NC and started a chemical distribution company, Appalachian Chemical & Solvents. They also invested in several furniture companies.

Phil loved spending time with his family and many friends. During his free time, you could find him being competitive on the golf course or playing cards. Phil also enjoyed traveling. He and Dianne took many trips both abroad and throughout the US. In 2014, they moved to Winston Salem, NC to be closer to family.

Phil was preceded in death by his parents and sister, Cecelia.

Phil is survived by his wife, Dianne Powell and daughters Jessica Powell, Melissa Leak (Frank) and Angie Cannon and his four loved grandchildren Eliza Leak, Annie Leak, Charlotte Leak and Charlie Cannon who affectionally called him Pop Pop. Phil is also survived by his sister Phyllis Johnstone and many cousins, nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, a donation may be made in his memory to Samaritian's Purse Response for Hurricane Helene Relief (samaritanspurse.org) or a charity of your choice.

A casual drop-in Celebration of Life will be held at the Elk's Lodge 356 Main Avenue Northwest, Hickory, NC 28601on Saturday November 9, 2024 from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Lastly, the family would like to thank all his in-home caregivers, as well as those at Brookridge Retirement Community.

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Staff Writer, 'Powell, Phillip', *Hickory Daily Record* (online), 17 Oct 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C458A26C4E77E0



Catawba County cross country rivals finish 1 and 2 in conference, look to rematch at states

October 17, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: Jason Koon | Section: Track And Field | 360 Words OpenURL Link

Hickory Christian Academy's Cate Hata jumped out to an early lead over University Christian's Madison Sledge in the Foothills Athletic Conference Championship meet on Monday.

It's the second time that has happened in the past two weeks. At the county race on Oct. 2, Hata held on to her early advantage, finishing nearly a minute ahead of her rival.

This time, however, Sledge chased Hata down to win by 7 seconds. She finished in 19:14.42. Hata clocked in at 19:21.30.

"So, it's basically one round to each of them with the state meet ahead," said Cate's coach Jon Hata.

Hata and University Christian High School coach Jim Frizzell have both been predicting a one-two finish for Sledge and Hata at the state meet on Oct. 25. The big question: Who will be first?

The state meet was originally slated to take place in Hendersonville. It has been moved to Cary due to the impact of Hurricane Helene on western North Carolina. Frizzell said he believes the adjustments he made for Sledge in the run up to the conference meet will give her a good chance to win her third meeting with Hata and take home the state title.

"We feel pretty good about the course in Cary," Frizzell said. "We had a good showing there last year. We've had a number of PRs on that course. There is one pretty good hill at the end line that they have to cover twice. We feel pretty good about how we've prepared for it."

Hata and Sledge are not the only two runners from Hickory Christian and University Christian who will be in the hunt for a state title on Oct. 25. Hickory Christian sophomore Ben Graham won the boys' race with a time of 17:08.38. He finished 12 second ahead of University Christian's Conner Frizzell.

University Christian's Ellie Adams finished third in the conference meet at 20:37.82. She has been improving steadily this season and seems poised to make a good showing at the state meet.

Hickory Christian seventh-grader Madelyn Jane Carter finished fourth with a time of 21:09.71. Seventh- and eighth-graders are allowed to compete at the varsity level in the North Carolina Independent Schools Athletic Association (NCISAA).

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Josh Stein makes stop in Hickory

October 17, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC)

Author: BILLY CHAPMAN AND XAVIER MARTIN wchapman@hickoryrecord.com xmartin@hickoryrecord.com | Section: News | 510 Words OpenURL Link

Democratic candidate for governor and current North Carolina Attorney General Josh Stein made a campaign stop at Morning Star First Baptist Church in Hickory on Tuesday afternoon.

"I'm running for governor because I love our home state and I believe in its promise," Stein said to a room of about 80 people. "If we work hard, where you come from should never limit how far you can go."

Stein said he was on his way to Boone and surrounding counties to help with recovery efforts from damage caused by Hurricane Helene.

Stein laid out his platform at the event, saying teacher pay, protecting reproductive rights, public safety and protection of personal freedoms were among his top priorities.

"Governing is not that complicated, it's just not," Stein said. "It's about putting people first and then fighting for them."

Stein cited his record as attorney general as among the reasons he is qualified to serve as governor.

Stein said he reduced the backlog of untested rape test kits and helped secure \$50 billion from opioid companies by leading a bipartisan coalition of state attorney generals.

North Carolina is expected to receive over \$1 billion as part of settlements against pharmaceutical companies associated with manufacturing and distributing opioids.

Stein also addressed some of the controversies surrounding his Republican opponent, current Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson.

"The vision of our opponent in this race, the lieutenant governor, is one of division, violence and hate," Stein said.

Stein cited a CNN story that reported Robinson made controversial and offensive comments in an online forum in the early 2010s.

Robinson has denied the allegations in the CNN story. Earlier Tuesday, Robinson announced he was suing CNN for defamation.

"There's not a person in this room who needed that CNN story to know that that man was wholly unfit to be governor," Stein said to applause and cheering.

Supporters who showed up for the event echoed Stein's statements about top priorities.

Marcella McCombs, a military veteran, said protection of women's reproductive rights was a top issue for her.

"Personally, I don't think you should ever be able to tell somebody what to do with their body," McCombs said. "Keep your guns, we'll keep our uterus and we'll be all right. ... I fought for people's rights and let's keep them. When people start taking people's rights, it's awful."

Doug Auer was direct with his answer on why he was voting for Stein.

"The other guy is just a disgusting human being," Auer said. "He's (Stein) a man of high integrity, understands government, believes in government. He's right on the issues."

Aubrey Gregory had another reason for voting for Stein.

"I'm voting so my two daughters know I did everything I could to preserve their rights," Gregory said.

Stein concluded the campaign event with a message of fighting for the future of North Carolina.

"The stakes could not be higher. The choice could not be clearer," Stein said. "Two competing visions: ours (is) positive, forward-looking, welcoming. It's about fighting for every person, creating opportunity for every person, and tapping the potential of every person so that together we can build a brighter, better future for every one of us."

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FEMA opens disaster recovery centers in McDowell, Caldwell counties

October 17, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: Billy Chapman | Section: Government Politics | 167 Words OpenURL Link

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has opened disaster recovery centers in Caldwell and McDowell counties.

The recovery centers can assist those affected by Hurricane Helene with applying for assistance and finding out what kind of assistance is available.

Residents from disaster areas can meet face to face with FEMA representatives at the sites. Residents can learn about financial assistance that may include money for basic home repairs, personal property losses, childcare, transportation and other needs.

In addition to the 28 areas in the state already eligible for disaster assistance, FEMA announced Wednesday that residents of Iredell County and 11 other North Carolina counties were eligible for assistance with uninsured damages.

The center in Caldwell County is located at 2345 Morganton Blvd., Lenoir, at the Caldwell County Health and Human Services Center.

The center in McDowell County is located at the McDowell County Senior Center, 100 Spaulding Road in Marion.

Both disaster centers are open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

For more information about FEMA disaster assistance, visit disasterassistance.gov.

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Billy Chapman, 'FEMA opens disaster recovery centers in McDowell, Caldwell counties', *Hickory Daily Record* (online), 17 Oct 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C45CDB0E2191A8



Early voting underway in NC

October 17, 2024 | High Point Enterprise (NC) Author: Paul B. Johnson PAXTON MEDIA GROUP | Section: Thomasville Times | 321 Words OpenURL Link

TRIAD — Early voting began this week for the fall general election, giving people a chance to cast ballots on races ranging from president to county offices about three weeks before Election Day on Nov. 5.

Launched 24 years ago as an experiment with casting ballots, in-person early voting has steadily grown as an option.

"In-person early voting has been the most popular form of voting in recent general elections, and we expect that will continue in 2024," said Karen Brinson Bell, executive director for the N.C. State Board of Elections. "In 2020, for example, 65% of North Carolina voters chose in-person early voting as their voting method. And back in the presidential election of 2016, 62% of NC voters chose to vote early."

The Davidson County Board of Elections has six early voting locations. The site for the northern part of the county remains the Thomasville Public Library at 14 Randolph St.

Weekday hours for Davidson County early voting sites will be from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. There will be five weekend days for early voting — Saturday, Oct. 19, Saturday, Oct. 26, and Saturday, Nov. 2, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Sunday, Oct. 20, and Sunday, Oct. 27, from 1 to 4 p.m.

Voters have to cast a ballot during early voting in the county where they reside.

People who aren't registered to vote can register on the same day and vote during early voting.

Statewide, 419 early voting sites will be used across North Carolina. The N.C. State Elections Board recently implemented changes for voting procedures in about two dozen western North Carolina counties to cope with the disruption of Tropical Storm Helene.

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Election offices

For more information about voter registration or questions about voting, call your local board of elections office: Guilford County Board of Elections offices in Greensboro at 336-641-3836 or High Point at 336-641-7895. Randolph County, 336-318-6900. Davidson County, 336-242-2190.

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Paul B. Johnson PAXTON MEDIA GROUP, 'Early voting underway in NC', *High Point Enterprise* (online), 17 Oct 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C4954576A6BCE8



Old Fort polling location changed due to Helene damage

October 17, 2024 | McDowell News, The (Marion, NC) Author: MIKE CONLEY nconley@mcdowellnews.com| Section: News| 254 Words OpenURL Link

One polling precinct in Old Fort has changed due to damage caused by Hurricane Helene at the end of September.

On Election Day, on Nov. 5, the polling place for Old Fort No. 2 would have been Old Fort Wesleyan Church. But due to Helene damage, both Old Fort No. 1 and No. 2 voting will take place at the Old Fort Depot on Nov. 5, McDowell County Elections Director Kim Welborn said.

The Old Fort early voting location was also eliminated due to Helene damage. Early voting will now only be held at the McDowell County Board of Elections, Welborn said at Monday's McDowell County Board of Commissioners meeting.

Welborn said she and her staff are grateful the Board of Elections building did not get flooded or experience leaks during Helene. More election workers will be brought in to handle the crowds of people coming to vote early, she said.

"When the doors open on Thursday, we will be ready to go," Welborn said.

Early voting in North Carolina begins on Oct. 17 and ends on Nov. 2.

In McDowell County, early voting will be held 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. on weekdays and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on three Saturdays, Oct. 19, Oct. 26 and Nov. 2. All early voting will be at the McDowell County Board of Elections, 2458 N.C. 226 South, Marion.

Wellborn said all 100 counties in North Carolina can accept absentee ballots for another county. This is aimed to help voters displaced by Helene who still want to vote in their county's election.

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MIKE CONLEY nconley@mcdowellnews.com, 'Old Fort polling location changed due to Helene damage', *McDowell News, The* (online), 17 Oct 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?
p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C45DB7481503F8>



McDowell Tech nursing students switch gears to help out with Hurricane Helene relief effort

October 17, 2024 | McDowell News, The (Marion, NC) Author: MICHAEL LAVENDER Director of Communications, MTCQ Section: Education | 446 Words OpenURL Link

McDowell Technical Community College students continue to show resilience and a spirit of generosity and togetherness following local and regional devastation from Hurricane Helene in the mountains of western North Carolina.

When college classes were canceled in the aftermath of the storm, students from throughout the college volunteered daily in the relief efforts and supply distribution coordinated by McDowell Tech President J.W. Kelley and McDowell County Schools Superintendent Tracy Grit in a warehouse near the college's Universal Advanced Manufacturing Center.

When the college reopened last week, students had to return to classes, labs, work-based learning and other educational settings. For several students in the college's associate's degree nursing program, the return to required clinical experiences became yet another opportunity to serve those impacted by the storm.

An agency with which the nursing students typically practiced clinical skills was not quite ready for students to return to the facility after the disaster. But McDowell Tech nursing instructor and simulation coordinator Kim Crawley helped students pivot to assist in a regional distribution center in a neighboring community.

Crawley and her nursing students worked alongside other volunteers in a converted warehouse at Maynard Electrical Company in Morganton. Students unloaded trucks filled with donated relief supplies and assembled pallets filled with essential provisions bound for hard-hit areas throughout western North Carolina. Over 20 pallets were packed and shipped to Asheville, Boone and Banner Elk during their time at the center.

In addition to basic necessities — diapers, baby wipes, baby food, hygiene products, clothes, tents, tools, grills, charcoal and sleeping bags — students packed outbound pallets with children's toys, coloring books, crayons, books and board games.

"In disaster situations, it is just as important to provide comfort items for children to support their emotional health as it is to provide physical necessities," said Dr. Kim Amos, director of nursing education at McDowell Tech. "It helps bring some sense of normalcy to their lives, as well as relief to their parents and caregivers during difficult and stressful times."

In addition, students packed Bibles to provide spiritual support to those in need.

Crawley and her students demonstrated teamwork, collaboration, and provided love and support to those suffering through this crisis, Amos said.

The staff at Maynard Electric Company took special notice of the hard work and dedication of nursing student Cassandra Burgess and even offered her a job that day. The experience was not traditional bedside nursing, it evolved into a rewarding community health experience.

"I couldn't be prouder of my students for their hard work, compassion and commitment to making a difference in the lives of those affected by Hurricane Helene," Crawley said.

For volunteer opportunities or donation information, email McDowell Cares at victoria@graceforall.org or contact Maynard Electric Company at 828-544-5056.

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MICHAEL LAVENDER Director of Communications, MTCC, 'McDowell Tech nursing students switch gears to help out with Hurricane Helene relief effort', *McDowell News, The* (online), 17 Oct 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C45DB7187EEF60



CLEANING UP

October 17, 2024 | McDowell News, The (Marion, NC) Author: MIKE CONLEY nconley@mcdowellnews.com| Section: Cleaning Up | 981 Words OpenURL Link

Before the remnants of Hurricane Helene hit McDowell County, a newly formed business in Old Fort was working to make it easier for the cyclists to hit the trails in the area. Now, the company is shifting gears from transportation to trail-clearing in the wake of the storm.

Started in 2023, Mountain Top Shuttles is a transportation service based in Old Fort for cyclists and their bikes. The business is owned and operated by Jeremy Poore and Molly Morningglory.

After the town of Old Fort and its surrounding area was devastated by Hurricane Helene, Mountain Top Shuttles has turned its focus to repairing area trails and cleaning up some of the damage that remains. The couple is committed to helping the town rebuild from the damage.

"Mountain Top Shuttles is both a shuttle service and trail construction/maintenance business," Poore and Morningglory said in a statement.

"During the next six months, we are pivoting to 100% trail construction and maintenance."

Poore and Morningglory started the shuttle business in 2023 with the goal of making McDowell County's trails accessible.

Working on trail access in western NC

The remnants of Hurricane Helene left enormous devastation to Old Fort, its businesses, the surrounding mountains and the trails cyclists enjoy. Poore and Morningglory have now shifted focus to repairing the damaged trails and helping the town rebuild.

Poore and Morningglory said in the two weeks since Helene hit on Sept. 27, they have completed more than 140 hours of volunteer work in town using heavy equipment to clear roads, parking lots, driveways and trees for Duke Power, FEMA, the town of Old Fort and local residents.

"Based on National Forest and Blue Ridge Parkway closures, there is no access for shuttling mountain bikers at this time," Poore and Morningglory said. "Our intention is to have most access and trails restored by March 2025. At that point, or sooner, we intend to again offer shuttle services."

To make this a possibility, the business started a GoFundMe campaign to pay the costs for opening the trails.

"So far, we've raised \$6,395, including funds from an anonymous donor, which translates to over 200 paid hours of trail maintenance at the government rate of \$31.80," Poore and Morningglory said in a statement. "This will ensure that we can continue to operate our business while directly working on Pisgah National Forest trails."

How the shuttle service started

In 2018, Poore visited a town in California that was once a gold mine town.

"After the mines dried up, so did the town," Poore said. "Much later, mountain biking entered the scene and the town came to be known for its long downhill trails."

There, Poore rode the mountain bike trails with the help of transportation services that took rider to the trails.

Years later, Morningglory finished graduate school at Clemson University in 2022. She and Poore wanted to move back to western North Carolina. Morningglory grew up in Old Fort and her parents once owned a building at the junction of Main Street and Catawba Avenue, where a park stands today. Poore's family live in Hendersonville, where he grew up.

The couple visited Old Fort and met with Jason McDougald of Camp Grier and the G5 Trail Collective. McDougald spoke to the couple about efforts to build trails in Old Fort and plans to rebrand Old Fort as a destination trail town.

The effort resonated with Poore, who was an avid biker and had led backpacking trips near Old Fort, he said.

The couple moved to Old Fort in late 2022. The pair developed the concept for Mountain Top Shuttles by emulating the mountain bike services in Downieville.

The business was born on Jan. 1, 2023 as a shuttle service for mountain bikers and a trail construction and maintenance company, according to Poore and Morningglory.

"I conceived of Mountain Top Shuttles as a way to make the trails around Old Fort, NC, more accessible," Poore said on the website for the business. "These trails are steep and deep! Sometimes we don't have all day to ride or to climb 5,000+ vertical feet. Sometimes we just need to get out there and choose our own adventure. Whatever your riding pleasure, you gotta get up to get down."

Hitting the trails around Old Fort

Before Helene, Mountain Top Shuttles would pick up bike riders from all over the country in downtown Old Fort near Seeker Coffee. Riders would enjoy coffee and pastries while Morningglory and Poore loaded bikes and prepared for the trip up the mountain, the couple said.

The most popular shuttle was a trip up Heartbreak Ridge. The nearly 14-mile trail took riders along the Blue Ridge Parkway near the base of Mount Mitchell State Park all the way down to Camp Grier Road, three quarters of a mile from downtown Old Fort, according to Poore and Mornningglory.

Before the storm, Mountain Top Shuttles often took up to 50 riders a week up the mountain, the couple said.

"Since the business was designed as an accelerator for the town of Old Fort, all marketing includes local eateries, breweries and the local bike shop," Poore and Morningglory said.

In addition to shuttles, the business includes building and maintaining trails, something the pair are focused on now.

Mountain Top Shuttles frequently led volunteer workdays with the G5 Trail Collective and was selected to build the section of trail from lower Catawba Falls to the upper falls earlier this spring.

Poore is also the coordinator of the McDowell Technical Community College Trail School. The trail construction program has served local land managers, trail maintainers and trail builders since 2021. Poore became the program's first coordinator in January 2023.

In just a short time before the storm, Old Fort and Mountain Top Shuttles got more recognition from those within the mountain biking community. Before Helene struck Old Fort, the business had its first rider from British Columbia, Canada on the shuttle.

"That makes our first international visitor specifically coming to Old Fort because they saw a YouTube video about Heartbreak (Ridge) and our shuttle," Poore said.

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U.S. Small Business Administration visits Marion to talk helping businesses after Helene

October 17, 2024 | McDowell News, The (Marion, NC) Author: Mike Conley | Section: Government Politics | 475 Words OpenURL Link

On Tuesday, the U.S. Small Business Administration visited Marion and talked with local officials about helping businesses in McDowell County rebuild from Hurricane Helene.

Dilawar Syed, deputy administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration, met with local leaders at the McDowell County Administrative Offices.

Marion Mayor Steve Little, Marion City Manager Bob Boyette, McDowell County Manager Ashley Wooten, Chamber of Commerce President Kim Effler, Marion Business Association Director Freddie Killough, Tourism Director Shannon Odom and McDowell Economic Development Association Director Chuck Abernathy were in attendance.

The SBA is an independent agency of the U.S. government that provides support to entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Syed and his team from the SBA came to McDowell County to talk about recovery efforts so far, specifically for businesses.

Syed said the SBA has disaster loans to assist businesses with rebuilding.

The SBA has people working at the McDowell County Disaster Recovery Center at the Senior Center in Marion. Applicants can walk in and talk with the SBA staff about this process.

"The whole process, our teams can walk you through, answer your questions," Syed said.

"We will be here as long as it takes, to help this community recover," Syed said. "That's a commitment the president has made, and we will make sure that we do that."

Little said the deputy administrator brought with him a group of people who are intelligent, helpful and compassionate.

"They know their stuff," Little said. "They know how to encourage and make us aware that first, we are not alone here. We have people who support our efforts to recover, and SBA is a vital, vital member of that team that we are being the beneficiaries of as they are here to help us."

Little said the information the SBA shared with local officials will be shared throughout the community.

The SBA disaster loans available to businesses include:

Business physical disaster loans — Loans to businesses to repair or replace disaster-damaged property owned by the business, including real estate, inventories, supplies, machinery and equipment. Businesses of any size are eligible. Private, nonprofit organizations such as charities, churches and private universities are also eligible. Economic Injury Disaster Loans — Working capital loans to help small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture, and most private nonprofit organizations of all sizes meet ordinary and necessary financial obligations that cannot be met as a direct result of the disaster. These loans are intended to assist through the disaster recovery period. Home disaster loans — Loans to homeowners or renters to repair or replace disaster-damaged real estate and personal property, including automobiles.

These loans have lower interest rates and fixed rates. Applicants must have a credit history acceptable to SBA and they must show the ability to repay all loans, according to a news release from the SBA.

Applicants may call the SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955 or send an email to disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for more information on SBA disaster assistance.

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MARION TAILGATE MARKET HOLDS FIRST EVENT AFTER HELENE

October 17, 2024 | McDowell News, The (Marion, NC) Author: Staff Writer | Section: News | 64 Words OpenURL Link

On Saturday, Oct. 12, the Historic Marion Tailgate Market Marion held its first event after Hurricane Helene impacted Mc-Dowell County.

The market included a supply exchange open to the community, assistance applying for FEMA help and the typical local food vendors, according to Marion Tailgate Market's Facebook page.

Photographer John Sacco was there to capture pictures of vendors and families who attended the Tailgate Market.

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Free meals in a time of need

October 17, 2024 | McDowell News, The (Marion, NC) Author: MIKE CONLEY nconley@mcdowellnews.com| Section: News| 364 Words OpenURL Link

The leaders of a city in Louisiana served hamburgers, beans, sausage and jambalaya in downtown Marion on Tuesday.

"The goal is to come here and help the people and give them the three Hs: help, happiness and hope," said Zachary, Louisiana, Mayor David McDavid.

"We've been through this before with floods and hurricanes," McDavid added. "We understand what they are going through here."

Zachary is located 12 miles north of Baton Rouge and has around 21,000 people. The city has survived hurricanes Andrew and Katrina.

In the wake of Helene's devastation, the city of Zachary launched a relief initiative to assist those in need here. Community members in the city were encouraged to donate essential items.

McDavid, Fire Chief Danny Kimble, Police Chief Darryl Lawrence and an entourage of Zachary's city staff traveled from Louisiana to western North Carolina and set up a cooker at the First Baptist Church of Marion. The group also brought a trailer packed with supplies donated by local businesses in Zachary.

The Louisiana group cooked outside First Baptist Church on Tuesday at lunchtime while volunteers from the church assisted with serving food. The entire Blanton Family fellowship hall at First Baptist of Marion is filled with supplies for those in need after the Helene disaster.

Scores of people came for the free lunch and fellowship provided by the folks from Zachary.

One of them was Scott Wilson of the Montford Cove community. He was there with two of his young children. Some trees fell on his outbuilding, and he lost electricity. But with help from a generator, Wilson, his wife, and their children made it through the hurricane.

"That's nothing compared to people who have lost their homes, lives, all of their homes," he said.

Wilson said he works at the Marion Correctional Institution. He said he has coworkers who lost everything.

Other people who came for the meals were members of the construction and carpentry programs at McDowell Technical Community College. One of those students said his home was damaged in the storm. Others said they faced downed trees and washed-out bridges.

Marion Mayor Steve Little, who is a long-time member of First Baptist, welcomed and thanked McDavid and his team. The group also served dinner in Marion on Tuesday.

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Letter to editor Danielle Lee

October 17, 2024 | McDowell News, The (Marion, NC) Author: Staff Writer | Section: News | 773 Words OpenURL Link

Dear editor,

My name is Danielle Lee. I'm a Frontier customer in the Marion/Nebo, North Carolina area. I have been without service for 20 days. We were one of the areas hit by Helene. I've been in contact with Frontier every day since power was restored on Oct. 4. For the last 13 days of having power restored I've spoken to about 10-15 different reps. They just keep logging my concerns in the notes and assuring me that Frontier is working diligently to restore the service. I don't doubt that. I know Frontier was really not equipped to handle such a disaster. I understand that Frontier had to wait until power was restored before they could repair and reconnect.

What has me upset is that when I tried to cancel my service, the retention department assured me they were going to credit my account for the upcoming balance owed of \$97.92. I was really appreciative of that and decided I would stick it out and wait. Ten days later, the credit still never posted. My balance was late. Then they added the next month's bill to the balance to a total of \$181. No estimated time of when service will be restored, but no problem charging me for the service not provided. I called to inquire and they said they escalated my concern. Still nothing again. I called in again and was then told they would make sure my credit would be escalated to a supervisor and that the balance would be zero when I log into my app after 24 hours. Now I'm receiving texts saying "We are working on your credit of \$9." I am receiving texts saying there's an outage, but the app says no outage. Then I receive texts saying our service has been restored, but still not service.

Everyone in my community is experiencing the same texts. I'm seeing posts on neighborhood and Facebook of others in surrounding areas with similar issues. These texts are every day saying there's an outage, but then saying it's restored. When we call tech support, the tech says there's no outage and they are sending someone out to the house. Then I get a text the day of the appointment saying there's an outage and they are going to fix it remotely so they cancel the tech themselves. Then when I call again they say there is an outage. I'm really confused. They told me they would have a field technician update me a week ago. We explained to Frontier that one of the boxes at the front entrance to our community needed to be serviced. They scheduled a tech to come out, but nobody showed up and they canceled that appointment. I work from home and require internet to run the programs on my computer to do my business. We live in a rural area with no cell signal unless we have internet and a network extender. I lose my pay every day that our service is out.

I had to apply for disaster unemployment assistance which we are still waiting to see if we qualify. I'm reading all these terrible reviews about people having the same experience with Frontier and not getting any answers. Every time I ask to speak to a supervisor to sort things out they send me to someone in the same department that is trained to sympathize with my concern and assure me it's being escalated and addressed every single time. Then no update. No update on my app. No update with a promised call. No email. Just a text saying were working on the outage and then another text saying it's restored and I'm left with a hefty balance of \$181.

A neighbor of mine who works in IT for another company spoke to a friend in Frontier's IT department warned that said it could be months until service is restored in our area. If that's the case, we have the right to know. We need to find other services to connect so we can provide for our families and connect with loved ones. Again, no cell service here unless we have internet. We have people doing door to door wellness checks daily because they are unable to make calls or receive texts in this area. This is an older and retired community that is pretty secluded. Is there anyone at this company that can give me any answers or help with this situation? My entire neighborhood is communicating back and forth having the same issues only to be brushed off, appointments cancelled, misleading texts, and still paying for services. What is Frontier going to do about this?

Danielle Lee

Marion

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READY TO PLAY

October 17, 2024 | McDowell News, The (Marion, NC) Author: JUSTIN EPLEY Sports editor | Section: Ready To Play | 622 Words OpenURL Link

H.S. FOOTBALL | WEEK 9 PREVIEW

On one hand, McDowell football coach Darrell Brewer is excited to see his team get back on the field following a monthlong hiatus for damage imposed by Hurricane Helene.

But on the other, Brewer knows his Titans have a tough test against a traditionally-strong Mountain 3A/4A Conference power in Asheville as they play host for a 7 p.m. Friday kickoff in Marion.

Going into the game, however, the excitement of getting to play again takes top billing.

"It's good to be back," Brewer said. "It's good for the kids and good for the community. When something like this happens, it's kind of like a whirlwind. It almost feels like starting the season over. It's been crazy.

"But it's good to get back to a little bit of normalcy in everybody's lives. It's one of those times when the winning and losing doesn't seem nearly as important as playing the game does, right now."

The Titans (1-4, 0-1 MAC) have their facilities and equipment in good shape following the storm as they prepare to host the Cougars (2-1), who are playing their MACopener.

"We were lucky here (at McDowell High School)," Brewer said. "You walk on campus here and look around, you wouldn't know anything has ever happened."

Asheville has, perhaps, as little play on film as any team in the state with just three games played so far this fall, and none in the conference.

The Cougars are led by senior running back Kyheem Plummer, who has 350 yards and three touchdowns on 29 carries. He is complemented by fellow senior rusher Josh Ellis (25-232-3).

Asheville junior quarterback Meek Slydell has completed 18 of 31 passes for 170 yards and three touchdowns with two interceptions, finding receivers Kayden Ray (9-73-1) and Kareem Williams (3-58-0) most frequently.

Despite how little the Cougars have played, Brewer knows the key word: speed.

"They are very good at running really fast," Brewer said with a laugh. "They have speed everywhere. That's the big thing. And they do a good job of trying to isolate you and put you in some one-on-one situations where their speed can really hurt you.

"So, we're going to have to do a really good job defensively and try to get a lot of hats around the football. We have to do a really good job of trying to contain their speed."

Some of the leaders of the McDowell defense that will be key to the effort include Chamberland Andersen, Hunter Pittman, Joey Collins, Troy Hayes and Ty Adkins.

Offensively, the Titans, who are a bit injury-beleaguered so far this fall, are guided by junior dual-threat quarterback Danny Brown, senior Job Marsh, running backs Pittman and Jordan Barnett, and receivers Andersen and Oakley Keaton.

"What we've got to do is try to control the clock and run the football," Brewer said. "For us to be successful, we have to be able to keep the football and we have to move it. They're a big-play threat whereas we're a 'three yards and a cloud of dust' kind of team.

"So, we've just got to try to use the old ball-control (offense) and do a really good job of tackling on defense."

With high school football back in Marion after a month off, Brewer and the Titans are hoping to see a lot of support from a community and a county as a whole that was hit hard by the hurricane.

"It'd be good and big to have a big crowd out," Brewer said. "I think there will be a big crowd for both teams just because of everything that's happened. Like we say, it's almost like the start of a new season again.

"It's a weird kind of feeling, but we're looking forward to getting it kicked off."

Justin Epley can be reached at jepley@morganton.com or sports@mcdowellnews.com.

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'Love in Action:' First United Methodist serves as community hub post-Helene

October 17, 2024 | Mountaineer, The (Waynesville, NC) Author: Brionna Dallara | Section: News | 1056 Words OpenURL Link

In the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Helene, First United Methodist Church in Waynesville transformed into a bustling hub for volunteers and flood victims, as well as a go-to station for school administrators, local media outlets, and other stakeholders needing to communicate with the community during a time when internet access was limited.

As the storm rolled in the morning of Sept. 27, Waynesville police called the church to ask whether it could be a drop off point for people who were evacuated who would then be shuttled to the Clyde Armory shelter.

"We knew that our initial response was going to be so important," said Ian Smith, director of community engagement at FUMCS. "The government organizations are focused on finding missing people, getting infrastructure back up and running, getting our Wi-Fi going again, getting cell towers going again — all those critical infrastructure needs in the first week of something this catastrophic, that's what they're focused on."

The mission quickly grew, evolving from supplies stacked out front to stations spread across the church campus, each serving a unique purpose. The entire operation operated under the umbrella of GraceFirst — a shared ministry between First United Methodist Church and the neighboring Grace Episcopal Church in the Mountains.

"Everybody stepped up. No one said no to a job that came across their plate or to somebody that walked in, it was just doing the best you could," Smith said.

But the outpour extended beyond GraceFirst. First Baptist of Waynesville initiated daily meetings with GraceFirst and other organizations including the Salvation Army and Meals on Wheels, as well as local groups such as the Clyde Community Center and the Pigeon Multicultural Center, to connect resources with those in need.

It became clear to Grace Episcopal Pastor Joslyn Schaefer that the faith communities' response was their currency in grace, mercy and gifts.

"It was nothing expected in return, and because church is based on friendships at its best, is based on friendships and relationships and trust. There's a certain flexibility and openness to meeting needs and to hearing needs, and I think that is unique," Schaefer said.

For example, she said, the Salvation Army had a commitment to make 200 meals but didn't know where the food would come from — but Haywood Christian Ministries was at the same table, and was getting food they could lend for the meals.

Volunteers rally together

Tuesday following the flood, Smith said there were close to 150 volunteers, more than half not even a part of the church's congregation.

"Everybody was meeting people new for the first time that just want to get out and get involved and help any way they can. So that was really fun, that was special," Smith said. "That made me proud to work here, and also just being a part of this staff."

The biggest haul starting out was a 16-foot trailer driven in by a member of their congregation, Smith said.

When the internet went down across the county and cash and gas became scarce, the church swiftly mobilized to distribute more resources. They organized a caravan of five to six vans, loaded with supplies and donations, to deliver directly to homes and neighborhoods.

"We would just drive into the neighborhood and knock on doors and deliver food, water, whatever really that they needed." Smith said.

In the first week nearly 100 households were reached by the church, some being folks that contacted the church directly or places in communities outside of Waynesville that they heard from word of mouth needed help. The church also has provided sites for those in need to have meetings with Pisgah Legal, FEMA and Mountain Projects.

This wasn't FUMC's first rodeo, however, as the church had been a distribution site in 2021 following the floods of Tropical Storm Fred.

"We knew we were gonna have to get set up for donations drop offs, and then it wasn't until later that day that we kind of put the word out, 'if you're looking to volunteer, come here', mainly because we were going to need help organizing and receiving donations," Smith recalled.

Love in action

"We can be a hub for each other in terms of letting the resources flow," Schaefer said. "It's love in action."

Deborah Ray has been volunteering every day since the First Methodist opened its doors that Monday.

"I've been going here for 40 years. This church loves people and wants to help," Ray said.

Ray said she's seen volunteers "coming out of the woodwork," including older and younger generations, like students from Western Carolina University that have been helping out and making deliveries, along with local high school students.

Just last week, Smith reported that 291 volunteers contributed a combined total of 1,400 service hours.

Gracie Rinker is a student at Tuscola High School and has been volunteering with her peers as much as she can since the hurricane.

"I think because I was so blessed to not be super affected myself, I just wanted to help people who were affected and just do the best I can to get them back on their feet so they can go and help other people also," Rinker said.

Stacked to the ceiling in the Friendship House, the church's outreach ministry, have been towering stacks of supplies rotating in and out, as they are delivered and replenished.

"Mutual aid is really important right now, because even though people from bigger places like federal are coming in to help, the locals and the local organizations and the people affected know about what's needed, they know where the resources are, and they know how to come together and make it happen," said Nicole Kott, director of the Friendship House.

Though they are now slowing down on accepting donations, more distribution centers, such as Woodland Baptist and New Covenant Church in Clyde, have taken the reins in distributing bulk supplies. Meanwhile, FUMC is looking ahead, continuing to assess future needs as the community's demands are met.

"The long game is important here, because after all the flood relief slows down, we're still going to have a major disaster and a lot of families affected," Kott said. "I know that we've got great food resources and clothing resources. But I don't know of any nonprofits long in the long term that do cleaning supplies and things of that nature."

She said it will be crucial to have volunteers consistently showing up throughout the year as they move forward with the next steps.

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'Love in Action:' First United Methodist transformed into a multipurpose hub following the hurricane

October 17, 2024 | Mountaineer, The (Waynesville, NC) Author: Brionna Dallara| Section: On Premise| 49 Words OpenURL Link

In the immediate aftermath of Helene, First United Methodist Church in Waynesville transformed into a hub for volunteers and flood victims. It was a go-to station for school administrators, local media outlets, and other stakeholders needing to communicate with the community during a time when internet access was limited.

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HART theater adds make-up weekends for The Mousetrap murder mystery

October 17, 2024 | Mountaineer, The (Waynesville, NC) Author: Staff Writer | Section: Arts Entertainment | 278 Words OpenURL Link

Three additional weekends have been added to HART theater's calendar to make up for the shows canceled due to Helene for The Mousetrap, a legendary Agatha Christie whodunit murder mystery.

"Our stage is set, and we can't wait to provide you with a space to reconnect, enjoy a fun night out, and be part of something special with your friends and fellow theatre-lovers," said Candice Dickinson, HART Artistic Director.

HART will donate 50% of the profits from The Mousetrap to other theaters in the region that are unable to reopen at this time.

Set in a remote English manor during a snowstorm, The Mousetrap follows a group of strangers stranded together, whose anxieties rise when they learn a murderer is on the loose nearby. As it becomes clear the killer is among them, suspicions grow, and when a second murder occurs, tensions soar among the residents — and the audience.

In addition to Oct. 17-20, new shows have been added for Oct. 25-27, Nov. 8-10 and 15-17.

Under the direction of Julie Kinter, the production promises to deliver the same thrills, suspense, and unexpected twists that have made this play a global sensation.

"Agatha Christie's storytelling is timeless. The Mousetrap keeps you guessing right until the final moment, and we're excited to bring this iconic work to life with our talented cast and crew," said Kinter.

The cast includes local talents Madison Brightwell, Matt Edwardsen, Darren Frazier, Lara Hollaway, Lynx Killillay, David Krarup, Morgan Miller and David Spivey.

Show times are 7:30 p.m. except Sundays, which are at 2 p.m. Purchase tickets online at harttheatre.org or by calling the box office at 828-456-6322. Prices range from \$18-\$38, with special discounts for students, seniors and groups.

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Queens of the Mountain 7: Tuscola golf makes it four-straight conference titles

October 17, 2024 | Mountaineer, The (Waynesville, NC) Author: Aarik Long | Section: Sports | 997 Words

OpenURL Link

Stringing together a run of multiple championships is quite a lofty feat, but that's just what Tuscola's girls golf team has done — earning its fourth-straight Mountain 7 conference championship this week.

"It's exciting from a coaching standpoint. It's all about the girls. They faced adversity and won it out. You just have to keep them in a good frame of mind," Tuscola coach Sean Williams said. "It was a great job they did. When you're that age and facing that sort of pressure, they did a fantastic job. I couldn't have done any better when I was in high school."

After coming into the season with three straight titles, the Mounties were feeling the pressure mounting from their Mountain 7 rivals.

"You could tell every year, especially this year, that they wanted us," Williams said. "This year, it was the hardest. When you win and win, you feel the pressure more. You basically feel them breathing down your neck. When the girls won, it was a great relief."

Flood interruptions

The conference tournament, like everything else, was impacted by Helene's devastation. The first round was held on Sept. 23 at Laurel Ridge Country Club — just days before the storm hit.

Haywood County's golf courses took a lick in the storm, but they moved swiftly to reopen — and the girls soon got back into the swing of things, even though make-up dates for round II and III of conference matches were still up in the air.

"They're an amazing group of girls. I've seen it every year. They all know every year what to do and what it takes. It's that same focus. They all get locked in," Williams said. "It's a matter of how you approach it. You have to cope with it and move on. You've got to do what you've got to do."

The Mounties weren't alone. The storm affected the entire region and the majority of the schools in the Mountain 7.

"It was different, but still we worked on our game," Williams said. "We found ways to keep the game sharp. Snow storms have never stopped us. Floods have never stopped us. Cold weather has never stopped us. You've gotta be creative and work it. You have to keep it going. Everyone is in a challenging situation during the process."

The conference tournament resumed on Oct. 11 with another round at Laurel Ridge, which hosted again due to the course at Cummings Cove Country Club in Henderson County not yet repaired.

"Luckily, Haywood County had a couple open," Williams said. "Laurel Ridge is the best course that came out of the flood. We chose to do a nine-hole event there for the second round."

The Mounties went into the second round with a six stroke lead — and came out of it with a 22-stroke lead, making it nearly impossible for anyone to catch them in round III.

"After the second round, it was a good feeling to see the 22-stroke lead," Williams said. "They knew they could do it. And it was our home course. That made them feel better, too."

Also during that second round, junior Madi Wright hit a hole-in-one.

"All the positive things that happen make the team more confident," Williams said.

At the third and final round at Maggie Valley Country Club on Oct. 15, the Mounties had extended their lead to 33 strokes — locking up the conference crown once again.

In that final round, the players "locked in," according to Williams. The highest score among the five golfers was 51.

Senior McKenna Williams, the star golfer of the team, shot one-under-par during the third round at Maggie Valley. She earned medalist honors in all three rounds with the lowest score and took home conference Player of the Year honors.

"She went out with a bang. She really stepped up and wanted to win it all," Williams said.

Joining her on the all-conference team were sophomore Abbey Adams and junior Josie Ostendorff.

"I'm very proud of them for the three of them getting on there," Williams said.

Adams shot a 41 on the final day of the tournament — showing she's hitting her stride at the right time in the season.

"She's really starting to play good towards the end of the season, like we all do," Williams said.

Wright and junior Haiden Woods were also named all-conference honorable mentions.

Heading to regionals

Now, the Mounties turn their attentions towards regionals and, if all goes well, a trip to state.

"They can do it. We've been talking about it all season long. They are potentially state champions. They have that sort of talent. We have the setup where we could get to state and perform really well at state," Williams said. "They have all the potential in the world to win regional and perform really well at state. They have to believe in themselves. It can happen that way."

The team has compared some of their nine-hole scores to teams that have won state titles in recent years and saw themselves right in the thick of things.

"I want them to do it so bad," Williams said. "We're preparing and putting our best foot forward. I know what it takes. We keep grinding those areas. We're staying true to what we know will put us in the best position."

On Saturday, the team will head to Cramer Mountain Golf Club in Cramerton for a practice round. On Sunday, they'll walk the course again and practice putting and driving before Monday's regional match against roughly 20 teams from the western half of the state.

"We'll enjoy the time," Williams said. "Part of the relaxing and fun time for the girls is getting together and going out to eat and just being teenagers and enjoying the great situation that they're a part of."

And the Mounties will be on the hunt to bring some more hardware back to Tuscola.

"Individual performance is great, but as a coach, I visualize walking into the gym at Tuscola and seeing the banner with the team championship," Williams said. "That thing stays permanently. That doesn't go anywhere. That's what it's all about."

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Enjoying life at the pace of Mayberry

October 17, 2024 | Mt. Airy News, The (NC) Author: Ryan Kelly | Section: News | 1096 Words OpenURL Link

It does not matter to lovers of "The Andy Griffith Show" (TAGS) that the show has been off the air for decades now because the feeling and emotions elicited by a half-hour trip to Mayberry still ring true.

It may shock those who are not from Mount Airy, or fans themselves off TAGS, but the nostalgic draw of the classic American television show still beckons to fans of the show across the country and abroad.

Each year Mount Airy hosts Mayberry Days which invites to town fans of the show and lovers of the idea of idyllic Mayberry where sometimes complex issues were resolved with folksy wisdom and often a little lesson for Sheriff Andy Taylor's son Opie and the television viewer as well.

Presented by the Surry Arts Council, Mayberry Days is a chance for fans of the show to come together in the home of fictious 'Mayberry' to share memories of the show and even some of Andy's lessons.

Visitors can choose to enjoy taking one of the Squad Car Tours around the sights of Mayberry, visit the jail, of sample the pork chop sandwich at Snappy Lunch. Annually, fans tee it up with other TAGS lovers during a golf tournament affectionately known as "The Emmett" before enjoying a meal at Cross Creek Country Club with other devotees.

"Mayberry Days has evolved over the years to help keep the Mayberry spirit alive. As some events have come and gone, new traditions are born," the Surry Arts Council wrote.

With each year, some faces fall away but the staying power and reach of TAGS seems to keep the tap flowing, replacing some of those missing faces with younger ones as it seems Andy, Barney, and company are still reaching into living rooms even in the twenty-first century with limitless entertainment options to choose from.

Every good story has a beginning and for Mayberry Days that goes back to 1990 when the festival was started to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of TAGS. According to the Arts Council the idea was born at the estate sale of Frances Bavier who played Aunt Bee on the show.

When she passed away, also in 1990, many of her belongings were auctioned off and fans of the show gobbled up items that reminded them of the character. One of those auction attendees was the late Alma Venable of Mount Airy who told a reporter that she planned to make an Aunt Bee themed room at The Mayberry Motor Inn.

If you build it they will come worked for a baseball field in a movie once upon a time, and it worked in Mount Airy as well. The Aunt Bee room still exists today at the motor lodge off U.S. 52 in Mount Airy where attendees of Mayberry Days have been known to frequent during the festival week.

At this year's dinner as some worked their way through the buffet line, others were mingling with celebrity guests who had roles on TAGS. While these may have been young actors, they have vivid memories of working on the show with Griffith and Don Knotts, who played loveable Deputy Barney Fife.

In attendance for the first time this year was Margaret Teele who played Barney's love interest in a later episode of TAGS after Fife had moved from Mayberry. She said it was a treat to be around people who share a love of the show and values it presented which are nearly absent in Hollywood today.

She lost her taste and walked away from showbusiness, but recalled with a broad smile what a gentleman Griffith

was and recounted some long conversations she had with her scene partner Knotts some 55 years ago.

Other notable attendees included Dennis Rush who played Howie Pruitt, Keith Thibodeaux who was seen as Johnny Paul Jason, Rodney Dillard as one of 'The Darling Boys,' and Ronnie Schell played several characters.

Also in attendance was Knott's daughter Karen has been attending and presented her own show "Make America Funny Again" in which she presented the top reasons to elect Barney Fife for President.

The love that fans have for Griffith bubbles over from TAGS as is evidenced by the attention that Daniel Roebuck receives during Mayberry Days.

While he was not on TAGS, he was a crucial member of the team for Griffith on his later program, 'Matlock,' where he played private investigator Cliff Lewis for the shows final three seasons. He has been attending the festival now with some regularity and has found himself new fame locally with a starring turn as Scrooge in the Surry Arts Council's 'A Christmas Carol' which he will be undertaking again this holiday season.

Shelly Stock from Rock Hill, South Carolina, waited in line for a chance to have a photo taken with Roebuck and get an autograph for her collection. A self-professed fan of Ben Matlock, she brought her daughter and grandson along for the 2024 incarnation of Mayberry Days but said this was the first time her husband could not attend with her.

"This would have been our tenth straight Mayberry Days but old folks like us have to sometimes pick and choose what we want to do – this ride was too much for him this year," she said. It was for the best she felt because that morning pounding rains from the remnants of Hurricane Helene drenched the area and made for a very wet day before the storm moved into the mountains causing catastrophic damage to mountain communities.

"The Andy Griffith Show was something we enjoyed together growing up in a small town and my grandkids get a kick out of it too. I am glad to be here again this year, " Stock said. Her husband loved most being around other fans, she said, and they had made friends during Mayberry Days that carried over to the rest of the year even exchanging birthday cards with a couple from Arkansas they met a few years back.

Mayberry Days is a feel-good week in Mount Airy that brings lot of people to town, but unlike those who come for events like Autumn Leaves Festival in October, fans of Mayberry Days do not come for the hustle and bustle of a gigantic crafts fair.

In fact, some come to town with little to no agenda at all and go with the flow wherever their whims lead. The pace may not be quite as slow as Mayberry in early black-and-white episodes of TAGS, but that suits visitors to Mayberry Days just fine. After all, life moves pretty fast as it is so slowing down to enjoy some moments of simplicity are always going to be a welcome homecoming.

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