

Community picking up pieces in aftermath of Helene

September 28, 2024 | Tryon Daily Bulletin, The (NC) Author: Jeff Allison | Section: Community | 525 Words OpenURL Link

Devastating flooding, mudslides, widespread power outages affect Polk County

POLK COUNTY—Friday morning, around 8:30 a.m., Tropical Storm Helene hit Polk County, the Upstate, and surrounding counties with a ferocity unmatched by any storm in recent memory. The area has experienced devastating flooding and mudslides, widespread power outages, hundreds of downed trees, washed-out bridges, impassable roadways, and limited cell service.

According to Steven Siler of the Tryon Fire Department, evacuations were underway along Hwy. 176 between Tryon and Saluda on Friday. Harmon Field and the surrounding property flooded, and most, if not all, waterways in the area breached their banks.

Siler also shared that fallen trees and flooding damaged several homes in Tryon.

Multiple mudslides occured along Hwy. 176, destroying some homes and shutting down the road entirely. Officials couldn't share an exact count of rescues as of press time.

The 3500 block of Hwy. 176 will be shut down for an extended time.

"We've cleared some trees and debris, but there's a lot of work to be done there," said Deputy Chief Josh Walton with the Tryon Fire Department.

Polk County Fire Marshal Bobby Arledge said this is the worst he's ever seen.

"This is way worse than 2018 [when massive mudslides occurred in the same area]," Arledge said.

Extensive road clearing operations are underway by NCDOT and other organizations.

As of Saturday, water seemed to have receded, and many of the roadways had been cleared, although some roads were still blocked by large trees and many bridges were impassable.

Polk County High School had an emergency shelter set up Saturday, offering a safe haven for those who were forced to evacuate.

Clean-up measures are underway in many communities, although complete plans have yet to be announced.

Power outages are still widespread, but accessibility for repairs is limited. Currently, there is no established timeline for restorations. Duke Energy warns that western North Carolinians should be prepared for potential multi-day outages and says it has 11,000 workers working quickly and safely on repairs, including additional crews from 19 states and Canada.

More than 700,000 North Carolinians lost power due to the storm. Power for 281,000 of the initial 700,000 has been restored, but western counties face a unique challenge due to the high number of road closures.

Other steps are being taken to respond to and recover from Hurricane Helene. Potable water and meals are actively en route from central North Carolina to Western North Carolina, according to a statement released by Congressman Chuck Edwards. Air operations for food and water deliveries began Friday in areas without roadway access.

Trade Street Diner in downtown Tryon set up a generator and offered free Wi-Fi and coffee on Saturday, showing firsthand how neighbors pull together during hard times.

"I've never seen anything like this in all my years here," said one community member on N. Trade St. "Just devastating."

Many residents were actively calling and checking in on loved ones, as this was the first access they had to communication since the storm hit.

No deaths have been reported in Polk County due to the storm, although at least five were reported in Upstate South Carolina due to falling trees.

The post Community picking up pieces in aftermath of Helene appeared first on The Tryon Daily Bulletin.

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Community reeling in aftermath of Helene

September 28, 2024 | Tryon Daily Bulletin, The (NC) Author: Jeff Allison | Section: Community | 419 Words OpenURL Link

Devastating flooding, widespread power outages affect Polk County, Upstate

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Red Cross, Holmes Convocation Center providing emergency shelter

September 28, 2024 | Watauga Democrat, The (Boone, NC) Author: Luke Barber luke.barber@wataugademocrat.com| Section: Local | 467 Words OpenURL Link

BOONE — The Red Cross, Appalachian State University and other agencies have opened up the Holmes Convocation Center as an emergency shelter, providing food, water, beds and a dry and warm environment to community members affected by Hurricane Helene.

Since the shelter opened at the Holmes Center early Friday morning, approximately 106 people have used the public service due to severe flooding, trees falling on their homes and other reasons as Hurricane Helene has impacted large swaths of Western North Carolina and East Tennessee.

For those seeking emergency shelter, food or supplies, the Red Cross will remain at the Holmes Convocation Center, located at 111 Rivers Street in Boone, for the foreseeable future.

George Bartholomew, Government Operations Liaison with the Red Cross, said some folks were at the shelter due to being evacuated during the emergency situation.

"There was a group of folks from Meadowview and Bavarian Village Apartments who were evacuated due to a situation with a propane tank," Bartholomew said. "I suspect that as more roads get opened up, they will find more islands of people that are blocked in."

Bartholomew added that an emergency shelter will be open in the community as long as it is needed. The Red Cross has multiple predetermined shelter sites identified.

"We had a bunch of students in here last night, both on campus and off campus. A lot of people leave during the day, but this is available for people to stay during the night as well. We have food, water and disaster mental health folks available. There's a lot of folks who are trying to process this, which doesn't really happen until about 24 hours after." Bartholomew said.

The local Red Cross shelter began operating Thursday night at Alliance Bible Fellowship before moving to the Holmes Center due to flooding. Bartholomew said AppalCart was instrumental in transporting the shelter residents to the new location.

The Red Cross has classified Hurricane Helene as a seven, the highest classification for natural disaster response given by the humanitarian aid organization. The Red Cross at the national level has deployed 300 additional service workers to help respond to the aftermath of the hurricane in the state.

In the coming weeks, the Red Cross will be completing a disaster assessment to identify areas that were damaged and people and families who have lost their homes. The Red Cross offers services to help people recover.

"We're in the initial phase right now," Bartholomew said. "Our focus right now is getting folks to a safe shelter. Then we will shift to these other phases after a while. The size of this disaster is unprecedented."

The local Red Cross is also encouraging folks to give in-kind donations, as well as their volunteer time, to other local organizations who are responding to the disaster.

For more information on the local Red Cross, visit redcross.org/local/north-carolina/about-us/locations/blue-ridge-piedmont.html or call 828-264-8226.

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Luke Barber luke.barber@wataugademocrat.com, 'Red Cross, Holmes Convocation Center providing emergency shelter', Watauga Democrat, The(online), 28 Sep 2024 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BE4F77F5C313A8>



Appalachian Medical Reserve Corps launches non-emergency information call center

September 28, 2024 | Watauga Democrat, The (Boone, NC) Author: Staff Report news@wataugademocrat.com | Section: Local | 240 Words OpenURL Link

BOONE – In response to the ongoing impact of Hurricane Helene, Emergency Management has enlisted the support of the Appalachian Medical Reserve Corps (APP MRC) to establish a non-emergency information call center. The center is now operational and can be reached at (828) 263-4178 for all non-urgent inquiries and reports related to the hurricane.

This initiative aims to divert non-emergency calls from the 911 system, ensuring that life-threatening emergencies receive prompt attention. Members of the public with general questions, requests for information, or non-urgent reports are encouraged to call the APP MRC's designated number rather than 911. Leave a message and they will return it.

What the Call Center Offers:

- Non-emergency support and information related to Hurricane Helene.
- Guidance on general inquiries to help keep 911 lines open for critical situations.
- A team of trained volunteers ready to provide accurate and timely information.

Interested in Volunteering: The APP MRC is currently seeking volunteers to assist with answering calls. As a volunteer, you will help manage the flow of non-emergency inquiries, ensuring that callers receive the information they need while reducing the burden on emergency services.

Volunteer Responsibilities Include:

Answering incoming non-emergency calls. Providing information using pre-prepared scripts and resources. Referring emergencies to 911 when necessary. Logging call details for reporting purposes.

Shifts are available over the next several days. Volunteers will receive training on handling calls and using the provided software. A team lead will be available to offer support during each shift. To sign up, visit https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAlpQLSfd9QSflIJxbJ5oRUkk3gmnTtQwyjTG7o3jQw--eQeACoCfJA/viewform

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Samaritan's Purse establishes emergency oxygen sites at local hospitals

September 28, 2024 | Watauga Democrat, The (Boone, NC) Author: Luke Barber luke.barber@wataugademocrat.com| Section: Local | 246 Words OpenURL Link

BOONE — Samaritan's Purse has established an emergency oxygen site at Watauga Medical Center and is currently working to establish another site at Cannon Memorial Hospital in Avery County.

The oxygen production clinic is intended for those who are unable to generate oxygen at home due to power outages and other reasons. The site is unable to refill oxygen tanks.

The hospital is providing clinical care, while Samaritan's Purse is providing the oxygen and the space for people to come in and get the help they need.

"We're involved in the community. We live in the community. We serve around the world, and we definitely want to serve our own community," Damon Tripp, Medical Operations Manager with Samaritan's Purse, said.

The site will remain available for as long as people in the community are in need of it. Watauga Medical Center is also expecting to receive additional support in the coming days to respond to the medical needs in the community in the aftermath of the hurricane.

Samaritan's Purse is also providing assistance to local homeowners. Those in need can contact Samaritan's Purse's Hurricane Helene damage assessment team at 1(833) 747-1234.

Moreover, Samaritan's Purse is offering prayer and support through the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association prayer line at (855) 255-7729. Prayer partners are available to offer spiritual guidance and emotional support in this difficult time.

Fore more information on Samaritan's Purse's local efforts in response to Hurricane Helene, visit samaritanspurse.org or follow the Christian humanitarian aid organization on their social media sites.

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p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BE4F7815774CE0>



Boone PD setting up separate call center for missing community members, non-emergencies

September 28, 2024 | Watauga Democrat, The (Boone, NC) Author: Luke Barber luke.barber@wataugademocrat.com| Section: Local | 175 Words OpenURL Link

BOONE – The Town of Boone Police Department has provided an update on its operations in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene and its impacts in the community.

"We know that it is a scary and unsettling thing to not be able to reach your loved ones. At this time, there is still 65% of power out around the area. This affects phone lines and the internet, so this may be why you cannot reach them. Emergency services personnel are working around the clock, continuing to evacuate individuals," the department stated in a social media post.

"We request your patience as our dispatch center is getting overrun with calls. There will be a separate call center set up as soon as possible that will be designated for reporting missing community members and non-emergency situations. We will get that information out to everyone as soon as possible," the post stated further.

"We know that everyone in the mountain community is hurting. We are doing our best, and we will continue to do our best for you," the department stated.

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BRE Crews Make Progress Saturday in Devastating Conditions During Multi-Day Power Restoration Efforts

September 28, 2024 | Watauga Democrat, The (Boone, NC) Author: Staff Report| Section: Local | 532 Words OpenURL Link

Blue Ridge Energy line technicians and visiting crews have made progress today with outages down from 63,000 at the height of the storm to currently 45,837 members still without power as of 6 pm Saturday. Approximately 150 linemen and right of tree contractors continue working tonight on power restoration.

The cooperative is working to secure an additional 150 to 200 workers in place in the field on Sunday as crews continue battling flooding, cutting their way through hundreds of downed trees and building roads to reach mangled power lines and broken poles essential to power restoration.

"Hurricane Helene is one of the worst events that I've seen in my career," said Doug Johnson, Chief Executive Officer of Blue Ridge Energy. "I started as CEO in 1989 when hurricane Hugo hit. This storm is going to be worse than Hugo.

"We're working as hard as we can around the clock to restore electricity to everyone, and we won't stop until every meter is turned back on," Johnson said. "But right now, over 60% of our meters are off. So we have a significant hard challenge before us," he added, noting that restoration will be a multi-day event due to the extent of damage. Some areas are not yet accessible due to flooding or roads that have been completely washed away.

The cooperative is using a helicopter and drones to fully assess damage and locate areas of destruction that need repairs in order to achieve full power restoration. System damage is widespread across the cooperative's service area and 8,000 miles of power line.

Safety is paramount, for both line technicians and the public. Blue Ridge Energy warns members using generators to remember the following:

Never use a generator inside your home or garage. Install a carbon monoxide detector for added safety.

Never connect it to your home's electrical system. It can "backfeed" and potentially harm or kill line technicians working on power lines.

Always let a generator cool down before refueling.

Keep generators away from water.

Attach a ground wire to the generator to assure proper grounding and avoid electrocution. The only safe way to connect a portable generator to your home's wiring is to have a licensed electrical contractor install a transfer switch.

Be aware that downed power lines can still be energized, and therefore dangerous or even deadly! The cooperative warns the public to stay far away from downed lines, which can be hidden underneath downed trees, water and other affected structures. Only a trained line technician should ever go near a downed power line. Blue Ridge Energy is assessing damage and members can also report downed lines by calling 1-800-451-5474.

While Blue Ridge Energy is aware of outages and system operators are monitoring conditions, members should only report outages by calling PowerLine at 1-800-448-2383, by using the Blue Ridge Energy mobile app, or, by texting OUT to 70216. Outage reports cannot be accepted over social media. Outage status is available 24/7 on the

cooperative's live outage map at www.BlueRidgeEnergy.com and on the mobile app.

Blue Ridge Energy serves some 80,000 members in Caldwell, Watauga, Ashe, and Alleghany counties as well as parts of Avery, Alexander and Wilkes counties. Learn more at www.BlueRidgeEnergy.com or on the cooperative's social media on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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HELENE BRINGS FLOODING, WINDS - Helene tears through North Carolina, leaving flooding, reports of tornado

September 28, 2024 | Winston-Salem Journal (NC) Author: JOHN HINTON Staff Reporter | Section: A | 933 Words Page: 1 OpenURL Link

Tropical Storm Helene rolled through much of North Carolina on Friday, bringing reports of tornadoes, heavy rain, strong winds and flooding, forcing state and local officials to close roads especially in the state's western counties.

The storm also caused two deaths in North Carolina, bringing the total number of storm-related deaths to at least 25, the Associated Press reported.

A tornado apparently touched down in Rocky Mount, causing dozens of serious injuries, authorities said.

Helene also threatened to overwhelm the Lake Lure dam on the Broad River in Rutherford County.

Officials with the Rutherford County Emergency Management ordered residents who live below the dam to evacuate to higher ground.

Locals notified the National Weather Service that the dam failure was imminent, according to news reports.

At 3:45 p.m. Friday, water had crested the dam, but it continued to hold despite damage to the structural supports, according to a Facebook post from Rutherford County Emergency Management officials.

"It is an extremely large system," Robert Beasley, a weather-service meteorologist in Blacksburg, Va., said about the storm.

In Northwest North Carolina, the storm produced flooding throughout Boone Friday, prompting Watauga County officials to declare a countywide state of emergency.

Town officials in Boone issued a boil-water advisory for their residents after a water pipe broke. Appalachian State University also canceled its game against Liberty University.

Gov. Roy Cooper advised residents in western North Carolina to stay in their homes.

"Do not travel unless there is an emergency," Cooper said Friday. "Because conditions are worsening, people in western North Carolina should consider all roads closed unless you are seeking higher ground."

In northwest Charlotte, one person was killed Friday and second person had life-threatening injuries when a tree fell on a house, according to news reports. Another person died Friday in a motor vehicle collision in Catawba County during the storm.

Cooper confirmed both deaths.

Duke Energy Corp. reported that 1.26 million of its customers in the Carolinas were without power - 654,485 in North Carolina and 614,503 in South Carolina.

There were 16,221 outages in Forsyth and Guilford counties, the company said. There were 33,798 outages in Davidson, Davie, Stokes, Surry, Wilkes and Yadkin counties, Duke Energy said.

Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative reported 45,657 outages to its customers in Watauga, Ashe, Alleghany and Wilkes counties.

The weather service reported flooding on the Yadkin River in Elkin and on the Watauga River near Sugar Grove in Watauga County. There was also flooding on the Middle Fork New River in Boone and Brush Creek at Muirfield Road in Greensboro, the weather service said.

The storm knocked down a tree onto the awning over a gas pump at the Quality Mart at 715 W. Fifth St. in downtown Winston-Salem.

Mike Morgan said he saw the tree fall.

"The wind was blowing real hard," Morgan said. "It was gusting. I then heard the tree cracking, and I saw the tree fall over and hit the yarning. It all fell down."

Tammy Morgan, Mike's wife, said that a driver of a beer delivery truck appeared to suffer an injury in the incident. The driver of a car parked at the gas station wasn't injured, she said.

Numerous trees fell in Greensboro, and a tree was toppled a mile northeast of Clemmons, the weather service said.

The storm dumped 2.13 inches of rain in Winston-Salem and 2.15 inches of rain in Greensboro, said Jonathan Blaes, a weather-service meteorologist in Raleigh.

Areas in Northwest North Carolina received much more rain than the Triad.

Boone received nearly 11 inches of rain, Surry County got up to 6 inches of rain, the Whitehead community in central Alleghany County received 15.6 inches of rain, the weather service said. The Lansing community in Ashe County received 7.72 inches of rain.

The N.C. Department of Transportation advised resident in western North Carolina that all roads should be considered closed. Unless residents are seeking higher ground, drivers were urged to not to travel in the region.

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App State calls off football game - Liberty-Appalachian State football game is canceled due to weather

September 28, 2024 | Winston-Salem Journal (NC)

Author: TOM FOREMAN JR. Staff Reporter | Section: B | 237 Words

Page: 1 OpenURL Link

Appalachian State's home football game against Liberty, scheduled for Saturday, has been canceled due to the effects of rainfall in western North Carolina due to Tropical Storm Helene, the school announced Friday.

The game will not be rescheduled, according to a statement from the school. While the Mountaineers (2-2, 0-1 Sun Belt Conference) get a weekend off, the trade off is that their next home game isn't until they face Georgia State on Oct. 26. There's an open date in that span, on Oct. 19.

Also, the school called off a field hockey game scheduled for Friday against Bellarmine.

App State said details on football ticket transactions will be communicated as soon as possible through AppStateSports.com, by email to ticket holders and through local and regional media outlets.

The school had already advised students of life-threatening flooding and high winds in the area and to avoid travel and stay indoors at a safe location.

Photos on social media showed U.S. 321 near downtown Boone covered by water.

The Town of Boone announced on its website that it's now under a State of Emergency effective on Thursday at 1 p.m. Officials said the town would remain under that status until further notice.

In addition, Watauga County has also declared a State of Emergency.

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Hurricane kills dozens - Hurricane kills dozens

September 28, 2024 | Winston-Salem Journal (NC) Author: STEPHEN SMITH, KATE PAYNE and HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH Associated Press | Section: A | 374 Words Page: 6 OpenURL Link

TROPICAL WEATHER

CRAWFORDVILLE, Fla. - Hurricane Helene left an enormous path of destruction across Florida and the entire southeastern U.S. on Friday, killing at least 35 people in four states, snapping trees like twigs, tearing apart homes and sending rescue crews on desperate missions to save people from floodwaters.

Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp said dozens of people were still trapped in buildings damaged by the Category 4 hurricane. The storm had maximum sustained winds of 140 mph when it made landfall late Thursday in a sparsely populated region in Florida's rural Big Bend area, home to fishing villages and vacation hideaways where Florida's Panhandle and peninsula meet.

The damage extended hundreds of miles to the north, with flooding as far away as northeast Tennessee, where a "dangerous rescue situation" unfolded after 54 people were moved to the roof of the Unicoi County Hospital while rapid waters flooded the facility, according to Ballad Health.

In North Carolina, a lake used in the movie "Dirty Dancing" overtopped a dam. People in surrounding neighborhoods were evacuated, though there were no immediate concerns it would fail.

Hospitals in southern Georgia were without power, and authorities had "a hard time getting to places" so teams with chainsaws were "working to free up roads," Kemp told a news conference.

Helene's devastation comes as climate change exacerbates conditions that allow such storms to thrive, rapidly intensifying in warming waters and turning into powerful hurricanes and typhoons, sometimes in a matter of hours.

All five who died in one Florida county were in neighborhoods where residents were told to evacuate, said Bob Gualtieri, the sheriff in Pinellas County in the St. Petersburg area. He said people who stayed because they didn't believe the warnings wound up hiding in their attics to escape the rising water.

"We tried to launch boats, we tried to use high-water vehicles and we just met with too many obstacles," Gualtieri said. He said the death toll could rise as emergency crews go door-to-door in the flooded areas.

Increasing numbers of deaths also were reported in Georgia and the Carolinas.

The hurricane came ashore near the mouth of the Aucilla River on Florida's Gulf Coast. That location was only about 20 miles northwest of where Idalia hit last year at nearly the same ferocity, causing widespread damage.

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STEPHEN SMITH, KATE PAYNE; and HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH; Associated Press, 'Hurricane kills dozens Hurricane kills dozens', Winston-Salem Journal (online), 28 Sep 2024 6 https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19BDF534013A1A28>



Helene's wind, rain do not dampen the Mayberry Days spirit

September 28, 2024 | Yadkin Ripple, The (Yadkinville, NC) Author: Ryan Kelly ryan.kelly@mtairynews.com| Section: Mtairy| 1079 Words OpenURL Link

One could have been fooled into thinking there was no impending threat of a tropical system when arriving to Cross Creek Country Club Thursday evening. With golfers still coming off the course from the Mayberry Days Golf Tournament, or "The Emmett," and those coming for the Mayberry Days Dinner, there was a lot of buzz in the air and smiles aplenty.

Inside the ballroom were hundreds of enthusiastic fans of 'The Andy Griffith Show' from near and far. They came from as far as California, Ohio, and Louisiana to the seat of Mayberry nostalgia to share with others their appreciation for the taste of Americana that Griffith and crew served in 249 twenty-two minute slices

There were special Mayberry Days guests inside ready to meet and sign autographs for those in attendance to the dinner and later music from Michael Hoover and Denise Glass.

A first-time celebrity guest to Mayberry Days this year was Margaret Teele who played Agnes Jean Parker on 'The Andy Griffith Show' episode 'A Visit to Barney Fife.' She had hoped to attend last year but a broken hip caused her to send her regrets.

"This is just wonderful, and I feel honored that I'm part of this family. When I worked on 'The Andy Griffith Show,' Andy could not have been any nicer and was such a wonderful and genuine person. Don (Knotts) and I became such good friends during that time, and he asked Andy to extend me for another week. So, I got to work an extra week and we just spent a lot of time talking."

The experience working on TAGS with Griffith and Knotts was vastly different from some of her later acting roles. She said after working on the show that her attitudes on Hollywood started to sour. "Hollywood was interesting in those days. It was changing in those times, and it was getting raunchier. They were beginning to make movies with some nudity in it, and one of the movies I tried out for they wanted me to be topless and I said I can't do that. I went to Catholic school, and I couldn't imagine the nuns looking at me like that." She walked away from that picture with her dignity and morals intact.

Letters still reach her, from places all around the world, saying they enjoyed her performances on TAGS and some of her other roles as well such as on Adam West's 'Batman' or in a movie with Dean Martin — whom she sang the praises of unlike his one-time partner Jerry Lewis whom she called, "a rat's (expletive)" and hard to work with.

At Friday morning's Mayberry Days Proclamation ceremony, Teele seemed even more at home than the previous evening. She told the crowd, "You all have been such a blessing to me. Mayberry represents wholesomeness, dignity, and all the good things that America represents. It really means a lot that Mayberry should keep going forward."

"I can see why this year after year means so much to people. The fact that Mayberry continues, and people want to keep watching the show because it's so beautiful and wholesome, it means to see what these values mean to people."

Surry Arts Council Executive Director Tanya Jones said that Teele really understood the spirit of Mayberry Days, "We love you for understanding what Mayberry Days is all about."

Mount Airy Mayor Jon Cawley spoke Friday morning at the official proclamation ceremony for Mayberry Days. He said, "One of the things that is unique about Mount Airy is that we love stories. I don't know which came first, the

chicken or the egg, that Andy grew up in a place where he heard great stories or if it was because of Andy that Mount Airy has learned to tell great stories."

"I think from listening to people around here that Mount Airy has always been really good at telling stories. There's going to be some really great stories that come from 2024 Mayberry Days. Some of them will be funny and some will be life changing," he said.

"Yesterday, we were playing golf and the team behind us had a tragedy. Thankfully for teammates and first responders it didn't end up being fatal. God shown yesterday on Mount Airy, as God always shows up for us,' Cawley said finding a rainbow amongst Helene's storm clouds.

Former police chief Carl Sferrazza was introduced as one of Mayberry Days biggest fans having made the trip from Enfield, Connecticut an annual pilgrimage.

"I love the show, that's number one, but beyond the show, I come down here and these folks generally speaking, the people here are just so much more laid back. Every year we look forward to coming, really, to see the people," he explained.

Nearly every year since 2004, save the year his mother passed away, he has made the trek to Mayberry and said the dinner was one of the things he looked forward to. Being around so many like-minded folks made him feel at home even this far South of the Mason-Dixon Line.

"I just really glad to meet people from Mount Airy because, you know, you can't make a judgment in the three days you here. I know there's problems here, there's problems everywhere. You know what? Just the demeanor of all the people here is different than they're generally very happy people."

He said back during his many years of law enforcement, sometimes he would come home from a rough day at work and need to unwind with his old friends in black and white. "I used to come home from work and terrible things happen and had to tell my wife and going in the den, I'm going to Mayberry, and she knew what to that meant."

Looking back, he knows that the life depicted on the screen even at that time did not perfectly mirror real life, "I'm not living in a fantasy world. I know that even in 1963 the world was not as Mayberry depicted it. But you know what I tell my kids? I think it was a little closer to that than we are today."

Both the chief and other attendees of the dinner and the Mayberry Days Proclamation held Friday morning sang a similar tune about the longevity of the influence of 'The Andy Griffith Show.'

"I think what happens if you have families that, you know, the kids grow up watching it, and it's like the Disney thing, right? Does Mickey Mouse ever go out of style? No. I hope this doesn't either," Sferrazza said.

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