



Logan Johnson was the sound board engineer for JazzFest on April 26 at Oakland Middle School.

DAN EPRIGHT

2025 JazzFest

JazzFest, a music festival featuring high school and middle schools band from throughout Rutherford County, was held April 25-26 at Oakland Middle School. The event had been scheduled for Fountains at Gateway but was moved indoors for expected rainy weather. There were performances

from 21 county schools and Victory Drumline and Belmont University's Jazz Ensemble. In 2024, Rutherford County Schools received Music for All's Advocacy in Action award for Community Involvement for efforts to save the long-running event from complete demise.



A Stewarts Creek Jazz Band's saxophonist performs at JazzFest on April 26 at Oakland Middle School.



Erika Meade and her daughter Anna, 14, a trumpet player with the Stewarts Creek Middle School band



The Stewarts Creek Jazz Band's trumpet section performs at JazzFest on April 26 at Oakland Middle School.



The Christiana Middle School Jazz Band prepares for its turn on the JazzFest stage on April 26 at Oakland Middle School.

County property values increase \$85.6M

SUBMITTED

The Rutherford County Property Assessor's Office announced what it described as significant progress in the county's property valuation and recurring revenue. As of April 28, the total assessed property value has increased to \$16,483,400,217.

compared to \$16,397,701,531 as of April 17 — a week-over-week increase of \$85,598,686. The increase in recurring revenue is \$1,606,003. For additional information, contact the Rutherford County Property Assessor's Office or go to rcpatn.com

Child Advocacy Center names Hometown Heroes

SUBMITTED

The Child Advocacy Center of Rutherford and Cannon counties presented its 2025 Hometown Heroes Awards at the 10th Annual Hometown Heroes Walk for Children.

Seven community leaders who have dedicated their career to making the community a safer place for children received the award. They are Andrea Butler, Morgan Clemmons, Marcy Gossett, Presley Hosford, Jill Howlett, Tracy Sheppard and Jennifer West.

Andrea Butler has investigated child abuse allegations for the past 12 years as a Rutherford County Sheriff's Office detective. She has served on the Sheriff's Office Child Abduction Response Team and handled missing children through AMBER Alert Initiatives. She has overseen the Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division Sex Offender Registry for several years.

Morgan Clemmons graduated with honors from Freed-Hardeman University in 2020. She majored in criminal justice and is currently an investigator with the Rutherford County Department of Children's Services. She has been a member of the Rutherford County Child Protective Investigative Team since 2021.

Marcy Gossett began her career at the Smyrna Police Department in 1999. In 2013, she was promoted to detective. When Smyrna Police Department started its Family Crimes Unit, she volunteered to take the assignment.

Presley Hosford is the Child Advocacy Center's Community Education Coordinator. She took on one of the more important missions the CAC has — educating adults how to protect children from child sexual abuse. Each year, she trains over 1,000 adults.

Jill Howlett worked at the Davidson County District Attorney's Office as a Victim Witness Coordinator from 2000-2011. In 2019, she obtained her License of Clinical Social Work. She provides services to children and families and testifies in trials, advocates for children and families, and provides training to Child Protective Investigative Team Partners.

Tracy Sheppard began serving on the Child Advocacy Center Board of Directors in 2017. She recently graduated from Middle Tennessee State University with a bachelor's degree in forensic science. She is a new patrol deputy with the Rutherford County Sheriff's Office.

Jennifer West began her law enforcement career with the Vanderbilt University Police Department. In 1997, then joined the Murfreesboro Police Department. She primarily focused on domestic violence cases and crimes against children while managing the sex offender registry. Since 2009, she has conducted more than 3,000 digital device examinations, playing a critical role in advancing the department's technological capabilities in criminal investigations.

college & university STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

HONORS

Brenna Hobgood of Smyrna has been selected as Miss FHU 2025 by the students at Freed-Hardeman University Hobgood, is the daughter of FHU alumni Adam and Keri Hobgood and is majoring in social work. She has been involved in the Xi Chi Delta social club, serving as the club's women's president, vice president, community service representative and class representative. After graduation, she plans to attend graduate school to pursue her master's in social work.

Lizbeth Burgos of Smyrna has been elected to membership into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest and most selective all-discipline collegiate honor society, at The University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Braden Bright of Murfreesboro has been elected to membership into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest and most selective all-discipline collegiate honor society, at The University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Abby Byrnes, majoring in sociology from Murfreesboro, is one of 45 seniors at Mississippi State University inducted into the Gamma of Mississippi Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's most prestigious academic honor society.

Eliza Farley of Murfreesboro and Sophia Maitlen of Smyrna have been named to Knox College's Dean's List.

Colin Fleener of Smyrna has been named to Spartanburg Methodist College's President's List for the Spring 2025 semester.

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