

# AUGUST

## Trump visit draws thousands to Asheville

Supporters swarmed through downtown Asheville on Aug. 14, decked out in MAGA attire and eager to enter the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium to hear then-presidential candidate **Donald Trump**. A handful of protesters gathered with signs, while vendors seized the opportunity to cash in on merchandise sales. ❌



Photo by Caleb Johnson

## Good eats galore: Bite Me festival launches

A five-day food frenzy ensued during the inaugural Bite Me festival Aug. 14-18. The event was spearheaded by **Jefferson Ellison**, founder and owner of brand-building agency JD Ellison & Co., who stepped up to fill the plate when the Chow Chow Food + Culture Festival announced its shutdown in February. To pull off the event, Ellison recruited **Jennifer Rodriguez**, founder of food and lifestyle website Asheville Guide; pastry chef **Melinda Hanley**; and **Sarah Fiori**, business administrator at Asheville Crafted Edge, a local provider of handmade kitchen tools. Offerings included creative takes on traditional meals, panel discussions and conversations, a community market and a cookout. ❌

## Happy Birthday Xpress!

*Mountain Xpress* blew out the candles for its 30th year Aug. 10. The paper hit the stands in 1994 with publisher **Jeff Fobes** at the helm (where he remains). Throughout September, *Xpress* celebrated the milestone with articles, photo spreads and reflections from current and former staff members including **Melanie McGee Bianchi**, who wrote about the early days of *Xpress* when press kits “still arrived in physical form, with an advance CD and an 8-by-10 black-and-white glossy.” ❌



## COVER OF THE Month

*“We are in a dark period of history. But, in the face of this darkness, ordinary people of hope and faith, locally and around the world, are coming together to resist injustice, violence and oppression.”*

— **Ed Sacco** wrote in a letter to the editor published in the Aug. 7 *Xpress*.

## AVLFest nails its second season

AVLFest’s second annual music festival ran Aug. 1-4. Crowds of festival-goers gathered across 20-plus venues to dance and sing to hundreds of local and touring acts, with headlining performances from **Papadosio** and **Washed Out**. ❌



Photos by Caleb Johnson

## BOOK RELEASE

Asheville-based writer **Rachel Hanson**’s debut memoir, *The End of Tennessee*, came out on Aug. 20. The work explores the author’s religiously extreme childhood in rural Tennessee as well as her family dynamics, which led the writer to flee her home as a teen. ❌

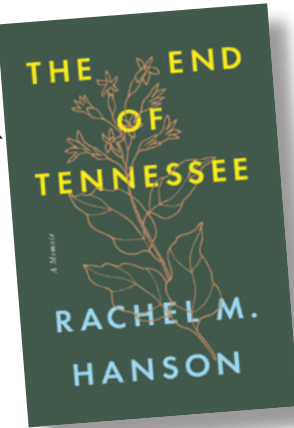


Photo by Madelyn Anderson

## Harvest Records spins its 20th year

The vinyl haven **Harvest Records** — an acclaimed WNC Hall of Fame winner for “Best Record/CD Store” — celebrated its 20th year Aug. 14. The shop landed on Haywood Road the summer of 2004 after co-owners **Matt Schnable** and **Mark Capon** decided to create a hub for people to comb through crates in WNC. ❌

## IN CONVERSATION WITH Luis Martinez

“Since opening, we’ve discovered that being part of Asheville’s community of restaurant owners means embracing collaboration, creativity and a shared passion for the city’s vibrant culture. The food scene in Asheville is driven by a strong connection to local ingredients, sustainability and community values. This inspires us to innovate and support one another continually.”

— **Luis Martinez**, who in August launched his latest project, **Taqueria Rosita**, at **The Odd**. For the full article, visit [avl.mx/ee2](http://avl.mx/ee2). ❌



Photo courtesy of Martinez

**Stay Glazed Donuts**, located in the basement of the **Jackson Building**, closed in August. But several new spots opened around town including **Haywood Famous**, **Taqueria Rosita** and **DayTrip**. The latter was sadly destroyed by **Tropical Storm Helene**. For more on **DayTrip**, see page 42.



## SONG OF THE Month

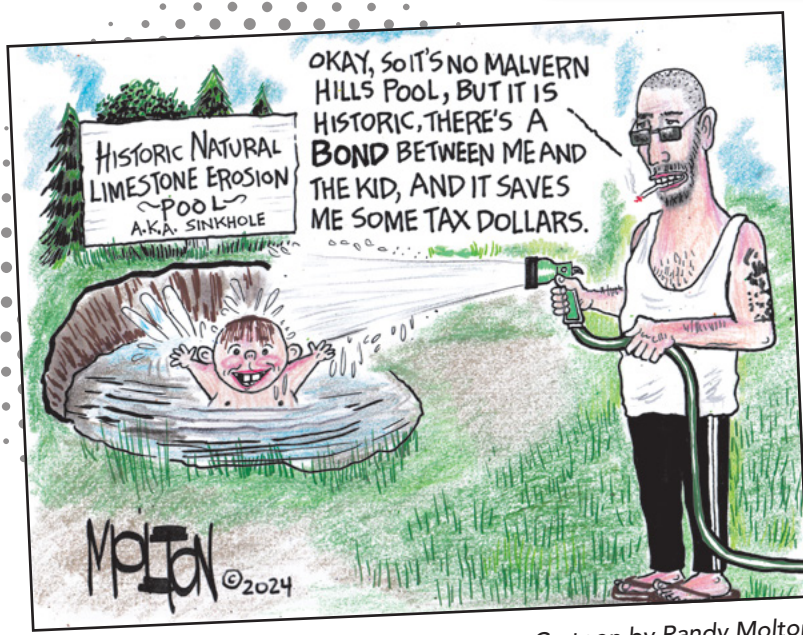
### Amanda Anne Platt & The Honeycutters, “Forget Me Not Blue”

The Americana band’s latest album, *The Ones That Stay*, is full of quotable lines. And along with “It’s been a big year / I hope the next one can be smaller” (“Big Year”), this mantra from the collection’s highlight feels like one to carry like a torch into 2025: “They say God won’t give you more than you can handle / It might be true cause I’m still standing.” The singer-songwriter’s pensive voice pairs exceedingly well with **Matt Smith**’s lush pedal steel solos and seems destined to be a balm for all who hear.

Listen at [avl.mx/edh](http://avl.mx/edh). — **Edwin Arnaudin** ❌



Photo by Eliza Bell



Cartoon by Randy Molton