



It's time  
to come  
home to  
Southwest  
Virginia  
for good...

[www.ReturnToRoots.org](http://www.ReturnToRoots.org)

**CONTACT:**

Carl Mitchell, CEO & President, (540) 831-6398 or (540) 357-2489

[cmitchel@vebinc.org](mailto:cmitchel@vebinc.org)

Susan Dickerson, (540) 831-6393

[sdickerson@vebinc.org](mailto:sdickerson@vebinc.org)

Leah Ross (423) 573-4898

[reunion@bristolrhythm.com](mailto:reunion@bristolrhythm.com)

## **Governor Timothy M. Kaine to attend Return to Roots Fund-raising Gala and Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion**

**RADFORD, Va., AUG. 30, 2007** – Governor Timothy M. Kaine will attend the Return to Roots Fund-raising Gala on Friday, Sept. 14, and will play the harmonica on one of the Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion stages that same night.

Kaine originally launched the Return to Roots Web site, [www.ReturnToRoots.org](http://www.ReturnToRoots.org), one year ago on Sept. 18, 2006, in Lebanon, Va. He will be at the Gala to celebrate the first birthday of Return to Roots and its Web site.

“It is perfect symmetry that Gov. Tim Kaine launched this Web site one year ago and that he will be on hand again to celebrate one year of workforce development in Southwest Virginia through Return to Roots,” said Carl Mitchell, president and CEO of Virginia Economic Bridge, which manages the program.

Return to Roots, funded by two Tobacco Commission Special Projects grants, has almost 650 people living in one of 27 states, Canada and the Middle East who want to live and work in Southwest Virginia. [www.ReturnToRoots.org](http://www.ReturnToRoots.org) also has seen employers post more than 125 career opportunities in the Southwest Virginia region. The Web site is a portal to match available career opportunities in Southwest Virginia to those who know about the quality of life Southwest Virginia has to offer.

For tickets to the Return to Roots Fund-raising Gala, also sponsored by Verizon, please call (540) 831-6159 for availability. Return to Roots continues to look for sponsors for the Gala Event. If you are interested in assisting in this innovative program that seeks to return native sons and daughters to the region, please contact Program Manager Susan Dickerson at (540) 831-6393.

To celebrate the launch of [www.ReturnToRoots.org](http://www.ReturnToRoots.org) and to unite two great organizations, the fund-raising Gala is being held the same weekend as the Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion.

“Two organizations – one that works, one that plays – are coming together to put Southwest Virginia on the map as the place to be for a great career and a great time,” Mitchell said. “We could not have found a better partner for the first birthday of Return to Roots.”

P.O. Box 3768  
Radford, VA 24143  
(540) 831-6389  
Fax: (540) 831-6397

The fund-raising Gala will be held Friday, Sept. 14, in Bristol's Cumberland Square Park, the same night and just a few blocks away from the Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion kick-off.

"This is an opportunity for two very innovative organizations to come together and promote Bristol and Southwest Virginia," said Leah Ross, executive director of Bristol Rhythm & Roots. "This brings two population segments together to show that not only do we appreciate our cultural heritage, but that we also have great career opportunities here as well."

This year marks the Seventh Annual Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion music festival that will occur Sept. 14-16, on State Street in historic downtown Bristol, Tenn./Va. Music will be alive on three outdoor stages and 13 indoor stages all up and down the street. The music festival commissioned Southwest Virginia native and artist April Street to provide this year's poster. For a complete schedule and additional information, please visit: [www.bristolrhythm.com](http://www.bristolrhythm.com).

Tickets may be purchased at the following locations:

Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion office – 29 6th Street, Bristol, TN 423-573-4898  
The Paramount Center – 518 State Street – Bristol, TN 423-274-8920  
Fandango – 511 State Street – Bristol, VA 274-669-4448  
Mountain Aire Music – 505 State Street – Bristol, VA 276-591-1240  
Bristol Chamber of Commerce – 20 Volunteer Parkway – Bristol, TN 423-989-4850  
Sonic Music & More – 311 Gate City Highway, Bristol, VA - 276-466-9402  
Cat's Compact Discs – 151 E Mountcastle Drive, Johnson City, TN - 423-282-2287  
Cat's Compact Discs – 7337 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN - 865 588-2287  
Cat's Compact Discs – 536 Winfield Dunn Parkway, Sevierville, TN - 865-429-4600  
Cat's Music – 5304 Broadway, Knoxville, TN - 865-688-1301

Kroger Stores:

31 Midway Street, Bristol, VA 276-642-0031  
466 Cummings Street, Abingdon, VA 276-628-6015  
1664 East Stone Drive, Kingsport, TN 423-392-0844  
112 Sunset Drive, Johnson City, TN 423-282-5656  
1919 S. Roan Street, Johnson City, TN 423-926-6429  
1805 W. State of Franklin Road, Johnson City, TN 423-929-1408

Weekend tickets are \$35, single day tickets for Friday and Sunday are \$15 and Saturday tickets are \$20. The Sapling Grove Professional Building Super Jam tickets are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door.

One of the Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion bands, The Mad Tea Party, will open the Return to Roots Fund-raising Gala event. For information about the band, please visit [www.themadteaparty.com](http://www.themadteaparty.com).

Virginia Economic Bridge, Inc. ([www.VirginiaEconomicBridge.org](http://www.VirginiaEconomicBridge.org)), which is a non-profit organization focused on creating an environment for economic growth in today's technologically advanced society, promotes the economic vitality and external competitiveness of the Commonwealth by fostering business, industry and educational relationships between Southwest Virginia, Northern Virginia, as well as other areas of the Commonwealth. Virginia Economic Bridge manages the Return to Roots project.

-###-