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Today's News...This Morning

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Monday, January 4, 2016

Athens, Tennessee

Local & Area News

◆ **JOBLESS RATE DROPS BIG IN MEIGS CO.**

The county unemployment rates for November have been released, and they held pretty steady for most counties in the Athens area. The major exception was Meigs County, where unemployment dropped sharply from 8.4% in October to 7.3% in November. In McMinn County, the jobless rate in November was 6.3%, down from 6.4% in October. Monroe County's unemployment rate was 6.0% in both October and November. Polk County's jobless rate was 6.5% in November, up from 6.2% in October. In Bradley County, the jobless rate held steady at 5.0% in both October and November.

◆ **NEW TENNESSEE LAWS FOR 2016**

- The fine for not buckling up goes up from \$10 to \$25 for first offenders and from \$20 to \$50 for repeat offenders.
- Tennesseans can now renew their drivers license every eight years instead of every five years.
- Tennessee drivers caught without insurance could have their car towed. The new law also triples fines for uninsured drivers from \$100 to \$300.

SPORTS: The Vols beat Northwestern in the Outback Bowl, 45-6.

HIGHWAY 30 IS OPEN AGAIN

TDOT's repair crews installed a new culvert and got Highway 30 east of Dayton open again in just six days, rather than the two weeks they had projected. The old culvert collapsed due to floods from the heavy rains early Christmas Eve morning, causing a huge hole to open up on Highway 30. A 22-year-old man was killed around 3:30 a.m. Christmas Eve when his vehicle plunged into the hole. **(Photo by Mike Henderson)**



Greeks Bearing Gifts

Our Annual Year End Sale begins Thursday, January 7th... and will continue. 10am-5:30PM M-T-TH-F, Saturday 10-2

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• Downtown on the Square •745-2642

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WYXI AM-1390 ATHENS

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Western Sizzlin' Steak House-1804 Decatur Pike
 Monday (All Day) 8 oz. Chopped Sirloin + salad-side-bakery-dessert-rolls, \$10.99. **SENIOR BUFFET (\$5 and older):** Mon-Fri, 2 to 4 p.m., \$5.99

This Valuable Advertising Space is available now for your restaurant. Contact the Morning Fax for more information. 423-745-1390

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For Information about advertising in The Morning Fax, call 746-1390 or email: wyxi@bellsouth.net

WEATHER

Monday - Sunny, with a high of 39
Monday night - Partly Cloudy with a low of 19
Tuesday - Sunny, with a high of 42
 More Weather & Zoom Radar at: www.wyxi.com

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WHEN RADIO WAS
Old-time Radio Shows
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WYXI AM-1390
 Tonight:
The Halls of Ivy & Jimmy Durante Show

Monday, January 4, 2016

Athens, Tennessee

More of 2015's Big Stories

Here are some more of the top news stories in the Athens area in 2015:

- Knox Park was renamed Prof Powers Park in honor of long-time educator and community leader, Harold "Prof" Powers.
- The Air Evac helicopter ambulance based in Etowah was moved to a new helicopter base off I-75 near exit 60 after being taken over by Lifestar.
- In October, TVA's Unit 2 reactor at Watts Bar was given a 40-year operating license by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The loading of fuel has now been completed and the reactor should begin producing electricity this year.
- There were several deaths of prominent people in 2015. Among them, former Athens Mayor William "Bill" Brakebill, who died in September. He was mayor of Athens when President Ronald Reagan visited in 1985.
- In June, the Medical Director of the Emergency Room at Starr Regional Medical Center in Athens, Dr. Rick Kalister, was killed when his plane crashed into a house in Plainville, Massachusetts. His wife and daughter also died in the crash.
- Also in June, Dr. Kelly Thomas, 40, of the Clearwater community died after suffering a severe allergic reaction after being stung in the back of his neck by a wasp. He was a tuba and euphonium instructor at the University of Tennessee Music Department.
- The final section of the project to four-lane Highway 30 between Athens and Etowah was opened in May. Motorists can now drive from Etowah to Decatur on a four-lane highway.
- In December, an early-morning fire destroyed Friendly City Auto Care on West Madison Avenue in Athens.

REGIONAL NEWS

- ✓ One person was killed in a wreck on I-75 at mile marker 23 in Bradley County Saturday night. The state patrol says the victim was an occupant of a car that crashed into a tractor trailer truck. I-75 was closed in both directions for several hours as a result.
- ✓ Weather officials say 19 tornadoes touched down in Tennessee last year, the smallest number since 2007.
- ✓ A family of five died Friday night when their home caught on fire in Bryant, Alabama. The victims included a man, his wife, their two young children, and the wife's mother. Police say the family was asleep at the time the fire started. They say the fire may have started from a propane gas heater.
- ✓ A woman was injured in a hang-gliding accident on Saturday on Lookout Mountain.

Obituaries

- **Dorothy Mansell Sherrell Copeland**, age 88, of Athens died last Thursday at Life Care Center of Athens. She worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture for 30 years as a clerk in the Warren County and Coffee County offices. She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Debbie and Rev. Pete Mullins of Athens. The family will receive friends Monday from 5 to 8 p.m. at Smith Funeral Home. Funeral services will be held on Tuesday at McMinnville Funeral Home Chapel.
- **Alice Ann Ledford Cranfield**, age 61, of Athens died last Thursday in Knoxville. She was a former employee of Damey Industries. Services were held Saturday night at Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home.
- **Billy Ray Devine**, age 74, of Englewood died last Wednesday at his residence. He had been a dairy farmer and had worked at Beaunit Fibers in Etowah. Graveside services were held Sunday. Bordwine Funeral Home was in charge.
- **Christina Dawn "Tina" Evans**, age 25, of Decatur died at her home on December 19th. Funeral services were held this past Saturday evening at Bowers Funeral Home.
- **Mark "Popeye" Newman**, age 79, of Decatur died last Thursday. Funeral services were held Sunday night at Bowers Funeral Home.

TWO CELEBRITIES DIED AS THE YEAR 2015 CAME TO AN END:

- **Natalie Cole**, singer and daughter of Nat King Cole, died New Year's Eve. She was 65. The cause of death was congestive heart failure. Miss Cole followed her legendary father into the music business with hits like "This Will Be (An Everlasting Love)" and "Unforgettable." The recording of "Unforgettable" featured Natalie singing a duet with her late father who was on tape.



- **Wayne Rogers**, who played the role of Trapper John McIntyre on the TV show "M*A*S*H," died New Year's Eve from pneumonia. He was 82.

MORE REGIONAL NEWS

- ✓ State troopers report they arrested 11 drivers in southeast Tennessee for driving under the influence on New Year's Eve. Lieutenant John Harmon says two people were arrested in McMinn County and two in Bradley County.