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Friday, December 13, 2024

Page 1

Athens, Tennessee

Lookout Mountain Fire Sparked by Rockslide, Authorities Say



The brush fire on Lookout Mountain this past weekend was sparked by a rockslide, investigators confirmed Wednesday. The fire, which started early Saturday morning, caused significant damage to the Lookout Mountain Incline Railway, requiring months of repair.

The National Park Service reported that a "freeze/thaw action" likely triggered the rockslide around 5:30 a.m., sending large boulders down the mountain toward Ochs Highway. The falling rocks struck trees and stationary boulders, generating sparks and heat. A tree toppled during the slide also hit a power line near the Hardy Trail, but officials determined the rockslide itself was the main cause of the fire. No evidence of human activity was found in the steep area where the blaze began. The wild-fire, now fully contained, will continue to be monitored under current conditions.

Source: [Chattanooga Times Free Press / National Parks Service](#)

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Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

Geneva Mae Brown Walker, 89 of Athens, passed away Thursday, December 12 at NHC Healthcare of Athens. She was a member of East Athens Baptist Church and was a former employee of Epperson Hospital and Athens Community Hospital where she worked in the business office. Funeral services will be 1:00 PM Sunday, December 15 in the chapel of Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home. Interment will follow at McMinn Memory Gardens. The family will receive friends from 12:00 Noon-1:00 PM prior to the service at the funeral home. Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home in Athens is in charge of the arrangements.

Hear *Hope From The Well* **TODAY** for a special Christmas Program, "The Christmas Story" Day 1 can be heard at 8:15 a.m. **TODAY** on WYXI Radio FM 94.5 and AM 1390

Community News You Can Use

- The McMinn County Election Commission will meet in regular session on Tuesday, December 17 at 5 pm in the conference room of the McMinn County Courthouse and will conduct any election business to legally come before the board. The agenda will be posted on the bulletin board at the Election Office by Friday, December 13.
- Athens Community Theatre will hold auditions for *As She Likes It* on January 12 and 13, 2025, at 6:00 PM at The Arts Center. Actors aged 18+ are invited to audition, with cold readings from the script required. The show runs March 13–16, 2025. Visit athensartscouncil.org/auditions or call 423-745-8781 for details.
- Dedicate a brick in honor of your favorite veteran at Veterans Memorial Park. Each new Veteran's name will be read during the next Brick Dedication Ceremony. Gift certificates are available for pickup at Athens City Hall to present this special gesture to your Veteran this Christmas. Bricks can be purchased online [HERE](#) by mail, by phone at 423-744-2704, or in person at Athens City Hall (815 N Jackson St., Athens).

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Friday, December 13, 2024

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Athens, Tennessee

Church News & Events

- Celebrate Recovery meets every Tuesday at 6:00 P.M. at Woodward Ave. Church of God (507 Woodward Ave., Athens).
- Planted In Christ Outreach Fellowship (317 Maple Street, Athens) holds Outreach Deliverance Classes every Thursday at 7:00 p.m.
- Trinity Grace Church will be hosting their Christmas Eve Service at TWU Townsend Auditorium from 5 - 6pm on Christmas Eve. All are Welcome.
- Trinity UMC (100 E. College St., Athens) presents "Walk-Through Bethlehem", a free community event on Sunday, December 22 from 3 - 5pm. Witness Jesus' birth story with live characters. You will end in the sanctuary with a beautiful live nativity.
- On Wednesday, December 18, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, the Table Graces Food Pantry will hold a holiday food distribution at Market Park Pavilion in downtown Athens. Father's Love Ministry and Lets Read 20 will also be present. Note: There will be no distribution on December 25.
- The North Etowah Baptist Church's Christmas Musical will take place this Sunday, December 15 at 6:00 pm.
- Allen Memorial UMC (800 Decatur Pike, Athens) will hold a bake sale this Saturday, 12/13 from 10 am - 2pm in the Fellowship Hall.
- Sanford Baptist Church is having a drive thru "Christmas Story" on December 14th and 15th. See their ad on page 5 for times and location.

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Athens, Tennessee

Church News & Events

- Cambria Baptist Church (305 County Road 875, Etowah) will present "Angels Unaware", a Christmas Play on Friday, December 20 at 7pm.
- Conasauga Baptist Church (649 County Road 475, Etowah) presents their Christmas Play, "Never Too Old for Christmas" on 12/22 at 6:00 pm.
- Lakeview Baptist Church (183 County Road 126) will present the Christmas Play "A Christmas Rapture" on Sunday, December 15th at 6:00pm. Everyone is encouraged to attend. The church is located beside Dynasty Spas.
- North Etowah Baptist Church (231 Pennsylvania Ave., Etowah) is holding a Live Nativity Scene TONIGHT from 5:30 pm - 8:30pm. (See their ad on PAGE 6 for more details!)

Driver Injured in Englewood Crash



A 2011 Chevrolet Cruze lost control on an "S" curve at County Roads 561 and 609 near Englewood around 9:30 PM Tuesday, striking a tree head-on. The driver was treated at the scene and transported to Starr Regional Athens by AMR. Englewood and Etowah Rural Fire Departments responded, and MCSO Deputy Sarah Gray investigated the accident.

Photo credit: Lynn Ingram, Englewood Rural Fire Dept.

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Friday, December 13, 2024

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Athens, Tennessee

Etowah Friendly Garden Club Donates \$1,500 to Boys and Girls Club



The Etowah Friendly Garden Club has donated \$1,500 to the Ocoee Region Boys and Girls Club, which is establishing a new facility in Etowah. Construction has begun on a building across from the Etowah City Pool on Louisiana Avenue. Funds for the donation came from the club's Annual Plant Sale, held each year before Mother's Day, which supports community projects. Founded in the late 1940s, the Etowah Friendly Garden Club focuses on gardening education and community service. The club meets monthly on every second Tuesday at the Etowah Community Center. For more information, contact President Gene Keller at 423-263-1506.

Photo Credit: Etowah Friendly Garden Club

Annual Shop with an Elk Held

Christmas came early for 77 kids on Saturday, December 7, 2024, when the Athens Elks Lodge #1927 hosted its annual Shop With An Elk gift-giving event. Now in its fourth year, the program gives children the opportunity to shop online at the Athens Elks Lodge for their Christmas wish lists and receive those gifts from Santa during the gift-giving event. This year, kids asked for Spidey, Bluey, Disney princesses, and Minecraft characters and they also got clothes and shoes. The gift-giving event on December 7 was a whirlwind of activity with Santa handing out sacks of toys, cookie decorating, hot chocolate to drink, and Polar Express playing. After the kids met with Santa and got their gifts, they were invited to decorate Christmas cookies donated by Dianne Stevens-Pupard and Richard Pupard, owners of Grandma's Gingerbread Bakery. Scouts from Sea Scouts Ship 0015 in Athens helped with distributing gifts and entertaining the kids. Elks members fundraise throughout the year for this event, and the number of kids included in the program is dependent on the amount of money the lodge members can raise. This year, the Athens Lodge #1927 also received a \$3,000 grant for Shop With An Elk from the Elks National Foundation. Families can apply to be part of the Shop With An Elk program in the fall. Teachers and Health Connect America identify students who may benefit from the program, and applications are distributed through the Athens City Schools and McMinn County schools. The Lodge works with the McMinn County Rescue Squad to ensure children are included in only one shopping program. The program accepts applications on a first-come, first-served basis, but children whose families are unhoused are prioritized. If families have needs outside of gifts, Lodge members will work to fulfill those needs. This year, Athens Elks Lodge #1927 provided a crib to one family and a toddler bed for another, both made possible through donations from Lodge members. One unique part of the Shop With An Elk program is that non-school-aged siblings are included in the program. Several families provided wish lists for babies, which typically include diapers and wipes. The number of children included in the program is limited only by the amount of money raised for the program. The Lodge budgets and spends approximately \$100 per child. **Source: Kristin Schrader**

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Friday, December 13, 2024

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Athens, Tennessee

Vols Baseball Announces 2025 Schedule

The defending national champion Tennessee Volunteers have revealed their 2025 schedule, featuring 38 home games, 15 road contests, and three neutral-site matchups. The Vols open with an eight-game homestand at Lindsey Nelson Stadium, beginning with a series against Hofstra from February 14-16.

Tennessee will participate in the Astros Foundation College Classic at Minute Maid Park in Houston from February 28 to March 2, facing Oklahoma State, Rice, and Arizona. SEC play begins March 14-16 with a marquee home series against Florida, a 2024 College World Series semifinalist. Other notable matchups include a home rematch with Texas A&M (April 4-6) and road series at Ole Miss, LSU, and Arkansas.

The Vols' 2025 schedule includes 28 games against NCAA tournament teams, with nine matchups against 2024 College World Series participants. The SEC Tournament will feature a new single-elimination format with all 16 teams competing in Hoover, Alabama.

Full schedule details and updates are available [HERE](#). Game times and the TV schedule will be announced early next year.

McMinn County Arrest Reports

Christopher Hernandez, 34 of Cleveland, was arrested by the Athens PD for Simple Possession and Domestic Assault. Total Bond: \$3,000.

Ashley Gammey, 32 of Englewood, was arrested by the Englewood PD for Failure to Appear. No Bond.

Johnathan Whitaker, 42 of Athens, was arrested by the MCSO for Violation of the Sex Offender Registry. Total Bond: \$10,000

Tammy Case, 56 of Madisonville, was arrested by the MCSO for State Violation of Probation. No Bond.

Michael Duckworth of Sweetwater, was arrested by the MCSO for State Violation of Probation and Aggravated assault. Total Bond: \$15,000.

The accused are considered innocent until proven guilty. Information gathered using Public Sources.

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