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Today's News... This Morning

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**Monday, January 20, 2025      Page 1      Athens, Tennessee**

## Chimney Fire Causes Extensive Damage to Calhoun Residence

A chimney fire early Friday morning on County Road 753 in Calhoun quickly spread to the roof, causing significant damage to the home. The McMinn County Sheriff's Department was first on the scene, ensuring all occupants were safely evacuated.

When the first fire unit arrived, flames were visible from the roof, which sustained extensive fire damage. The remainder of the residence experienced smoke and water damage.

Multiple agencies responded to the scene, including Claxton Fire, Calhoun Fire, Riceville Fire, Etowah Rural Fire, AMR, and VEC. Claxton Fire First Lieutenant Jonathan Bartley led the response efforts.

*Photo by Ryland Hearn, Etowah Rural Fire Department*



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- Friday - Sweetwater - Little Drugs - 10:30 - 2:30

**BEST OF THE BEST**  
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**Today is Martin Luther King Jr. Day.**  
 This day is an observed federal holiday, meaning that most banks and government offices are closed.  
 Learn more about this holiday on Page 4.

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**Tuesday** - Mostly Cloudy. High 31.  
**Tues Night** - Mostly Cloudy Low 13.

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Monday, January 20, 2025

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 2

Athens, Tennessee

## Obituaries

**Barbara Ellen Howard**, 76 of McMinn County, passed away on Friday, January 17. She retired from Shaw Industries after 30 years of service. Barbara was a member of Clear Springs Baptist Church. Visitation will be held on Wednesday, January 22 from 10:00 AM-12:00 PM with a funeral service at 12:00 PM at Clear Springs Baptist Church. Interment will follow at Clear Springs Baptist Church Cemetery. Ziegler Funeral Home has been entrusted with the care of Barbara Ellen Howard.

**Betty Jean Moses**, 64 of Athens, passed away on Saturday, January 18. She was retired from Cleveland State Community College as the Evening School Student Coordinator. Visitation will be held at Ziegler Funeral Home on Tuesday, January 21, 2025, from 4:00 PM-6:00 PM with a funeral service to follow at 6:00 PM. Ziegler Funeral Home has been entrusted with the care of Betty Jean Moses.

**Charles Dale Prescott**, 92 of Athens, passed away Thursday, January 16 at Terra Bella of Athens. He was a member of Athens Church of Christ. He was a Veteran of the Korean Conflict having served in the U. S. Air Force and was a long time banker. Funeral services were held Sunday in the Chapel of Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home. Interment followed in McMinn Memory Gardens. Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home, Athens in charge of arrangements.

**Scott Mitchell Fox**, 30 of Athens, passed away Thursday, Jan. 16 at Starr Regional Medical Center. He was a member of Clearwater Baptist Church. He was an active volunteer at the Ronald McDonald House. Funeral services were Sunday in the Chapel of Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home. Interment at 11:00 A.M. on Monday, January 20 at Short Creek Cemetery. The family will held visitation from 5-7 Sunday at the funeral home. Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home, Athens in charge of arrangements.

*More Obituaries on Page 4*



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Monday, January 20, 2025

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 4

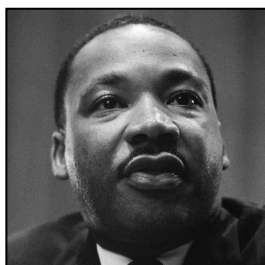
Athens, Tennessee

## Obituaries

**Franklin "Frank" Leon Hicks**, 84 of Decatur, passed away Thursday, January 16. He was a member of Brittsville Baptist Church. A Funeral Service will be held at 7 p.m. on Monday, January 20, in the chapel of Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services. Interment will be held at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, January 21 in the Beta Cemetery. The family will receive friends Monday from 5 - 7 p.m., prior to the service. Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services is honored to serve the Hicks family.

**David Lynn Slack**, 72 of Englewood, passed away on January 15. David sang with several gospel quartets. There was a Graveside Service on Sunday, January 19 at Wildwood Cemetery in Englewood. Companion Funeral Home and the Cody family assisted his family with these arrangements.

## History of Martin Luther King Jr. Day



Martin Luther King Jr. Day honors the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the civil rights leader who championed racial equality through nonviolent protest. Efforts to establish a federal holiday in his honor began shortly after his assassination in 1968. The first bills were introduced to Congress in 1968 and 1969.

Public support for the holiday grew over the years, bolstered by the efforts of activists, labor unions, and musicians like Stevie Wonder, [whose song "Happy Birthday" became an anthem for the cause](#). On November 2, 1983, after sustained advocacy and a petition with over six million signatures, the legislation was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan, officially designating this day as a federal holiday. The first official observance took place on January 20, 1986, though some states refused to recognize the holiday. By 2000, all 50 states had adopted the holiday, celebrated on the third Monday of January each year near Dr. King's birthday on January 15.

Today, Martin Luther King Jr. Day is not only a day to honor Dr. King's contributions but also a time for Americans to reflect on the ongoing struggle for equality and to engage in community service.

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Monday, January 20, 2025

Page 5

Athens, Tennessee

## Homicide in Monroe County

In the morning hours of Thursday, January 16, 2025, a call for service came into the Monroe County E-911 Center regarding CPR in progress at a residence in the 200 block of Cedar Valley Road, Sweetwater. Deputies on scene notified the Monroe County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigation Division and the Monroe County Violent Crime Task Force, and they responded to the scene. An elderly male subject was discovered outside of the residence unresponsive, and later pronounced deceased. The male had sustained what appeared to be multiple injuries. A female, Ms. Dianna Turland, was questioned regarding the incident and after providing multiple inconsistent statements, she later confessed to striking the elderly male subject and removing him from inside the residence and placing him outside. Ms. Dianna Turland was charged with Felony Murder (1st Degree) and Aggravated Abuse of Elderly Adult. The elderly male victim was seventy-two years old.

The name of the elderly male victim will not be released at this time, as investigators work to locate the next of kin.

Source: [Sheriff Tommy J. Jones, II - Facebook](#)

## Community News You Can Use

- The McMinn County Board of Education will have a workshop on Thursday, January 23 at 5:30 p.m. at the McMinn County Center for Educational Excellence with a called meeting to follow after the workshop.
- There will be a public hearing on the Community Development Block Grant program with the Athens City Council on Tuesday, January 21 at 5:00 pm in the Burkett L Witt Council Chambers at Athens City Hall. The purpose will be to discuss possible projects that the city may apply for under this program. The Council will meet in Regular Session at 6:00 pm directly after the public hearing.
- The McMinn County Commissioners will meet in the Blue Room of the McMinn County Courthouse in Athens in Regular Session on January 27 at 6:00 p.m.
- The City of Athens Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, January 22 has been cancelled due to the board not receiving any applications this month.

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Monday, January 20, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

## McMinn Central Basketball

## #6 Tennessee Falls to Vanderbilt 76-75



The McMinn Central Chargers and Chargerettes traveled down US 411 to face district 3-2A rival Polk County Friday night. The Chargerettes led 40-12 at the half in route to a 61-36 victory. Karina Bystry passed 2200 career points with a runner at the buzzer to end the first quarter. Bystry led Central with 27 points and now has 2218 in her career.

In the nightcap, the Chargers trailed 25-15 in the second quarter, but they erupted for a 32-5 run that gave them a 47-30 with 2 minutes left in the third quarter. Polk County countered with a 31-8 run to finish the game for a 61-55 Polk County win. Carter Anderson scored 23 points. Daylen Spradling added 20 points.

The McMinn Central Charger and Chargerette basketball teams travelled to face district 3-2A foes Kingston Saturday afternoon. The Chargerettes routed the Lady Yellowjackets 67-33. Karina Bystry scored 28 points, grabbed 8 rebounds, dished out 3 assists, swiped 3 steals, and blocked 2 shots. Malea Baker and Reagan Baker joined her in double figures with 12 and 11 points respectively. The win improves the Chargerettes to 19-1 and 4-0 in district 3-2A.

The Chargers, missing post Will Benton, fell to the Yellowjackets 85-64. Carter Anderson led the way with 36 points, tying his career high. Anderson also led the team with 6 rebounds. The Chargers fell to 5-14 overall and 1-3 in district 3-2A with the loss.

McMinn Central hosts William Blount Tuesday, January 21. The girls game tips off at 6:00pm at the Roundhouse.

**McMinn Central Coverage By: Todd Loveday, Voice of the McMinn Central Chargers**

The University of Tennessee men's basketball team narrowly missed completing a stunning comeback Saturday evening, falling 76-75 to Vanderbilt in front of a sold-out crowd at Memorial Gymnasium.

The Volunteers, ranked sixth nationally, rallied from a 16-point second-half deficit to put themselves in position to win in the final seconds, but the Commodores held firm to secure the victory.

### Standout Performances

Fifth-year guard Chaz Lanier, playing in his hometown, led Tennessee (16-2, 3-2 SEC) with 17 points, shooting 4-of-6 from beyond the arc. Senior guard Zakai Zeigler added 16 points and 10 assists, notching his 12th collegiate double-double. Forward Felix Okpara also contributed 16 points on a perfect 7-of-7 shooting, along with four blocks, while senior forward Igor Miličić Jr. scored 16 points and pulled down a team-high five rebounds.

Vanderbilt (15-3, 3-2 SEC) was led by junior guard Jason Edwards, who scored a game-high 18 points. Sophomore guard Jaylen Carey recorded 14 points and 10 rebounds, while junior Tyler Nickel chipped in 13 points, including four 3-pointers.

### Game Recap

The game was a back-and-forth affair in the first half, with Tennessee jumping out to an eight-point lead midway through the period. However, Vanderbilt answered with an 11-0 run, ultimately heading into halftime with a 41-35 advantage.

Vanderbilt's hot shooting continued early in the second half, with a flurry of 3-pointers extending the lead to 16 points. Tennessee slowly chipped away at the deficit, cutting it to eight points with just under two minutes to play.

The Volunteers tightened their defense, forcing multiple Vanderbilt misses while scoring on consecutive possessions to trim the lead to two with 45 seconds remaining. After a Vanderbilt turnover, Tennessee had a chance to tie or take the lead but was thwarted by a crucial blocked shot by Vanderbilt's Chris Mañon.

With four seconds left, Lanier went to the free-throw line and hit one of two shots, leaving Tennessee one point shy as the clock expired

### Looking Ahead

The Volunteers will look to bounce back on Tuesday when they host No. 15 Mississippi State at the Food City Center. Tipoff is set for 7 p.m., with live coverage on ESPN2. **Source:** [UTSports.com](http://UTSports.com)