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Monday, September 15, 2025

Page 1

Athens, Tennessee

Athens Firefighters Honor 9/11 Heroes with Memorial Stair Climb



On September 11, the Athens Fire Department gathered at its training tower to honor the heroes and lives lost in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Firefighters participated in a memorial stair climb, a symbolic act reflecting the courage and sacrifice of first responders on that day.


In full firefighting gear, Athens firefighters climbed the tower 28 times each. The total climb equaled 110 stories—the same number of floors the FDNY firefighters faced while responding to the World Trade Center towers.

The stair climb served as a physical and emotional tribute to the 343 FDNY firefighters who died in the line of duty, along with police officers, paramedics, and thousands of civilians. With each


climb, participants reflected on the courage, sacrifice, and resilience shown on 9/11.

At the completion of the stair climb, a bell was rung in tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice. The ringing symbolized remembrance and respect for every life lost on September 11. The Athens Fire Department joined fire departments nationwide in conducting these memorial climbs as a way to ensure that the legacy of 9/11 is never forgotten.


Source: Deb Cardin, Athens City FD



Monday - Sweetwater-Little Drugs-11 - 2
••Tue-Madisonville: Wil Sav -10:30 - 2
•Wed-Etowah Across from Johnsons-10:30 - 2
•Thu-Athens Family Dollar 10:30 -2
•Fri-Sat-Sun Sweetwater Fair
(Fri: 10:30-7/8ish Sat: 10-dark Sun 12-5)



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

Athens, Tennessee

Illegal Tire Burn Sparks Fire on County Road 618



A fire that began with the illegal burning of tires spread out of control Wednesday afternoon on County Road 618.

Firefighters with Etowah Rural Fire Department responded around 1:30 p.m. to contain the blaze. No injuries were reported.

Authorities are reminding residents that open burning of tires and other prohibited materials is against the law. **Important Reminder:** Only brush and natural vegetation may be openly burned outdoors.

Photo by Etowah Rural Fire Department

Community News You Can Use

- The McMinn County Election Commission will hold its regular meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2025, at 5 p.m. in the conference room of the McMinn County Courthouse. The agenda is posted on the bulletin board at the Election Office and on the commission's website.
- This week on *Main Street Moments*, host Maggie Blaine takes the mic for a special solo episode! She'll be shining a spotlight on local business owners and sharing all the exciting events happening on Main Street and with Main Street Businesses. Don't miss this celebration of the people and places that make Downtown Athens thrive! Listen to *Main Street Moments* every Tuesday at 8:15 am on WYXI Radio on AM 1390 and FM 94.5.

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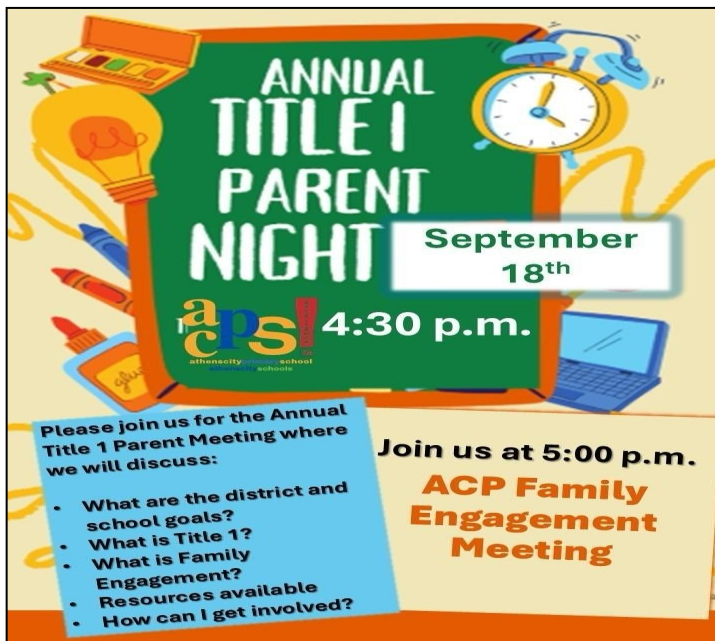
Monday, Sept. 15, 2025

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 3

Athens, Tennessee

23RD ANNUAL PUMPKINTOWN SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11TH

Historic downtown Athens, Tennessee, McMinn County and Friendly City festivals are busy preparing for one of East Tennessee's favorite fall festivals- Pumpkintown: A festival of history, harvest and heritage on Saturday, October 11th. Scheduled from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., this will be the 23rd annual event celebrating the rich cultural history of East Tennessee by highlighting Native American culture, local history and displaying elements of times past that are unique and interesting for all ages. Pumpkintown is among the area's premiere fall festivals and is one of the largest annually attended events with over 26,000 in attendance last year. The day-long celebrations brings to life the rich cultural history and heritage of the county and is named for a former McMinn County settlement. If you were to try to locate Pumpkintown today, you'd find yourself somewhere on Mayfield Dairy Farms about two miles North of downtown Athens and still within city limits. It's not certain when Pumpkintown began or who founded it. It is known that around 1820, a postmaster was named. Hugh Kelso, one of the first postmasters of McMinn County,, distributed mail arriving by stagecoach. The county itself was a newborn formed in 1819 and named after Joseph McMinn who governed Tennessee at the time. Pumpkintown was once described as a "home for transients and ne'er-do-wells" and it is surmised the name came from the native crop grown on the premises. Legend would have us believe that Pumpkintown was considered to be the actual site for what would become the City of Athens but that didn't quite happen. After much discussion and dissent, the permanent location of the county seat was located midpoint in the county on donated land and the little pioneer settlement was eventually absorbed into Athens. Friendly City Festival committee members expect the event will continue to provide a variety of events for all ages to enjoy. Old favorites will be returning, including the Scott Crisp Memorial PowWow, the infamous McMinn Regional Humane Society's Mutt Strutt and Pet Costume Contest, the 41st Annual McMinn County Living Heritage Museum Quilt Show, Mayfield Farm Park, Pumpkin Plinko, 300 arts, crafts, info and food booths and local shopping. There will be plenty of children's activities throughout the venue as well as a petting zoo, pony rides, inflatable's, larger than life dinosaurs and lots of interactive vendors for all ages. Pumpkintown is glad to welcome back the USS Ware Reunion to The Friendly City. Activities will include the Commemorative Brick Dedication Ceremony at Veterans Park along with a special exhibit at the Living Heritage Museum. The festival will also feature live entertainment on three stages throughout the day. Pumpkintown is a free to the public production by Friendly City festivals made possible by the following sponsors: The City of Athens Tourism Fund, McMinn County Tourism Board VEC Customer Shares, Tennessee Overhill, Tennessee Arts Commission, Citizens National Bank of Sevier County, Athens Insurance, DENSO, Wolfenden Family Pharmacies, Athens Kiwanis Club, Simmons Bank, Simmons Wealth Management Group, Starr Regional Medical Center, WarrenJackson CPAs, Valley Oil, Kona Ice, Pendleton's Playground, The Retirement Guys, Tonya Phenix Senior Insurance and Mayfield Dairy Farm. Special thanks to media support from The Morning, Fax, The Athens Area Chamber of Commerce, WCLE, The Mountain and The Daily Post Athenian. For more information, please contact Meredith Willson at 423/887-3544 or by Email: meredithw2009@comcast.net Website: <https://friendlycityfestivals.com/>



**ANNUAL
TITLE I
PARENT
NIGHT** September 18th
4:30 p.m.

**Join us at 5:00 p.m.
ACP Family
Engagement
Meeting**

Please join us for the Annual Title 1 Parent Meeting where we will discuss:

- What are the district and school goals?
- What is Title 1?
- What is Family Engagement?
- Resources available
- How can I get involved?



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Monday, Sept. 15, 2025

Page 4

Athens, Tennessee

McMinn County Arrest Reports

9-11-25

Latina Collins, 67 of Athens, charged with DUI, simple possession and casual exchange of Schedule VI.

Kayla May, 36 of Cleveland, charged with possession of meth and Schedule VI, Bond \$32,000

Alan Carraway, 74 of Athens, charged with animals at large, retaliation for past actions, Aggravated Cruelty to Animals and Cruelty to Animals, Bond \$8,000

Margaret Carraway, 66 of Athens, charged with cruelty to animals, Bond \$500

Hector Zabela Leyva, 44 of Sweetwater, charged with driving without license and DUI, Bond \$3,000

Ziya Liu, 26 of Laurel Springs, Florida, charged with criminal conspiracy theft of property, financial exploitation of elderly or vulnerable persons, Bond \$120,000

Michael Casteel, 41 of Englewood, charged with state violation of probation for evading arrest.

Jacob Turk, 42 of Englewood, charged with DUI, Bond \$1,000

Anthony Porter, 20 of Athens, charged with especially aggravated burglary, aggravated assault against first responders, vandalism, aggravated criminal trespassing, kidnapping, resisting stop halt frisk law, and evading arrest, Bond \$175,000

9-12-25

Charles Williams, 51 of Sweetwater, charged with violation of probation for driving on a revoked license, second offense, Bond \$901.95

Austin Wyatt, 27 of Spring City, charged with contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

Aaron Daugherty, 45 of Athens, charged with violation of order of protection, and violation of probation for violation of order of protection, Bond \$2,000

Ashley Davidson, 41 of Niota, charged with violation of probation for criminal impersonation, Bond \$3,072.35

Hannah Hurst, 34 of Athens, charged with failure to appear for theft of merchandise and shoplifting, Bond \$3,000

Those accused are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.
Information gathered using public sources.

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Monday, Sept. 15, 2025

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 5

Athens, Tennessee

Vols Push No. 3 Georgia to the Brink Before Falling 44-41 in Overtime



Under a roaring checkerboard of orange and white inside Neyland Stadium, Tennessee nearly pulled off its biggest win in nearly a decade. But after 60 minutes and an overtime thriller, the No. 15 Volunteers fell just short, 44-41, to No. 3 Georgia on Saturday night.

The Vols (2-1, 0-1 SEC) struck first and struck big. Quarterback Joey Aguilar, in just his third start at Tennessee, carved up the Bulldogs' vaunted defense with 371 yards and four touchdowns — three to Chris Brazzell II, who hauled in 177 yards receiving. Freshman Braylon Staley added 97 yards and a long touchdown grab that electrified the 101,915 fans. Tennessee's offense rolled up 508 total yards, more than Georgia has allowed in the Kirby Smart era against the Vols. Tennessee looked poised to win in regulation, driving into field-goal

range in the closing minute. But a late penalty pushed Max Gilbert's potential game-winner back to 43 yards, and the kick sailed wide. The Volunteers briefly regained hope in overtime when Gilbert connected from 42 yards, but Georgia answered with a one-yard touchdown run by Josh McCray to end it.

Georgia quarterback Gunner Stockton — who had struggled with accuracy in earlier games, including a sluggish showing against Austin Peay — steadied himself late, finishing with 287 passing yards and two touchdowns while adding two more on the ground. His fourth-quarter strike to London Humphreys, followed by a two-point conversion to Zachariah Branch, tied the game at 38 with under three minutes left. The Bulldogs' depth was tested as right guard Juan Gaston and tight end Ethan Barbour sat out with injuries, while Tennessee played without top cornerbacks Jermod McCoy and Rickey Gibson. Even so, the Vols' defense held Georgia to just 30 points through three quarters before Stockton's rally.

The near-upset snapped Tennessee's nine-game home winning streak, but it also sent a message. Neyland Stadium was deafening, the checkered stands rattled the visitors, and the Vols' mix of balance — 246 yards rushing against Syracuse earlier this season paired with Aguilar's passing — proved they can challenge the SEC's best. *The Vols host UAB next week, while Georgia (3-0, 1-0 SEC) leaves Knoxville still unbeaten but no longer untouchable. Stats Source: [UTSports.com](https://www.utsports.com)*

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	CLEVELAND	7-44	MARYVILLE	
	McMINN CENTRAL	8-29	MEIGS CO.	
	POLK CO.	35-28	SWEETWATER	
	WALKER VALLEY	49-0	CHATTANOOGA CENTRAL	
	SEQUOYAH	16-20	HOWARD TECH	

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WISCONSIN #19 ALABAMA	14 38	UTEP #7 TEXAS	10 27	FLORIDA #3 LSU	10 20
SOUTH ALABAMA #24 AUBURN	15 31	ALCORN STATE MISSISSIPPI ST.	0 63	#16 TEXAS A&M #8 NOTRE DAME	41 40
LOUISIANA LAFAYETTE #25 MISSOURI	10 52	ARKANSAS #17 OLE MISS	35 41	VANERBILT #11 S. CAROLINA	31 7

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Monday, Sept. 15, 2025

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 6

Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

Phillip Wesley Gordon, passed away on Thursday, September 11. Funeral arrangements will be announced at a later time. Ziegler Funeral Home has been entrusted with the care of Phillip Wesley Gordon.

Laura Leigh Jerles, 56, of Athens, lost her battle with cancer on Wednesday, September 10, at Parkwest Medical Center with family by her side. Compassionate by nature, Laura dedicated many years to serving others as a home health nurse, caring for countless patients. There will be a visitation on Tuesday, September 16 from 2:00pm-4:00pm at Companion Funeral Home of Athens. A Graveside service will follow the Visitation at Cedar Grove Cemetery of Athens. Companion Funeral Home of Athens and the Cody family are honored to assist the family with these arrangements.

Jocelyn King, 56 of Cleveland, passed on Saturday, September 12 at her residence in Cleveland. Survivors and funeral arrangements to be announced. M.D. Dotson & Sons Funeral Home and Cremation Service is in charge of arrangements.

David "Robbie" King, 55 of Athens, passed away on Thursday, September 11, at Starr Regional Medical Center. Robbie was a man who deeply enjoyed the outdoors. He was a member of Bethsadia Baptist Church in Decatur. In accordance with his wishes, Robbie will be cremated, and no services are planned at this time. Companion Funeral Home of Athens and the Cody family are honored to assist the family with these arrangements.



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