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Friday, September 11, 2026

Page 1

Athens, Tennessee

Etowah Chosen for Downtown Redevelopment Pilot Program



Etowah has been selected as one of 10 Tennessee Main Street communities to participate in a new Real Estate Development Pilot Program aimed at revitalizing downtown properties and encouraging private investment.

The program will provide Etowah with professional real estate analysis, development expertise and property-specific planning to identify opportunities for vacant and underused downtown buildings. Etowah Tennessee Main Street will partner with Place + Main Advisors, LLC, which has been contracted by Tennessee Main Street to conduct an in-depth assessment of the local downtown real estate market.

As part of the program, consultants will prepare development recommendations and six individual reports for priority properties, outlining strategies to attract developers and make redevelopment projects financially viable.

Following the assessment, a state consultant will work with Etowah Tennessee Main Street, city officials, property owners, developers and community partners to help implement the recommendations.

LeBron Fowler, executive director of Etowah Tennessee Main Street, said the selection is a significant opportunity for the community and reflects confidence in the future of downtown Etowah. Fowler said the city's historic buildings and distinctive character provide a strong foundation for growth, adding that the program will help identify what is needed to attract new investment and move redevelopment projects forward. He also noted that the initiative is about more than restoring buildings, saying it has the potential to create new business opportunities, generate jobs and strengthen downtown for future generations.

According to Etowah Tennessee Main Street, the pilot program represents another step in the city's ongoing efforts to preserve and revitalize its historic downtown while supporting long-term economic development.

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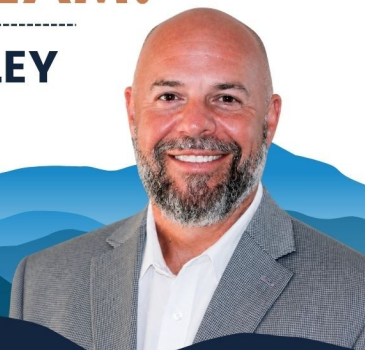
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Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 2

Athens, Tennessee

Tennessee Man Killed in Monroe County Crash Identified



The Tennessee Highway Patrol has identified the man who died in a single-vehicle crash Wednesday in Monroe County as 24-year-old Isaac Self of Tennessee.

According to a preliminary THP report, Self was driving a truck north on Highway 360 near Bill Moser Road when the vehicle left the roadway at approximately 11:28 a.m.

Troopers said the truck traveled onto the grass shoulder on the right side of the road, struck a tree and then went down an embankment before coming to rest on its left side in a lake.

Self died as a result of the crash. The incident remains under investigation by the Tennessee Highway Patrol.

Source: [WATE](#)

Street Closures Planned for Athens Travelers Car Club Cruise-In

Motorists should plan for temporary road closures in downtown Athens on Saturday, Sept. 19, as the Athens Travelers Car Club Cruise-In returns to the city.

According to the Athens Public Works Department, portions of Jackson Street and Madison Avenue will be closed from 2 to 7 p.m. to accommodate the event.

The affected areas include Jackson Street between Green Street and Washington Avenue, and Madison Avenue between White Street and Green Street.

City officials are advising drivers to use caution in the area and watch for traffic signs, workers and pedestrians. Motorists should also allow extra travel time due to expected delays and detours around the event.

The street closures are being implemented to provide space for the annual cruise-in, which typically brings classic vehicles and spectators to downtown Athens.

For additional information, contact the Athens Public Works Department at 423-744-2745.

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EVERY WEEK**

Friday, September 11, 2026

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

Athens, Tennessee

Church News & Events

- **Celebrate Recovery** meets every **Tuesday** at 6:00pm at Woodward Ave. Church of God in Athens. They also meet every **Thursday** at 6:00pm at Watts Bar Community Church in Decatur and Thursdays at 6:30pm at **Spirit City Church North Etowah**.
- **St. Mary's Legacy Clinic** offers free mobile medical care for the uninsured. Anyone who is medically uninsured is eligible to receive care. *St. Mary's Catholic Church (1291 E Madison Ave, Athens) is the McMinn County location and accepts patients every 3rd Thursday of the month.*
- Englewood First Church of God will host a Grandparents & Grandkids Night on Saturday, Sept. 19, 3–5 p.m. in the church gymnasium. Admission is \$12 per adult; children 17 and under attend free. Proceeds benefit the church's inclusive playground and recreational field project. Register at [Facebook.com/englewoodfcog](https://www.facebook.com/englewoodfcog).
- Redemption to the Nations Church, located at 2329 Clearwater Road in Athens, will distribute free food boxes on Friday, Sept. 11 from 6:30–7:30 p.m.
- Mt. Verd Baptist Church will hold Homecoming Sunday on September 13, with worship beginning at 10:30 a.m. A meal will follow the service. There will be no evening service.
- Christ Community Church (back building), 14 Congress Pkwy., Athens, will host an Indoor Yard Sale from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Bargain bag sales begin at noon. Proceeds will benefit the Prom Ministry.
- “Four Him” Gospel singers will perform at Cambria Baptist Church, 305 County Road 875, Etowah, on Sept. 13 at 6 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

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AACA to Feature Three Exhibits This Fall



The Athens Area Council for the Arts will host three exhibitions at The Arts Center from Sept. 25 through Oct. 30, highlighted by the annual **Open Exhibit and Art Show**, a juried competition featuring artists from McMinn and surrounding counties. This year's exhibit celebrates America's 250th anniversary, inviting artists to explore the nation's history, culture and ideals through visual art. Chattanooga artist Adam Romano will serve as the competition judge.

Romano will also present his solo exhibit, **American Witches**, on the Gallery Wall in the Peggy Dow Performance Center. The collection examines the legacy of the 1692 Salem Witch Trials through portraiture and contemporary imagery, exploring how societies create and treat outsiders. Romano is an award-winning fine artist whose work has appeared in galleries, museums and exhibitions across the country.

Also featured will be **Threads of Resistance, Stitches of Hope**, a textile art exhibit by the artist collective Resist-Stitch. Using quilting and needlework traditions, the group explores themes of democracy, community, justice and hope. The exhibit reflects on American values and encourages viewers to consider the role of civic engagement and collaboration in shaping the future.

All three exhibits will be on display through Oct. 30. A combined reception and awards ceremony is scheduled for 5 p.m. Friday, Oct. 2, at The Arts Center. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and during special events.



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McMinn County Arrest Reports

September 09, 2026

Jacob Benton, 29, of Riceville, charged with driving on a revoked license, and violation of an interlock device. Bond \$1,000.

Lynette Holland, 38, of Calhoun, charged with driving on a revoked license. Bond \$1000.

Patrick Coujah, 39, of Athens charged with state violation of probation for possession of schedule 2 meth for resale.

Alicia Vargas, 33, of Madisonville, charged with state violation of probation for schedule 2 meth for resale.

Markela Davis, 28, of Ooltewah, charged with violation of probation for criminal trespassing. Bond \$750.

Valent Koffer, 65, of Cleveland, charged with driving on a revoked license second offense. Bond \$8,000.

Jekia Rice, 19, of Athens, charged with unlawful inhaling, simple possession of schedule 6, drug paraphernalia, resisting stop, and public intoxication.

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

Twin Sisters Celebrate 40 Years of Refusing to Act Accordingly

Local twin sisters Liz Axley and Jess Farr will painstakingly celebrate their 40th birthday tomorrow, marking four decades of carb loading and mischief. However, the twins' continued attempts at aging gracefully haven't gained traction. "The concept has never been fully adopted," Jess concluded. But this may be in large part due to the twins' love affair with carbohydrates. Sources close to the twins (definitely not their husbands) report that even though they work out every morning, no amount of physical fitness will keep them away from their morning biscuits. As Liz claims, "If I don't have one, I'll die."

Furthermore, despite making no plans to coordinate, they are frequently spotted wearing nearly identical outfits without any prior coordination, causing many to suspect some form of twin communication like "ESPN or something." Along with this research, the twins are also concluding additional research to determine whether bundt cake and biscuit calories count if consumed with a Diet Coke before noon. The findings are awaiting peer review.

So, if you see Liz or Jess out in town this weekend, be sure to wish them happy birthday and congratulate their husbands for doing such a great job keeping them both in check!

Happy Birthday Liz and Jess!



Jess & Liz accidentally coordinate matching outfits



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Athens, Tennessee

Athens Fire Department Receives \$35,615 State Grant for Rescue Equipment

The Athens Fire Department has received a \$35,615 grant from the Tennessee State Fire Marshal's Office to help strengthen the department's emergency response capabilities.

According to city officials, the funding was used to purchase new extrication tools for firefighters. The equipment will be used during vehicle rescue operations, allowing crews to more safely and effectively remove victims trapped in wrecked vehicles.

Fire officials said the upgraded tools will enhance the department's ability to respond to motor vehicle crashes and other emergencies requiring specialized rescue equipment.

The grant represents an investment in public safety and emergency preparedness, providing Athens firefighters with updated resources to better serve the community.

City leaders noted that the funding supports the department's ongoing efforts to improve response capabilities and ensure firefighters have the equipment needed to perform critical rescue operations. *Source: City of Athens*

Obituaries

Margie Altoyce Bowers, 92, of Englewood, passed away on Tuesday, September 8. Margie was a longtime member of Englewood Church of Christ. She was a woman whose greatest joy in life was her family. Her love was unconditional, her heart was generous, and she had a way of making those around her feel loved and cared for. Funeral service will be held at 4:00 p.m., Sunday, September 13 in the chapel of Bordwine Funeral Home. Family will receive friends from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Sunday, prior to the service. Family and friends will assemble at Bordwine Funeral Home at 10:00 a.m., Monday, September 14th and go in procession for the 11:00 a.m. committal service at McMinn Memory Gardens. [Bordwine Funeral Home](#) is in charge of arrangements.

Linda Sue Davis, 62, passed away on Tuesday, September 8. Linda found joy in the simple pleasures of life. She loved spending time at the casino, relaxing at the beach, and enjoying days spent fishing. Above all else, Linda cherished her family. There will be a memorial service at a later date. [Companion Funeral Home of Athens](#) and the Cody family are honored to assist the family with these arrangements.

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