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Today's News... This Morning

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Monday, August 12, 2019

Athens, Tennessee

Local and Area News

◆ FIVE MORE DAYS OF EARLY VOTING

Early voting for the August 20th Athens Sales Tax Referendum continues through this Thursday, August 15th. At the close of voting this past Saturday, 532 people had voted early. For comparison, there are 7,057 registered voters and 122 property rights voters in Athens. Early voting takes place at the McMinn County Election Commission office on the ground floor of the Courthouse. A lot of people have not yet made up their minds about whether to vote in favor of a 0.75 percent increase in the sales tax. They've also heard that the property tax will go up, whether or not the sales tax increase is approved. In hopes of helping to clarify any confusion, WYXI Radio will have Athens City Manager C. Seth Sumner and Athens School Director Dr. Melanie Miller live in the studio this Monday morning at 8:15 a.m. right after the 8 o'clock news. They will be explaining how the revenue will be used if the sales tax increase is approved, what will happen if it is defeated, and how a possible property tax increase figures into the whole equation. They will also be asked about the effect on revenue from a sales tax increase if the county commission decides to extend the sales tax increase to all of McMinn County.

◆ WRECK CAUSES ENGLEWOOD OUTAGE

Athens Utilities Board had to spend about 6 hours to repair the damage to a 3 phase power pole on Highway 39 East near Nonaberg Sunday morning. The pole was struck by a vehicle at around 3 a.m. No injuries were reported.

Dangerous Prison Escapee Captured

✓ The top news story in Tennessee over the weekend was the capture of 44 year-old Curtis Ray Watson. Watson was spotted early Sunday morning. Watson is suspected of killing Tennessee Department of Correction Administrator Debra Johnson at her residence on the grounds of the West Tennessee State Penitentiary in Henning last Wednesday. Watson was an inmate at the prison and escaped from a work detail on a tractor. The TBI has secured warrants for Watson for first-degree murder, burglary, and sexual battery. Governor Lee announced the State of Tennessee would offer a reward of \$25,000 for information leading to the capture and conviction of Watson. The FBI and U.S. Marshals also contributed \$10,000 each plus \$2,500 from the TBI and \$5,000 from the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms for a total. Other agencies contributed as well. The total reward money was at least \$57,000.



◆ COMMUNITY NEWS YOU CAN USE

- ✓ The Etowah Carnegie Library will have Storytime for children at 4:30 p.m. today and then will show how to make Paper Plate Watermelon Fans.
- ✓ **LISTENING REMINDER:** The guest on the Main Street Athens radio show, "Main Street Moments," this week will be Anne Montgomery of The LITE House. You can hear the program each Tuesday at 8:15 a.m. on WYXI Radio, FM 94.5 and AM 1390 or [ONLINE](#)



HEAR RUSH*
Noon to 3 p.m.
Monday
through Friday
& Saturday's
Week in
Review 4-7 pm

*Having more fun than a human being should be allowed to have

WYXI FM 94.5 & AM 1390

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WEATHER FORECAST

Monday - Partly sunny & humid. Possible t'storms. High 92.

Mon. night - Cloudy & humid. Low 73.

Tuesday - Partly sunny, warm, and humid. High 95.

More Weather at: wysi.com



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Monday, August 12, 2019 Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page Athens,

Obituaries

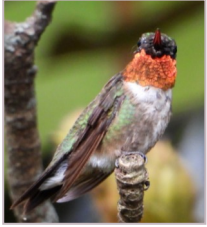
- ♦ **Thomas Cecil “Sonny” Johnson**, age 84, of Athens, died Thursday at his home after several years of sickness. He worked at Athens Bed Company for 40 years. His hobbies were buying cars and land. Graveside services were held Saturday at Sullins Cemetery. Ziegler Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements.
- ♦ **Juanita Kinser**, age 92, of Englewood, died Friday evening at her home. She was retired from Eureka Sewing Mill in Englewood. A graveside service will be at 2 p.m. Monday in the McMinn Memory Gardens. Companion Funeral Home of Athens is in charge of the arrangements.
- ♦ **John Eddie Kennedy**, age 63, of Decatur, died Saturday. He was a truck driver and heavy equipment operator his whole life. Funeral arrangements will be announced later by Bowers Funeral Home of Decatur.
- ♦ **Dorothy Ann Cole**, age 81, of McMinn County, died Saturday morning at River Grove Health & Rehab in Loudon. She had worked in the sewing/hosiery industry in McMinn County. A funeral service will be at 8 p.m. Tuesday at Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church with visitation beginning at 6 p.m. Companion is in charge of the arrangements.
- ♦ **Herbert Rockholt**, age 90, of Decatur, died Sunday in a Greeneville TN. Hospital. Funeral arrangements will be announced by Smith Funeral Home of Athens.
- ♦ **Graham M. Roberts**, age 76, of Decatur, died Sunday. There are no formal services at this time per his wishers. Bowers Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.
- ♦ **Wanda Sherrod**, died Sunday at Life Care Facilities of Athens. Funeral arrangements will be announced by Bowers Funeral Home.

Opioid overdoses on the Rise

♦ In 2017, more than 1,700 people died in the state of Tennessee from drug overdoses. Athens police are using a new tool to try and save lives from opioid abuse. Officers now carry Narcan nasal spray which can counteract opioid overdoses. Monday a week ago, officers responded to the Athens Lodge off Highway 305 near the interstate where they found a man on the bathroom floor, unresponsive. Officers say Narcan nasal spray brought him around and three minutes later he regained consciousness. Athens Police Chief Cliff Couch says the opioid crisis has arrived in Athens. Couch says his officers have been called out to nearly a dozen overdoses so far in 2019. Chief Couch says he needs more resources. As of today, 32 officers are currently on the beat in Athens. Couch says he needs six more officers. Athens police are stepping up drug sweeps to get drugs out of the city. Drug-related arrests have consistently increased over the last three years. Officers took 176 people into custody in 2016. Two years later that number jumped to 247. As of July 2019, they have arrested nearly 260 people on drug charges.

♦ **BEAUTIFUL PHOTO OF AMAZING CREATURE**

Jennifer Hardison sent us this photo of a male ruby-throated hummingbird that was “hiding” in a large magnolia tree about 30 feet from the back deck of her home. She said that the brilliant colors of the feathers show why the small bird is indeed called “ruby-throated”.




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