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# Morning Fax<sup>®</sup>

Today's News...This Morning

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**MEDIC**  
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 213 E. Washington Ave.  
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 Monday-Friday  
 8:30 am - 5 pm

Tuesday, October 12, 2021

Athens, Tennessee

## Schultz Named Interim Chief

Athens City Manager C. Seth Sumner has named Lieutenant Fred Schultz of the Special Services Division of the Athens Police Department as the Interim Police Chief following the dismissal of Police Chief Cliff Couch last Friday afternoon. Schultz previously worked for the McMinn County Sheriff's Office for 12 years and for the regional Drug Task Force for one year. Couch was dismissed as of 3 p.m. Friday. Sumner says he was given an opportunity to resign, but he did not exercise that opportunity. Couch was named Athens Police Chief on September 25th, 2017, after a nationwide recruitment effort. Couch says he was "shocked" by what was presented to him last Friday and had no plans to resign. Couch says he believes his dismissal was an act of retaliation for something he expressed concern about, 8 months ago. That's when Couch became suspicious of Sumner's role in the disappearance of two "Nest" cameras from the police department's "Sergeant's Closet." Couch also had video showing Sergeant Casey Patterson appearing to return one of the missing cameras to the closet. Couch briefed District Attorney Steve Crump on what was going on and asked for guidance on how to handle the situation. That and other issues led to three members of the Athens City Council asking for a special called meeting to discuss the missing cameras, Chief Couch's allegations of retaliation by Sumner, and several other items including Sumner's possession of a loaded handgun in his carry-on bag at the Knoxville airport.

## Community News You Can Use

- ✓ The Etowah Senior Center will be having a flu clinic on Wednesday, October 13th, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The flu clinic is sponsored by Walgreens in Etowah. For more information, call 781-7632.
- ✓ The McMinn County Board of Education will meet in regular session at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 19th. There will be a Board Workshop prior to the meeting at 5.
- ✓ The fire season in Tennessee begins on October 15th. Effective on that date, debris burn permits are required for burning leaf and brush piles. To get a burn permit, call (877) 350-2876. Permits are issued only when conditions are conducive for safe burning. If you live inside the city limits, check with your municipality for additional restrictions before you burn.

The differences shown below for cases and active cases are the differences between Friday's Report & Monday's Report

### ◆COVID-19 VIRUS UPDATE Monday 10-11

Tennessee: 1,253,863 cases up 746. 15,583 deaths up 7.

COUNTY	CASES	ACTIVE	DEATHS
McMinn	10,269 up 24	190 down 29	122
Meigs	2,128 up 3	38 down 5	27
Monroe	9,516 up 63	190 down 16	117
Polk	3,119 up 14	95 down 1	27
Bradley	21,719 up 46	336 down 69	176 up 2
Rhea	6,856 up 35	185 down 7	90

**RESTAURANT SPOTLIGHT**  
**Bojangles'**  
**NEW: Hand Breaded Chicken Sandwich \$3.99**  
**Pork Chop Biscuits 2 / \$6 • 32 oz Tea**  
 Due to Staffing Shortages, the Athens Bojangles will be closed on **SUNDAY ONLY DURING OCTOBER**  
 Famous Chicken 'n Biscuits **BOJANGLES of Athens-South Congress Pkwy 744-5292**

**WYXI**  
 FM 94.5 & AM 1390

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Tuesday, October 12, 2021 **Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 2** Athens, Tennessee

## Obituaries

- ♦ **Cory Lane Howell**, of Sweetwater, died Sunday at his residence. Arrangements will be announced by Smith Funeral Home.
- ♦ **Patricia "Marlene" Smith**, of Athens, died Sunday at Park West Medical Center in Knoxville. Arrangements will be announced by Smith Funeral Home.
- ♦ **Joyce Baker Wong**, age 83, of Etowah, died Saturday. She was a teacher at Hawaii Baptist Academy for 37 years. Graveside services will be held this Thursday at Lynnhurst Cemetery in Fountain City, TN. No formal visitation will be held. Bordwine Funeral Home is in charge.
- ♦ **Mary Ann Ragland**, age 58, of Decatur, died October 6th. A memorial service will be held on Thursday, Oct. 14th, in the Cleveland Chapel of Companion Funeral Home, with visitation from 2 to 3 p.m.
- ♦ **Joseph Thomas Crockett**, age 83, of Etowah, died September 24th. A memorial service will be at 5 p.m. Tuesday at Bordwine Funeral Home with visitation from 4 to 5 p.m. prior to the service.
- ♦ **Jessie Gwendolyn Brady**, age 27, of Athens, died Friday at Parkwest Medical Center in Knoxville. Visitation will be from 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday at Ziegler Funeral Home.
- ♦ **William Michael Paisley**, age 54, of McMinn County, died Sunday. He was a former employee of Bowater Paper Mill for 18 years. Graveside services will be at 11 a.m. Wednesday in Cedar Grove Cemetery. There will be no formal visitation. Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home is in charge.
- ♦ **James Alfred "Alf" Johnson** age 69, of Athens, died Sunday in a Decatur healthcare facility. There will be no public services at this time. Companion Funeral Home of Athens is in charge.

## Ribbon Cut for Zenful Panda

A ribbon cutting was held recently for new Athens Chamber of Commerce member Zenful Panda, on Washington Avenue in Downtown Athens. Pictured below are: McMinn County Mayor John Gentry, Lisa Rhea (Chamber Diplomat), Tisha Little, Troy Cheangnangam, Audrey Rogers, Cotey Warren, & Janson Brown (Zenful Panda), Cheryl Ingram (McMinn Register of Deeds), Connie Woodcock, Danielle Sierra, Ashton Burrows, & Heather Bateman (Diplomats), Rob Preston (Chamber President/CEO), Karen Sullivan (Chamber), Phil Tuggle (County Trustee), Doug Bailey (Diplomat), Paul Semenov, Louise Akins, State Rep. Mark Cochran, Joseph Ladner, Larae Graves & Traci White (Diplomats)



**LISTENING REMINDER:** The guest on Main Street Moments on Tuesday (Oct. 12) will be Jody Harrison with NAPA Auto Parts. The interview will be heard at 8:15 a.m. on WYXI Radio: AM-1390 FM-94.5 & [ONLINE](#)



## Thank You 1<sup>st</sup> Responders Golf Tournament Sponsors



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- Robert Preston, Athens Chamber of Commerce

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- Tennessee Valley Urology
- ...more to come tomorrow