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Today's News... This Morning

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(See page 3 for more news)

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Friday, January 12, 2024

Athens, Tennessee

Man Arrested/Charged with Child Exploitation



Kenterrius McGuffie

Special agents assigned to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation's Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force have arrested and charged an Athens man in connection to an ongoing child exploitation case. On Monday, agents received a tip from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, concerning child sexual abuse material being uploaded by a

Snapchat user, later identified

as Kenterrius McGuffie (DOB 8-24-1996). Authorities detained McGuffie at his place of employment in Sweetwater, while agents and investigators from the 10th Judicial District Drug Task Force, Athens Police Department, Homeland Security Investigations, and the McMinn County Sheriff's Department executed a search warrant at his Athens home. Agents subsequently arrested McGuffie, charging him with 13 counts of Aggravated Rape of a Child, 12 counts of Especially Aggravated Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, one count of Continual Sexual Abuse of a Child, and one count of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor (Over 50 Images). Authorities subsequently booked McGuffie into the McMinn County Jail, where, at the time of this release, he was being held on \$400,000 bond. The investigation remains ongoing. Anyone with information about this case should contact 1-800-TBI-FIND

AUB Prepping for Weekend Weather

With expected heavy rainfall and high winds by the weekend, Athens Utilities Board (AUB) is prepping for impacts across the four field divisions. "We know our vulnerabilities and we're preparing in every way possible as we wait for the incoming rain and wind," said AUB's Eric Newberry. "Each division is taking steps to be best prepared. We are planning and prepping for worst case scenarios relative to our operations and customer support," he said. Of specific concern are trees taking down power lines, the ability to handle peak flows at treatment plants, and flooding that can impact infrastructure such as pumping stations and pad-mounted power transformers situated in low-lying areas. AUB has recorded 3.92 inches of rain since January 1. Rainfall of this magnitude over an extended period of time can lead to ground saturation and softening of the soil. "The soft soil sometimes allows trees simply to fall over, pulling up roots and all at the base. And when this happens, the tree is usually a big one. Customers generally are understanding that the resulting mess of wire, debris and fallen tree can lead to long restoration times for our crews," Newberry said. Crews in AUB's wastewater, natural gas, and water divisions also are preparing for the wet week. "Our wastewater systems will see a big impact with high flows in wastewater lines due to groundwater and storm runoff that finds its way into our pipes," said AUB's Craig Brymer, the Superintendent of Natural Gas, Water and Wastewater. The increase in rainfall and floodwaters can lead to overflows of manholes and pump stations and cause backups in sewer lines due

See AUB Prepping on Page 2

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Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

♦**Jerry Collins**, age 71, of Athens, passed away Wednesday, January 10. He was a member of Victory Baptist Church. His love for Jesus was evident. He shared that love with all the youth in the area by teaching them and by his actions. He loved his family dearly, especially his grandkids. He enjoyed spending time by the Hiwassee River. A funeral service will be held at 2:00 p.m., Saturday, January 13, at Bordwine Funeral. Visitation will be from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m., Saturday prior to the service. Interment will follow the service in Green Hill Cemetery with Military Honors. Bordwine Funeral Home of Etowah is in charge of arrangements.

Church News and Events

-The 2x2 Quartet will be singing on Sunday, January 14th at 11:00 am at Double Springs Baptist Church. Sunday School is at 10am. Everyone is welcome.

-Planted In Christ Outreach Fellowship, 317 Maple Street, in Athens, invites you to attend Outreach Deliverance Classes every Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

- Celebrate Recovery meets at the following churches: The Englewood Church of God every Sunday at 6 p.m. and Woodward Avenue Church of God every Tuesday at 6 p.m.

-Mars Hill Presbyterian Church (205 North Jackson Street) is sponsoring a free children's playgroup on Mondays, 9-11 a.m. for ages 0-5. For additional information, contact the Church Office (423-745-1403) or Mary Ann Reed (910-200-2905).

-The Epps Family from South Carolina will be singing at Solid Rock Baptist Church on January 14 at 10:30 in the morning service. Everyone is welcome.

AUB Prepping for Weekend

Continued from Page 1 to partial blockages that just haven't revealed themselves yet. During heavy rainfall, a blockage in a wastewater line can lead to backups in toilets and drains. "If this were to happen in your home, the first step would be to call AUB at (423) 745-3131 to get a serviceman on-site to pinpoint the issue. Crew members often can find the blockage and flush it out or find another relief point to alleviate the backup," Newberry said. "Rainfall events like the one we may experience effectively "stress test" our system and show us where problems persist and serve to remind us that there is still work to be done," Brymer said. The increased flow eventually finds its way to AUB's wastewater treatment plants where operators are prepared to handle the dramatically increased flow. "Our experienced operations staff will make the necessary adjustments to provide the same level of treatment efficiency that happens every day. These events put additional stresses on our processes and equipment but do not reduce our ability to produce clean water that exceeds regulatory standards," Brymer said. Plant operators at AUB's Oostanaula Wastewater Treatment Plant, North Mouse Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, and the Vernon Wade Filter Plant will continue to work throughout each day and overnight on location to handle these extra stresses on the systems while the rain event lasts. "Across the utility we are working to be as ready as we can be, and we encourage all in the community to do the same," Newberry said.



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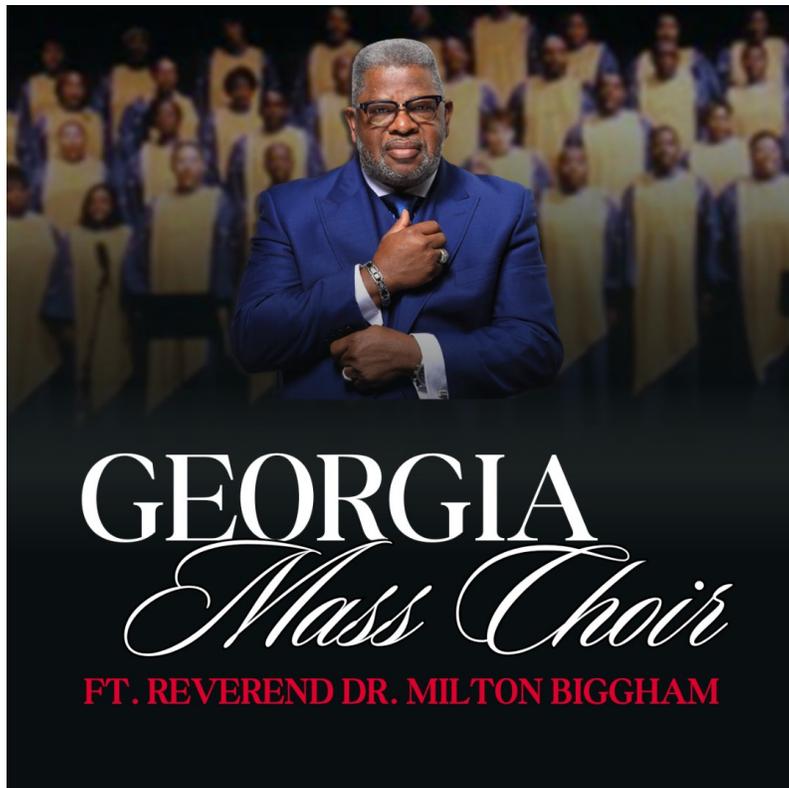
Friday, January 12, 2024

Morning Fax® Today's News This Morning Page 3

Athens, Tennessee

Gospel Jubilee Benefit Concert

Please join everyone at The Gospel Jubilee Benefit Concert on Sunday, February 18 at 5 p.m. at the International Light of Life Church located at 1112 Congress Parkway, N. featuring the soul-stirring sounds of the renowned Georgia Mass Choir, led by the incredible Reverend Dr. Milton Biggiam. The concert is free and, while no admission is charged, event organizers will accept donations as a love offering to celebrate the show's 57th anniversary. The concert is sponsored by the Athens Area Council for the Arts (AACAA) and McMinn County. It is a heartfelt tribute to **W.E Burke's Sunday Gospel Jubilee**, a Sunday morning radio show that has graced our community for over half a century. Gospel Jubilee, airs on WYXI every Sunday from 9:00 to 10:00 AM, and has been a source of inspiration and joy since 1967. Founded by W. E. Burke and currently hosted by dedicated volunteers Stanley Blair, Karen King, and Jasmine Porter-McDermott, the show has become a cherished part of our heritage. Proceeds from this concert will ensure that Gospel Jubilee continues to uplift spirits for years to come. The Douglass Family Gospel Singers will kick off the evening with their unique blend of quartet-style music, honoring a tradition passed down through generations. Following them, the Georgia Mass Choir, with the legendary Rev. Dr. Milton Biggiam at the helm, promises an unforgettable performance. Biggiam, a Vietnam veteran and influential figure in the gospel music industry, has brought us timeless compositions and has worked with iconic artists. In his more than 40 years in the gospel music industry, Biggiam has recorded, performed with, written for and/or produced some of the biggest names in gospel, including the Rev. James Cleveland, Albertina Walker, the Rev. Clay Evans, the Rev. Timothy Wright, LaShun Pace, The Mississippi Mass Choir, Dorothy Norwood, Inez Andrews, and others. Biggiam is credited with the discovery of Kirk Franklin and Donnie McClurkin. Biggiam produced Franklin's first hit, "Joy," with the Georgia Mass Choir and McClurkin's debut hit, "Speak To My Heart" with the New York Restoration Choir. As co-founder of the New Jersey Mass Choir, the Florida Mass Choir and the DFW Mass Choir, Biggiam helped start a thriving choir music scene in the 1980s. In 1983, he founded the award-winning, 100-voice Georgia Mass Choir, with whom he



scored a handful of Grammy nominations. In 1996, the Georgia Mass Choir was brought to the attention of Hollywood producer Penny Marshall, resulting in a featured role in the Touchstone film, "The Preacher's Wife," starring Denzel Washington and Whitney Houston, for which Biggiam also served as gospel music director. For his work in traditional gospel, this Vietnam veteran who has more than 500 compositions to his credit, including "Prayer Will Fix It Every Time," "The Storm Is Over," "I Still Have A Praise Inside Of Me," "I'm Blessed," "Come On In The Room," and "I Owe You The Praise," has become one of the most sought-after producers on the gospel music scene. *For more information about the Georgia Mass Choir Benefit Concert, reach out to Karen King at 423-829-7021 or Stanley Blair at 423-745-0298. For more information about AACAA programs visit athensartsCouncil.org, or call 423-745-8781. Their office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The Arts Center is located in Historic Downtown Athens, Tennessee, in the Main Street District, at 320 North White Street. Photo submitted by Athens Arts Council.*