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TWU extends President Forrest's Contract through 2030



Tennessee Wesleyan University has extended President Dr. Tyler Forrest's contract through June 2030, following a unanimous vote by the Board of Trustees at its April 25 meeting. Dr. Bobby Goodfriend, Board Chair, praised Forrest's leadership, citing record enrollment, improved finances, and successful fundraising efforts since Forrest became president in 2022.

Under Forrest's leadership, the university has launched major campus improvements, including residence hall renovations, expansion of the dental hygiene program, and the creation of new athletic facilities and academic programs. A key highlight is the \$27 million *We Are Wesleyan* Capital Campaign, which has surpassed multiple fundraising goals.

Forrest also helped secure the largest campus expansion in over 40 years through a lease of the former Ingleside School property, which will house new athletic facilities. His tenure has also seen the university rise in national rankings, adopt a new logo, and increase access to education through the TWU Pledge, a scholarship initiative for low-income families.

A McMinn County native and TWU's youngest-ever president, Forrest expressed gratitude for the opportunity to continue serving his hometown institution alongside his family. Before joining TWU, he held leadership roles at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

Community News You Can Use

- [Morning Star Ministries](#) is hosting a [Mini-Golf-a-Thon](#) TOMORROW Tuesday, May 6 from 10am - 12pm at [Midway Mini Golf](#) (2240 Hwy 30 E, Athens). Sponsor a student with a donation or pledge per hole and help support their mission. Businesses that sponsor will even get their logo featured on our event t-shirts! Donate in person at [The Lantern](#) (118 N. Jackson St.) or email them at morningstarministries25@gmail.com.
- The McMinn County Board of Education will have a Called Meeting TOMORROW, Tuesday, May 6 to begin at the close of the Board Workshop at the McMinn County Center for Educational Excellence.
- If you are an alumni of E.H.S., and are interested in attending the last Etowah High School Decades Reunion on Saturday, June 14 at the L&N Depot from 10:00 am - 3:00 pm, with Free Lunch served at 12:00 noon, please RSVP asap with your name and one guest to: E.H.S. Alumni Association, P.O. Box 24, Etowah, TN 37331 or by phone to 423-506-9097. Bring your own lawn chair!
- The Athens Planning Commission will meet today at 12:00pm in the Conference Room at Athens City Hall, assuming there is a quorum.

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- Thursday-Athens Family Dollar 10:30 - 2:00
- Friday-Sweetwater-Little Drugs-10:30 - 2:30
- Saturday-Dooley Tractor (TRACTOR SHOW) 109 N. Congress Pkwy - 10:30 - 2:30
- Lunch set ups are different for the next few weeks due to private catering events!! We will be back on regular schedule week of May 19.

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Monday, May 05, 2025

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

Athens, Tennessee

Rain Couldn't Dampen the Spirit of Athens' First-Ever May Daze Culture Crawl



Despite rainy skies, Downtown Athens came alive with color, creativity, and community spirit during the city's first-ever *May Daze Culture Crawl*. The event marked a vibrant kickoff to what organizers hope will become a cherished seasonal tradition, celebrating local art, culture, and small businesses.

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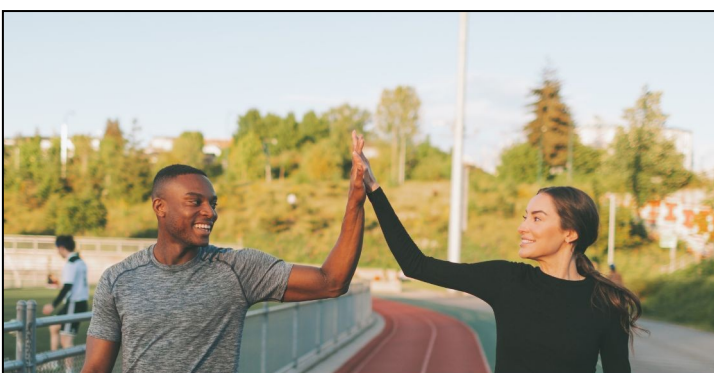
Today's News. This Morning.

Quick-thinking adjustments kept the day running smoothly, and each participating location added a unique flavor to the crawl. At the Athens Arts Center, visitors enjoyed hands-on experiences like drawing, painting, and pottery. The McMinn Living Heritage Museum offered art exhibits and character appearances that delighted all ages, while The Lantern helped guests craft whimsical flower crowns. Over at Ink Theory Tattoo and Body Piercing, fun was in full swing with temporary tattoos and balloon giveaways. Athens Flower Shop elevated the vibe with stunning real-flower crowns, and Grandma's Gingerbread Bakery hosted cookie decorating lessons that brought smiles to kids and grown-ups alike. Meanwhile, White Street Market showcased the talents of many local artists in a bustling atmosphere full of creativity.

Adding to the lively ambiance, WYXI Radio broadcasted live from The LITE House, featuring interviews with key organizers and local business leaders. Voices included Main Street Athens Director Sandra Kinney, McMinn County EDA Tourism Coordinator Brianna Baker, White Street Market's Lisa Mayfield, longtime community leader Scottie Mayfield, Living Heritage Museum Director Brett King, Arts Center Executive Director Lauren Brown, Grandma's Gingerbread Bakery co-owner Richard Pupard, Athens Communications Coordinator Frank Clark, MCHS Senior Jada Bright, *Main Street Moments* radio host Maggie Blaine, and Timberly Guffey of Fuller's Frame Shop.

From flower crowns to live art demonstrations, cookie decorating to community storytelling, the Culture Crawl turned a rainy spring day into a downtown celebration of everything that makes Athens special. Organizers are already planning the next Culture Crawl & Art Walk for this fall—hopefully with sunnier skies and even more local flair. Stay tuned!

See Photos on Page 6



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

Athens, Tennessee

Fire Damages Home in Madisonville; Multiple Agencies Respond



A fire that broke out in a double-wide mobile home on Pleasant Drive prompted a swift mutual aid response from multiple fire departments Wednesday evening.

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The blaze was reported around 5:30 p.m. after the homeowners, who were working in their garden, noticed smoke coming from the residence. The fire is believed to have started in the kitchen area, near the cook stove.

Responding to the scene were Gudger Fire Department, Madisonville Fire Department, Hopewell Fire Department, Notchy Creek Fire Department, and Englewood Rural Fire Department. Additional support was provided by the Monroe County Sheriff's Office and Monroe County EMS.

Gudger Firefighter Jacob Gates served as incident commander during the response. There were no injuries reported at the scene. The extent of the damage is currently under assessment.

Photo provided by Lynn Ingram, Englewood Rural Fire Dept.

Women United in Community Service Plans Exciting Charleston, SC Bus Tour This July

Women United in Community Service is inviting locals to join an exciting bus tour to Charleston, South Carolina this summer. The five-day adventure is set for **July 14-18, 2025**, and promises a memorable experience filled with sightseeing, southern charm, and community fun.

The travel package includes:

- **Four nights at a hotel** in the Charleston area
- **Four breakfasts and four dinners**
- **A guided tour of Charleston**
- **A scenic dinner cruise**
- **A visit to the famous City Market**, among other attractions

The cost is **\$775 per person for double occupancy** (2 in a room) and **\$735 for triple occupancy** (3 in a room). A **\$125 deposit** is required by **April 1, 2025**, with the **final payment due by May 15, 2025**. To reserve a spot, checks should be made payable to **Women United In Community Service** and mailed to:

Mrs. Robin Smith
168 County Road 703
Athens, TN 37303

For more details or questions, interested participants can contact **Harriel Blair** at **423-745-0298** or hjb191@gmail.com.

With a blend of cultural exploration and community bonding, the Charleston Bus Tour is shaping up to be a summer highlight for those looking to travel, connect, and relax.

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Monday, May 05, 2025

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 4

Athens, Tennessee

2025 MooFest Scheduled for Saturday, June 7



MooFest, McMinn County's beloved dairy festival, is scheduled for Saturday, June 7th. Taking place from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. in historic downtown Athens, Tennessee, the festival showcases several popular activities including the Maggie Strut, Athens Lions Club 16th annual MooRun at Eureka Trail, live entertainment on four stages, over 275 info, food and craft vendors as well as local shopping at downtown Athens businesses.

The festival also features AgAvenue at Market Park with interactive agricultural exhibits, Farm Bureau's Agriculture in the Classroom mobile trailer, Mayfield's sampling trailer and pop up visitors center, live cows and milking demonstration by McMinn County 4-H and the Dairy Alliance and the Wheel of Agriculture and Trivia Tractor activities. Other activities throughout the venue include life size dinosaurs and putt putt golf from East Tennessee Entertainment, Pendleton's Playground carnival rides, bounce houses by Let's Bounce Rental, The Little Country Farm petting zoo and pony rides, Let's Read 20 Colorful Bus along with lots of children's activities.

Kicking off the Courthouse Steps Stage on Madison Avenue will be Jim Brooks and his grandson Rafe Paul followed by Wilson Cross, Roscoe Morgan and Nina Ricci. Featured on the Downtown Beauty Lounge Stage on White Street will be performances by music students of local bluegrass star Ronnie Raper followed by the Mr. & Miss MooFest Pageant sponsored by Wendy Wheeler.

Inspirations Dance & Gymnastics Studio will captivate you with three performances at the Lifestyles Stage on Madison Avenue. And, Market Pavilion Stage on Jackson Street offers a stellar lineup of Further Up The Road, JCreek Cloggers, Cole Sitzlar and the first performance of the 2025 Sounds of Summer series by Emi Sunshine. In between sets will be Mayfield games and contests.

MooFest is a production of Friendly City Festivals, a subsidiary of Willsinthropic, Inc., a 501(c)3 organization based in Athens that also produces Sounds of Summer and Pumpkintown.

All Friendly City Festivals events are free to the public thanks to the following sponsors: The City of Athens Hotel/Motel Tax Fund, Athens Kiwanis Club, McMinn County Tourism Board, Mayfield Dairy Farms, Tennessee Overhill, Tennessee Arts Commission, Valley Oil, DENSO, Warren Jackson CPAs, Simmons Bank, Simmons Private Wealth Group, Citizens National Bank of Sevier County, VEC Customer Shares, 3 Rivers Radio Stations, Starr Regional Medical Center, Tonya Phenix, Willsinthropic, Inc., Kona Ice, Pendleton's Playground, WYXI Morning Fax, The Daily Post Athenian, Madison Avenue Pharmacy, Athens Insurance and The Retirement Guys.

For more information check out our website at www.friendlycityfestivals.com and Friendly City Festivals Facebook page.



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Monday, May 05, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

Thursday Baseball: Cherokees Come Up Short Against Walker Valley Mustangs



McMinn County Varsity Cherokees could not keep up with Walker Valley Varsity Mustangs 6-1 on Thursday.

Walker Valley Varsity Mustangs got on the board in the top of the second inning after Hayden Harrison hit a sacrifice fly, and Brody Ownby laid down a sacrifice bunt, each scoring one run.

Marshall Goodner started the game for McMinn County Varsity Cherokees. The pitcher allowed eight hits and six runs (two earned) over six innings, striking out four and walking three. Titus Torbett led things off on the mound for Walker Valley Varsity Mustangs. The southpaw allowed four hits and one run over seven innings, striking out 10 and walking one.

Linc Brazzell, McMinn County Varsity Cherokees's number nine hitter, led the team with two hits in two at-bats.

Walker Valley Varsity Mustangs tallied nine hits in the game. Ownby went 3-for-3 at the plate to lead Walker Valley Varsity Mustangs in hits. Torbett collected two hits for Walker Valley Varsity Mustangs in four at bats. Walker Valley Varsity Mustangs were sure-handed in the field and didn't commit a single error. Jordan Smith had the most chances in the field with 10.

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Sunday Recap: Goodin's Big Day Propels McMinn County Past Walker Valley

Jack Goodin drove in four runs on three hits to lead McMinn County Varsity Cherokees past Walker Valley Varsity Mustangs 7-2 on Sunday. Goodin singled in the second inning, scoring two runs, and singled in the fifth inning, scoring two.

McMinn County Varsity Cherokees were the first to get on the board in the first when Auston Fugate was struck by a pitch, driving in a run.

McMinn County Varsity Cherokees extended their early lead with four runs in the top of the second thanks to RBI singles by Goodin, Fugate, and Kade Hyde.

Hyde opened the game for McMinn County Varsity Cherokees. The pitcher allowed two hits and two runs (one earned) over seven innings, striking out seven and walking five. Michael Pledge started the game for Walker Valley Varsity Mustangs. The hurler allowed seven hits and five runs (four earned) over two innings, striking out five and walking one.

The Cherokees collected 13 hits in the game. Chase McDonald, Linc Brazzell, and Drake Frazier each collected multiple hits for McMinn County Varsity Cherokees.

Zander Neuendorf and Owen Sneed each collected one hit for Walker Valley Varsity Mustangs. Neuendorf went 1-for-3 at the plate and led the team with one run batted in. Walker Valley Varsity Mustangs turned one double play in the game. [Copyright © 2025 GameChanger Media, Inc. All rights reserved.](#)

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Athens, Tennessee

Pictures from the May Daze Culture Crawl this past Saturday



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Monday, May 05, 2025

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 7

Athens, Tennessee

Vehicle Fire and Minor Injuries Reported in Two-Car Collision in Etowah



A fiery two-vehicle crash occurred Thursday evening at the intersection of Tennessee Avenue and David W. Lillard Memorial Highway, resulting in minor injuries and a dramatic vehicle fire.

The collision involved a Honda Civic LX and a 2018 Toyota Tacoma around 5:30 p.m. The impact caused the Honda to burst into flames, drawing a rapid response from multiple emergency agencies. Drivers of both vehicles, along with one passenger, sustained minor injuries. All were treated and examined at the scene but declined medical transport.

Responding agencies included Etowah City Fire Department, Etowah Rural Fire Department, AMR, Etowah City Police, and the McMinn County Sheriff's Department. Etowah City Police Officer Jennifer Davis is leading the investigation into the crash.

Photos from the scene were provided by the Etowah Rural Fire Department and local resident Tim Jones, who captured a striking image of the Honda engulfed in flames. A fiery two-vehicle crash occurred Thursday evening at the intersection of Tennessee Avenue and David W. Lillard Memorial Highway, resulting in minor injuries and a dramatic vehicle fire.

Photos provided by the Etowah Rural Fire Department and local resident Tim Jones

Obituaries

Christina "Krissey" Marie Silverberg, 59 of Le-noir City, passed away peacefully on the morning of April 6. She had a deep love for animals and was known for her compassionate heart toward all creatures.- especially her beloved pug, Yoshi. A private family memorial service will be held at a later date to honor and celebrate Krissey's life. Companion Funeral & Cremation Service of Athens and the Cody family are honored to assist the family with these arrangements.

Responding agencies included Etowah City Fire Department, Etowah Rural Fire Department, AMR, Etowah City Police, and the McMinn County Sheriff's Department. Etowah City Police Officer Jennifer Davis is leading the investigation into the crash.

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Photos provided by the Etowah Rural Fire Department and local resident Tim Jones

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