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Monday, May 12, 2025

Page 1

Athens, Tennessee

Athens to host Juneteenth Celebration at Cook Park

**JUNETEENTH
celebrate
freedom**

SATURDAY, JUNE 21
10 AM - 1 PM
COOK PARK, ATHENS

The McMinn County Branch of the NAACP invites the community to "Let's Celebrate Freedom Day," a Juneteenth celebration taking place on Saturday, June 21, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Cook

Park, located at 414 Cook Drive in Athens.

This free, family-friendly event will highlight the significance of Juneteenth through educational displays, poetry readings, book giveaways, and a special presentation on the history of Cook Park. Guests are encouraged to bring their own lawn chairs and enjoy a morning of reflection, learning, and community fellowship.

Juneteenth, observed annually on June 19, commemorates the day in 1865 when enslaved African Americans in Galveston, Texas, were informed of their freedom—more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed. It is widely considered the longest-running African American holiday and was officially recognized as a federal holiday in 2021.

Cook Park, a historic gathering place in Athens, serves as a fitting backdrop for the event. Its legacy and connection to the local African American community will be shared as part of the celebration.

Community News You Can Use

- The City of Athens Public Works Dept. announces the following street closures:

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- **Lynwood Drive** from Ivy Lane to Lynwood Circle. The closure will be from Tuesday, May 13 at 8:00 a.m. until Wednesday, May 14 at 4:00 p.m. The purpose of this closure is for drainage repairs.
- **Jackson Street** from Green St. to Washington Ave. and **Madison Ave.** from White St. to Green St. These closures will be on Saturday, May 17, 2025, from 4:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. The purpose of this closing is for the Athens Travelers Car Club Cruise-In event.
- The budget committee of the McMinn County Board of Education will meet TODAY, Monday, May 12 at 5:30 p.m. at the McMinn County Center for Educational Excellence.
- **The Athens-Isahaya Sister City Committee** is hosting a Bento Box Packing workshop tomorrow, Tuesday, May 13 from 6pm-7pm at the McMinn County Higher Education Center (2345 Denso Drive, Athens) Cost is \$10. Register at the link [HERE](#)



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- **Thursday-Athens Family Dollar 10:30 - 2:00**
- **Friday-Sweetwater-Little Drugs-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 12, 2025

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

Athens, Tennessee

Athens City Council to Review Budget, Fire Station Plans and More at Upcoming Work Session



The Athens City Council will hold a work session later TODAY, **Monday, May 12, at 5:00 p.m.** in the Burkett L. Witt Council Chambers at the Athens Municipal Building to discuss several key issues ahead of its May 20 regular meeting.

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Today's News. This Morning.

Among the most significant items on the agenda is the **presentation of the proposed FY 2025–26 Athens City Schools budget**, which outlines a \$32.2 million financial plan. The Council will also review the **city's overall budget proposal** and a **budget amendment for the current fiscal year**.

The Council is also expected to discuss the **selection of Wold Architects & Engineers** to design the new Fire Station #3. The firm was recommended after a competitive evaluation process and would lead both planning and design phases, with construction anticipated to be funded over two fiscal years.

In addition, Council members will consider a **renewal of the city's health insurance plan**, which could shift to the state's Blue Cross/Blue Shield offering to control rising costs. Also on the agenda are discussions about the **demolition of the former North City School**, the **renewal of a contract with TDOT** for maintenance of state routes, and **authorization to apply for a federal Safe Streets grant** to improve traffic safety at key intersections, including Decatur Pike and Congress Parkway.

A **public hearing and second reading of Ordinance 1139** is also scheduled, which proposes **increasing the number of local liquor store licenses** from two to three.

The Council will also review several board appointments, including positions on the Athens Utilities Board, Board of Adjustment & Appeals, and the Recreation Advisory Board.

The meeting is open to the public. For more details, visit athenstn.gov.

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EVERY WEEKDAY

Monday, May 12, 2025

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

Athens, Tennessee

2024-2025 RISE Award Winners



**2024-2025
RISE
AWARD
WINNERS**

**RECOGNIZING
INSPIRING
SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**







Congratulations to the following individuals for being named the 2024-2025 RISE Award Year Winners.

Morning Fax

Athens City Middle School: Wendy Grimmett Today's News. This Morning.

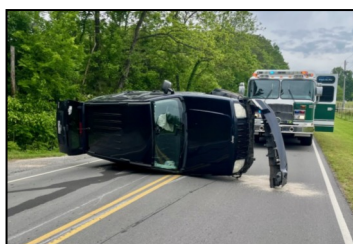
Central Office/Systemwide: Leslie Clary

Athens City Primary School: Megan Dingess Oetting

Athens City Intermediate School: Nallely Roblero

Source: Julie Lofland, Athens City Schools

Driver Seriously Injured in Rollover Crash Near Englewood



A woman was seriously injured Saturday afternoon after losing control of her vehicle on County Road 550 near Englewood.

According to emergency responders, the driver of a 2011

Jeep Liberty struck a guardrail, collided with a bridge, then hit a second guardrail before the vehicle flipped onto its side and slid several feet along the roadway. The crash occurred around noon.

Emergency personnel from Englewood Rural Fire Department, Etowah Rural Fire Department, the McMinn County Sheriff's Department, and the Tennessee Highway Patrol responded to the scene. THP Sgt. Kyle Millsaps is leading the investigation.

The driver sustained severe head injuries and was treated at the scene by AMR medics before being transported to Erlanger Medical Center in Chattanooga.

Source: Lynn Ingram, Englewood Rural Fire Department



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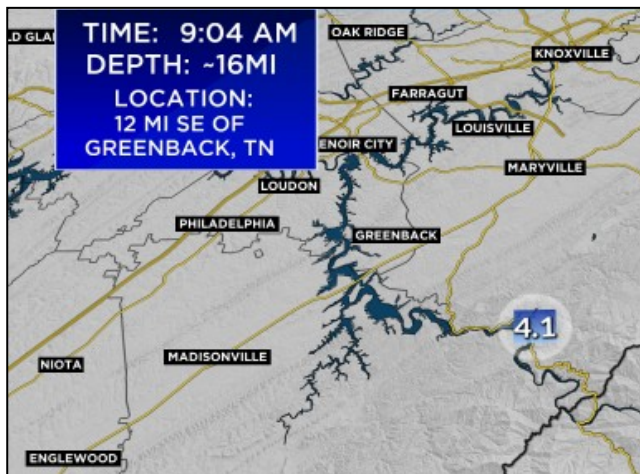


Monday, May 12, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

4.1 Magnitude Earthquake Shakes Tennessee-North Carolina Border Region



A 4.1 magnitude earthquake struck near the Tennessee-North Carolina border Saturday morning, rattling residents across several counties and prompting temporary closures along Foothills Parkway.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the quake occurred at **9:04 a.m. EDT** and was centered about **12.9 miles south-east of Greenback** and **14.4 miles south of Maryville**, at a depth of **25 kilometers** (approximately 16 miles) beneath the surface. The earthquake was initially measured at a 3.5 magnitude, but was later upgraded to 4.1 following further analysis.

Residents in McMinn County, across East Tennessee, and as far away as **Atlanta, Georgia** reported feeling the tremor, though no major damage or injuries have been confirmed. As a precaution, parts of the **Foothills Parkway** were temporarily closed for inspection following the quake.

Saturday's earthquake is one of the strongest in the region in recent years. The **strongest recorded earthquake** in the area occurred near Alcoa in 1973, registering a **magnitude of 4.7**. More recently, a 3.8 magnitude quake was recorded in Campbell County's Fincastle area in 2020.

The U.S. Geological Survey and the University of Memphis continue to monitor seismic activity in the Southeast through the Southeast US Seismic Network. For updated maps and technical data, residents can visit the USGS Earthquake Hazards Program website.

Source: [United States Geological Survey](https://www.usgs.gov)

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Our guest speaker will be the Wellness Director here at Dominion of Athens, Ashley Stansberry!

Ashley, a dedicated nurse with over 20 years of experience in geriatrics, Alzheimer's, and mental health, served as LPN Charge Nurse at Brookdale Senior Living for 14 years and Director of Nursing at Health Connect America for 6 years.

A member of Woodward Ave. Church of God in Athens, Ashley finds joy in honoring God through service to seniors.

She'll share insights on Dominion's offerings, how Dominion helps families navigate through the admission process, and support you can expect to receive.

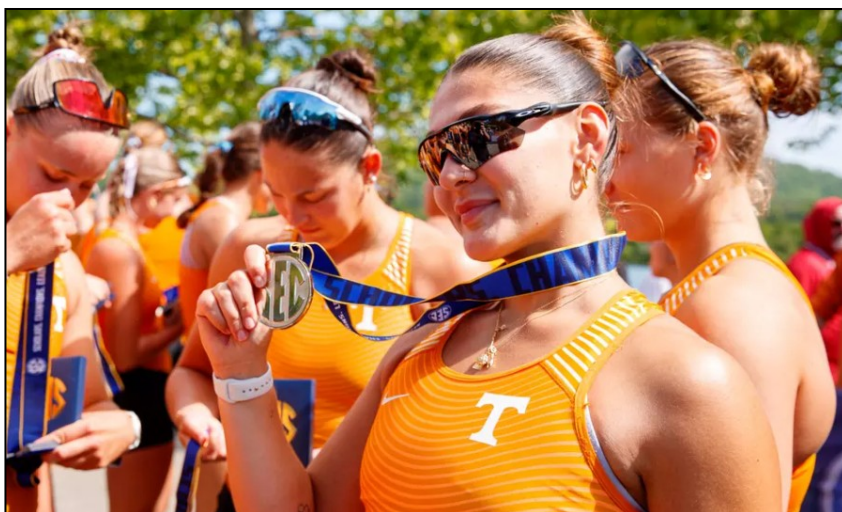


Monday, May 12, 2025

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 5

Athens, Tennessee

Lady Vols Rowing Finishes Second in Historic SEC Championship Debut



In the first-ever SEC Rowing Championship, the No. 4-ranked Tennessee Lady Vols delivered a powerful performance Sunday on Melton Hill Lake, winning three races and pushing No. 2 Texas to the limit before ultimately finishing second overall.

"It was really exciting to watch our team and cheer for them," said head coach Kim Cupini. "We just told the women that we wanted to have them in there and fight against Texas. We knew they were going to be fast."

The championship came down to a high-stakes showdown in the 1V8+ race, with Tennessee

and Texas—two of the nation's top four programs—vying for the title. The Lady Vols took an early lead, but crossed the finish line in 6:15.586, just over three seconds behind Texas, who claimed the gold with a time of 6:12.420.

Tennessee captured three event wins in the historic conference meet, including a standout performance in the 2V8+ event. The Lady Vols clocked 6:24.809 to edge out Texas (6:26.430), earning the SEC's first-ever gold medal in that race.

UT's dominance extended to the third varsity events, where the Lady Vol 3V8+ boat finished more than seven seconds ahead of Texas, and the 3V4+ squad earned a narrow victory by just 0.215 seconds—the slimmest margin of the day.

"The venue rocked," Cupini said. "Tennessee always rocks it at home, and to have such fans is awesome. Seeing fans of other schools, as well, was really cool."

Texas claimed victories in both varsity four events. Tennessee finished 11 seconds back in the 1V4+ and stayed close in the 2V4+, falling by just three seconds.

Next up, the Lady Vols will learn their NCAA Championship seeding during the selection show on **Tuesday, May 20, at 5 p.m. ET**. The national championship will take place **May 30–June 1** in Mercer, New Jersey.

Source: [UTSports.com](https://utsports.com)

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Monday, May 12, 2025

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 6

Athens, Tennessee

Former Madisonville police officer indicted on three charges related to misuse of city fuel funds



A former Madisonville police officer has been indicted after a state investigation revealed he misused city-issued fuel purchasing cards, costing taxpayers more than \$3,000, according to a report released by the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury.

The investigation focused on fuel purchases made by Bobby Mack Woods, who served with the Madisonville Police Department from May 2021 until his resignation in December 2023. The probe covered records from February 1, 2022, through December 31, 2023.

Investigators determined that Woods misappropriated at least \$3,072.71 by using his department-issued fuel card on 84 occasions for personal use—including while off duty, outside city limits without a documented reason, and for fuel quantities exceeding his patrol vehicle's capacity. Woods admitted to using the card for personal purposes.

The report also flagged an additional \$2,270.43 in questionable fuel charges based on odometer readings that did not align with the fuel amounts purchased.

On May 7, 2025, a Monroe County Grand Jury indicted Woods on three charges: Theft of Property (\$2,500 to \$10,000), Fraudulent Use of a Debit or Credit Card (\$2,500 to \$10,000), and Official Misconduct. He is presumed innocent until proven guilty in court.

The investigation further uncovered serious internal control issues within the city. Until June 2024, the City of Madisonville lacked formal written policies governing the use of fuel purchasing cards and failed to implement adequate oversight. Officials also did not report the suspected fraud to the Comptroller's Office as required by Tennessee law.

According to the report, city officials have indicated they have corrected or plan to correct the identified deficiencies.

The full report is available at comptroller.tn.gov.

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Monday, May 12, 2025

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

Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

James "David" Miller, 79, of Athens, passed away on Friday, May 9. He was a member of New Hope Methodist Church. He served in the U.S. Navy for 4 years. A funeral service will be conducted 7:00 pm, Tuesday, May 14 in the chapel of Smith Funeral Home. The committal service will be 11:00 am Wednesday, May 15 at Cedar Grove Cemetery with full military honors provided by the U.S. Navy. The family will receive friends from 5:00-7:00 pm Tuesday prior to the service. Smith Funeral & Cremation Services of Athens is honored to serve the family of James "David" Miller.

Helen Louise Dennis Nipper, 84 of Riceville, passed away on Thursday, May 8. Helen dedicated many years of her life to serving the community through her work at the Athens Utilities Board. Following her retirement, she continued her commitment to others by volunteering her time and energy at the McMinn County Senior Center. A Graveside Service will be held on Wednesday, May 14 at 11:00am at Upper Spring Creek Cemetery in Riceville. Companion Funeral & Cremation Service of Athens and the Cody family are honored to assist the Nipper family with these arrangements.

Jimmy Cannady, 78, passed away at his home on Wednesday May 7 surrounded by family. He attended Riverview Baptist Church in Lenior City, TN. After 25 years of service he retired from the City of Atlanta Department of Aviation. He was a member of McMinn County Foster and Adoptive Care Association for many years. Funeral services will be held Saturday, May 17, 2025 at 1:00 p.m in the chapel of M.D. Dotson and Sons Funeral Home – Athens, TN. 502 Congress Parkway N. The family will receive friends one hour before the service at the funeral home from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. Services of loving memory entrusted to M.D. Dotson and Sons Funeral Home- Athens, TN.

Ella Mae O'Dell, 86 of Tellico Plains passed away on Friday, May 9 at the home of her daughter, Alice O'Dell, in Athens. Services will begin at 7:00 P.M. on Friday, May 16 at the Biereley-Hale Chapel in Madisonville. Interment will take place at 2:00 P.M. on Sunday, May 18 at Center Cemetery. Family will receive friends between 5 P.M. - 7:00 P.M. Friday at Biereley-Hale Funeral Home, Madisonville.

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