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Friday, May 30, 2025

Page 1

Athens, Tennessee

SUV Collides with Semi at Niota Truck Stop



A serious crash occurred around 8:15 a.m. Wednesday on Highway 309 at the Pilot truck stop in Niota, involving a Chevrolet Equinox and a semi-truck.

According to reports, the SUV was traveling eastbound when it struck the rear wheels of a semi-trailer exiting the truck stop, ripping the wheels from the trailer. The female driver of the Equinox was extricated by fire crews and transported by ambulance to the University of Tennessee Medical Center. Emergency responders included the Niota Police Department, Niota Rural Fire Department, North McMinn Rural Fire Department, AMR, and the Tennessee Highway Patrol. Trooper Travis Ryans is leading the investigation. *Photos courtesy of David Prater, Niota Rural Fire Department*

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

Athens, Tennessee

Community News You Can Use

- The McMinn Senior Activity Center (205 McMinn Ave., Athens) would like to invite the community to the "Celebrate Summer Dance" on Friday, June 6 @ 7:00pm. Doors open at 6:45pm. The cost is \$5 per person.
- The City of Athens Planning Commission is announcing that due to a lack of petitions for the June meeting, the Commission will not meet next Monday, June 2.
- The McMinn Senior Activity Center (205 McMinn Ave., Athens) will be hosting [Qigong classes](#) every Monday at 4:30p.m. The cost is \$3.00 per class. Qigong is an ancient Chinese practice that combines mindfulness, breathing, and movement to enhance physical and mental well-being.

Woods Memorial Foundation Board Seeks Funding Applicants

The Woods Memorial Hospital Foundation Board is seeking requests for funding from local organizations and agencies for projects designed to better the health and wellbeing of the community.

The role of the Woods Foundation Board is to request, evaluate and recommend health-related projects to the McMinn County Commission for funding.

"Our county is home to numerous organizations with missions to improve the health of our citizens, and it is my hope that funding from the Woods Foundation will make a real difference in reaching those objectives," said McMinn County Mayor John Gentry.

Grant awards will range between \$5,000 and \$10,000. Applications are available at mcminncountyttn.gov/woodsfund and are due June 30, 2025. Questions about the application process can be directed to the McMinn County Mayor's Office at 423-745-7634 or:

mayoroffice@mcminncountyttn.gov

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Athens, Tennessee

Church News and Events

- **First Baptist Church Etowah** is seeking a part-time [Music Worship Leader](#). To access more information, email: FBcoffice@mail@gmail.com, Call: (423)263-2214, or Visit the Webpage at www.fbcetowah.org
- **East Athens Baptist Church** will have VBS June 8th through 10th from 5:30-7:30 PM. The location will be at Cook Park (414 Cook Drive.) Ages include Pre-K through 5th grade. Free supper included.
- **Niota UMC** will be hosting a free week-long summer camp on July 14-18 in partnership with Camp in the Community at their church in Niota. The summer camp is open to all children ages 5-14 The camp will run from 8:30-4:30pm (Friday ends at 2pm) and includes breakfast and lunch. Space is limited, make sure to sign up soon to secure your spot. To register, visit: <https://www.campinthecommunity.org/host/niota>
- **Planted In Christ Outreach Fellowship** (317 Maple Street, Athens) holds Outreach Deliverance Classes every Thursday at 7:00pm.
- **Celebrate Recovery** meets every [Tuesday](#) at 6:00pm at Woodward Ave. Church of God (507 Woodward Ave., Athens). They also meet every [Thursday](#) at 6:00pm at Watts Bar Community Church (1517 TN-68, Decatur)
- **New Life Church** hosts weekly Prayer Meetings every Wednesday night beginning at 7:00pm. The church is located at 204 Fisher St. in Athens. All are welcome.
- **SRBC Kids presents: Kingdom Seekers** on Sunday Nights at 5:30pm at [Solid Rock Baptist Church](#) (4975 Hwy. 11, Calhoun) This event combines, God, music, games and fun into a very special all ages affair.
- Athens Lutheran Church (710 Forrest Ave, Athens) invites children ages 6-12 to their Vacation Bible School/ From June 23 - 27 from 9 a.m. to 12:30p.m. Lunch will be provided. Register online at AthensLutheranChurch.org
- Homecoming service has been announced at Four Point Baptist Church on Sunday, June 1 at 10:30am. Special guest singers will be **Trinity Trio** with lunch to follow.

Continued on Page 4




LISTEN ON WYXI RADIO FM 94.5 & AM 1390

SPECIAL REPORTS OF THE LOCAL ATHENS RACE
BEGINNING AT 10 AM ON SATURDAY, MAY 31

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GoComics

Friday, May 30, 2025

Page 4

Athens, Tennessee

Ribbon Cutting Set for New Larry Dean Wallace Sr. Animal Shelter



The City of Athens and the McMinn Regional Humane Society will host a ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony for the new Larry Dean Wallace Sr. Animal Shelter and Adoption Center on **Saturday, June 14, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.**

The public is invited to attend the event and celebrate the opening of this major addition to the community. The new shelter is expected to significantly improve animal care and adoption services throughout Athens and McMinn County.

City and county officials say the facility represents a long-awaited investment in local animal welfare and will serve as a valuable resource for years to come.

The ceremony will take place on-site at the new shelter, and all are encouraged to attend. **Source:** [City of Athens - Facebook](#)

Church News & Events

- Englewood First Church of God is sponsoring a marriage conference hosted by Larry and Anna Lawrence on June 20-21st with child care provided. You can sign up at englewoodfcog.com. The cost is \$35 and includes a meal Friday night and a light breakfast on Saturday morning. The deadline for signing up is June 11th. Scholarships are available if needed to cover the cost.
- There will be a benefit singing for Debbie Weddington on Saturday June 7 at 12 noon. She has been diagnosed with cancer. This will help with travels and treatments. The Singing is at The Gathering in Ten Mile TN. Address is 29501 SR-58, Ten Mile. Singers are Recognized Southern Gospel, Meadow Fork Singers, and Good News Singers.



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Friday, May 30, 2025

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

Athens, Tennessee

Young Racers Set to Fly Down Keith Lane at Athens Soap Box Derby



The excitement is building as the Athens Soap Box Derby returns this Saturday, May 31, beginning at 10:00 a.m. on Keith Lane in Athens. Racers should arrive by 7:30 am and Practice Runs will begin at 8. Official races will begin between 9:30 and 10 am. Local youth will compete in gravity-powered cars in one of Athens' most anticipated community events of the year.

The event, part of the FirstEnergy All-American Soap Box Derby program, will feature two racing divisions: Stock and Super Stock. Dozens of young drivers will be sponsored by area businesses and organizations, all competing for a chance to advance to the national championships in Akron, Ohio, in July.

Live coverage of the Athens race will be provided by **WYXI Radio FM 94.5 and AM 1390**, beginning at 10:00 a.m. on race day and continuing throughout the event. Listeners can tune in for special reports, race updates, and highlights.

The **National-International Championship in Akron** is scheduled for **Saturday, July 19**, with **weeklong coverage starting Monday, July 14** on WYXI & The Morning Fax.

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 Cam Witt – Athens Area Youth Council/A&J Body Shop

Major sponsors for the WYXI broadcast include A&J Body Shop & Wrecker Service, Domino's Pizza, Dooley Tractor Company, Athens Barn Center, Athens Utilities Board, and Starr Cardiology Associates. **See Info Ad on Page 3.**

Residents are encouraged to come out, cheer on the racers, and enjoy a day of family fun and friendly competition. For more updates, listen to WYXI Radio and read additional coverage in *The Morning Fax*.



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Friday, May 30, 2025

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

Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

Dr. Robin L. Pierce, Jr., 90 of Athens, passed away peacefully after a life devoted to education, faith, community, and family. Robin earned his B.S. from Bethel College, his M.A. from George Peabody College, and his Ed.D. from Memphis State University. Robin began his career as a biology teacher and basketball coach at Dyersburg High School in Tennessee. In 1973, he was named Superintendent of Athens City Schools—a role he held with distinction for 27 years. He was named Tennessee School Superintendent of the Year in 1988 and served five years as president of the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents. A funeral service will be conducted 2:30 pm, Sunday, June 1 at East Athens Baptist Church. Interment will be at New Haven Cemetery in Ridgely, TN. The family will receive friends at the church in the fellowship hall from 2:30-3:30, Sunday following the service. Smith Funeral & Cremation Services of Athens is honored to serve the family of Dr. Robin L. Pierce, Jr.

Community Supports McMinn EMS Worker Following Major Heart Attack



The community is rallying behind longtime EMS worker Eric Johnson, who is recovering after suffering a major heart attack and multiple cardiac arrests last week. Johnson, who has served in emer-

gency services for over 37 years, was transported to Parkwest Medical Center in Knoxville, where doctors had to shock his heart nearly 60 times during emergency procedures.

The family has faced additional hardship, having lost Eric's wife just over a year ago. According to a fellow paramedic, Johnson had appeared to be in good health just hours before the incident

With Eric unable to work for the foreseeable future, a [GoFundMe](#) has been launched by friends to assist with medical and household expenses. So far, over \$4,000 has been raised. His son, Tyler Johnson, noted that financial support and prayers are both deeply appreciated as the family navigates this challenging time.

Johnson is now off the ventilator and showing slow signs of improvement. He remains on in-room dialysis and continues to receive care. The family is also using this experience to encourage others to take preventive steps for their heart health, reminding the community that cardiac events can strike unexpectedly. Source: [WBIR](#)

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