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**Tuesday, July 08, 2025**

**Page 1**

**Athens, Tennessee**

## Retired Cleveland State Nurse Educator Brings "Hope" to West Africa



*Nancy Thomas (front center) volunteers with the nursing program in Chinguetti. Front left is one of the program instructors, Nasr Rashad. Back row left to right: Ely Beissif, Doralee Gordon (volunteer nurse traveling with Thomas), Bodein Sleimane, and Dedah Kouneyella.*

Retired Cleveland State nursing instructor Nancy Thomas is continuing her mission to elevate the nursing profession by supporting *Espoir*, a medical training school in Chinguetti, Mauritania. With more than 40 years of nursing experience, including 16 years teaching at Cleveland State, Thomas began traveling to the West African town in 2023 after learning about the school through a friend. Founded by Dr. Amanda Beattie to train doctors and nurses in a medically underserved region, *Espoir* now benefits from Thomas's donated lesson plans, books, and equipment—including a maternity simulator no longer used at the college.

Despite limited technology and instruction in English for French- and Arabic-speaking students, the school graduated its first three nurses this spring. Thomas taught classes during her January visit and is now helping design a pre-nursing course to prepare incoming students. She plans to return in December as the school works to secure formal government approval and continue addressing the area's healthcare shortage—living out the Florence Nightingale Pledge by lifting up the next generation of nurses, one student at a time.

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Tuesday, July 08, 2025

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

Athens, Tennessee

## Fire Alarm Prompts Response at Etowah Funeral Home



A fire alarm at Poole Funeral Home and Cremation Services on Tennessee Avenue in Etowah triggered a multi-agency re-

sponse around noon on Sunday.

Etowah City Fire Department was first on the scene and reported a burning smell upon entering the building. As a precaution, additional support was requested from Etowah Rural and Englewood Rural Fire Departments, along with AMR and Etowah City Police.

After a thorough investigation, no active fire was found, and the building was deemed secure.

*Photo courtesy of Lynn Ingram, Englewood Rural Fire Department*

## Jim's Mattress & More opens new location in Athens

Get ready, Athens! The newest downtown addition has opened its doors for you to visit! There will be a [ribbon cutting](#) for the brand new location of [Jim's Mattress & More](#) located at 4 E. Washington Ave. in Athens **TOMORROW**, Wednesday, July 9 . The public is invited to attend the [Grand Opening Sale-a-Bration](#). The event begins at 10 a.m. with the ribbon cutting happening around 1 p.m.

[WYXI](#) will be broadcasting the event on FM 94.5 an AM 1390. There will be plenty of giveaways that the public can enter with **NO PURCHASE NECESSARY** including a **\$500 Gift Card to Jim's Mattress & More**. As an added bonus, everything in the store will be 15% off regular price.

[Taqueria El Organo](#) will have their food truck on-site selling authentic Mexican food, as well.

**LISTENING REMINDER: TODAY** on *Main Street Moments*: Host Maggie Blaine is solo today and will be interviewing herself! **She is checking-in from her hometown of McKenzie, TN.** The broadcast will be aired at 8:15 a.m. **TODAY** on WYXI RADIO: AM-1390 and FM-94.5.

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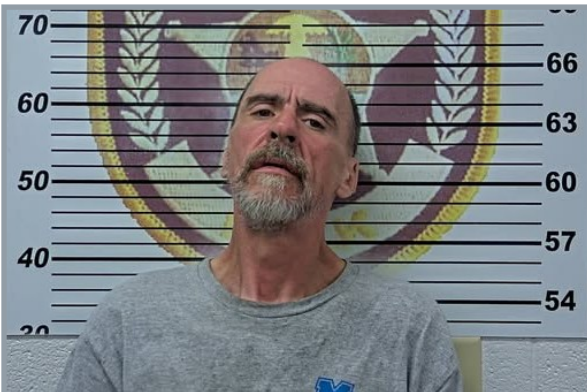
## Enrollment Events

For all students interested in starting this Fall

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## Suspect Caught - Truck & Trailer Recovered



The Polk County Sheriff's Office would like to thank the public, the Benton Police Department, the Madisonville Police Department, and the Vonore Police Department for their assistance and work in solving the theft of a truck and trailer that occurred recently. Deputy Logan Brooks and Detective Cody Day of the Polk County Sheriff's Office worked the case and found that Roy B. Perdew Jr. was the suspect in the theft. Roy B. Perdew Jr. has been apprehended on charges of Theft of Property (Over \$10,000) and Vandalism (Over \$2,500) and is currently being held on a "no bond" at the Polk County Jail. The pickup truck, trailer, and cargo have all been recovered! The public's assistance and good communication between law enforcement agencies was essential in the resolution of this case. Note: All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

The incident occurred at Burgess Hardware in Benton, TN where a white 2001 Chevrolet flatbed pickup with a black 24-foot gooseneck trailer were stolen. During the theft, a large number of round hay bales loaded on the trailer fell off and

were later found scattered along the roadway. **Source: Polk County TN Sheriff's Office's Post**

## Obituaries

**Jimmy Darrel Kyle**, 80 years old of Athens Tennessee passed away Saturday, July 5, 2025 at Starr Regional Rehab Center, Etowah, TN. Jimmy was born in Grundy, Virginia. Jimmy was an engineer for Norfolk Southern Railroad for 32 years in Grundy, Virginia. He was a member of Keith United Methodist Church in Athens, TN. To honor Jimmy's last request he will be cremated and there will be a family memorial gathering to scatter his ashes at a "special place" at a later date. Smith Funeral & Cremation Services of Athens is honored to serve the family of Jimmy Darrel Kyle.

**Vicki Lee Smallen Hernandez** was born March 16, 1953 in Loudon, TN. She passed away on July 1, 2025 at NHC of Athens, TN. Vicki was a graduate of Central High School in Etowah, TN. The family wishes to thank all of the employees at NHC of Athens. Vicki loved each and every one of them. They did a marvelous job caring for her. A memorial service will be held at a later date. Companion Funeral & Cremation Service of Athens, TN, and the Cody family are honored to assist her family with these arrangements.

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