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Friday, July 25, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

## Fire Destroys Home on Washington Avenue in Etowah



The Etowah City Fire Department responded to a house fire Wednesday around 1:30 p.m. on Washington Avenue in Etowah. When crews arrived, flames were visible at the front of the home.

Mutual aid was requested from Etowah Rural and Englewood Rural Fire Departments. Officials believe the fire originated at the front of the house, which sustained heavy fire and smoke damage. Fortunately, no one was home at the time.

Other responding agencies included Etowah City Police, McMinn County Hazmat Air Support, AMR, and Etowah Utilities Board. Etowah City Fire Chief Adam Hafley was in command of the scene.

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

As a reminder, Friday, August 1 is the first day of school at McMinn County Schools.  
Monday, August 4 is the first day of school with Athens City Schools. Both are abbreviated days

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Friday, July 25, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

## Community News You Can Use

- The McMinn County Highway Department would like to inform residents that McMinn County Road 285, Fleming Rd., will be closed on Monday, July 28 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for road construction.
- The Athens Federal Foundation announces that applications are now available for 2025 grants. Those applications can be downloaded and printed from the following link: [www.athensfederalfoundation.com](http://www.athensfederalfoundation.com). Charitable and non-profit organizations in the service area are encouraged to apply. Grant applications will be accepted from August 1-15, 2025 via email only to [athensfederalfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:athensfederalfoundation@gmail.com)

**We encourage you to e-mail community events, church news, or other items of interest for possible use in The Morning Fax. If you take a newsworthy photograph, send it to:**  
[wyradio@gmail.com](mailto:wyradio@gmail.com)

## Law Office of Leah Sauceman Celebrates Ribbon Cutting in Athens



The Athens Area Chamber of Commerce recently held a ribbon cutting ceremony to welcome the Law Office of Leah Sauceman as a new member. The firm is located at 14 N. White Street in downtown Athens.

Chamber representatives, county officials, family, and staff gathered to mark the occasion. The Law Office of Leah Sauceman focuses on Estate Planning and Probate Law, providing guidance in drafting wills and navigating the probate process. The firm also offers experienced legal services in Family Law, including adoptions, divorces, custody matters, and parenting plan modifications. Attorney Leah Sauceman brings over 12 years of experience to her practice, offering personalized and compassionate legal support to clients across the region.

Source: Julie Simbeck, Athens Area Chamber of Commerce


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Athens, Tennessee

## Church News and Events

- **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 in Athens. They also meet every **Thursday** at 6:00pm at Watts Bar Community Church in Decatur.
- Are you grieving the loss of someone close to you? Clearwater Baptist Church (964 County Road 180, Athens) is beginning a new session of Grief-Share helping those grieving find hope, comfort, and guidance. Beginning on Thursday, July 17th from 6 pm - 7:30 pm there will be an ongoing (in 13 week rotations) grief support group that you can join at any time and is open to the community. For more info visit: [clearwaterbc.org/grief-share](http://clearwaterbc.org/grief-share) (Notify them in advance if childcare is needed.)
- The next Christian Men's Prayer Breakfast sponsored by New Hope Methodist Church will occur on Thursday, August 7 at 8 a.m. at Maddi Mae's Cafe in downtown Athens. This ecumenical prayer breakfast is open to all men of Christian faith plus those who want to establish a relationship with Jesus. Please contact Marcus Guinn ([marcusguinn@gmail.com](mailto:marcusguinn@gmail.com) or 423-507-7769) for more information. (See their ad above)
- Greater Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church will be celebrating their 150-year anniversary this coming Sunday, July 27 with their service beginning at 10:30 a.m. The guests will be Rev. Tiki Dixon and St. Mark AME Zion Church. The public is invited to attend and the church is located at 414 Chester St. in Athens.
- Pleasant Hill Baptist Church (1923 Pleasant Hill Rd., Ten Mile) will be hosting their Community Meal this Saturday 7/26 from 12pm – 2pm. Featured Food includes: Baked Spaghetti, Chicken Alfredo and Baked Sandwiches alongside dessert and a drink. There is no cost, and everyone is invited to enjoy fellowship and a great meal.

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Athens, Tennessee

## Cleveland State Grad Reinvents Career After 25 Years at Coca-Cola

After more than two decades working at Coca-Cola United, Polk County native Jeff “Cubby” Culberson made a life-changing decision to return to school and pursue a new career path. Now 50, Culberson recently completed Cleveland State Community College’s mechatronics certificate program and is working as a Maintenance Technician at the same company where he spent much of his career.

Culberson, who started at Coca-Cola United in 1995, had previously taken classes at Cleveland State after high school but said he wasn’t ready to take them seriously. Decades later, with encouragement from a manager and access to tuition-free classes through Tennessee Reconnect, he enrolled again—this time balancing night shifts with college coursework.

The hands-on training in the mechatronics program mirrored his day-to-day responsibilities, including work with motors, conveyors, and production lines. Culberson credits the program’s instructors for helping him gain both the technical knowledge and confidence to grow professionally. Graduating in May 2024, Culberson said returning to school later in life was a challenge, but one he’s proud to have completed. His story reflects the impact of adult education opportunities like Tennessee Reconnect, which allows qualifying adults to attend community college tuition-free.

For more information about Cleveland State’s mechatronics program, contact [advanced\\_technologies@clevelandstatecc.edu](mailto:advanced_technologies@clevelandstatecc.edu) or call (423) 473 -2447. *Source: Andrea Byerly, CSCC*



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Athens, Tennessee

## Obituaries

**Betty Green Hutsell**, 89 of Athens, passed away Tuesday, July 22 at Dominion Senior Living. She was a life-long member of East Athens Baptist Church. She was a Bank officer having worked with AmSouth Bank, Farmer's Bank and FS&G Bank for over 50 years until her retirement. A graveside service for family and friends will be conducted, 2:00 pm, Monday, July 28 at McMinn Memory Gardens. Smith Funeral & Cremation Services of Athens is honored to serve the family of Betty Green Hutsell.

**Roy Lynn Nivens**, 70 of Etowah, passed away Monday, July 21. Roy Lynn was an Army veteran, an active long-time member of Amvets Post 100. He served one year as the Post Commander and over ten years as Judge Advocate at Amvets Post 100. Funeral services will be held at 1:00 p.m., Friday, July 25 in the chapel of Bordwine Funeral Home. The family will receive friends from 11:00 to 1:00 p.m., Friday prior to the service. Interment will follow the service in Coghill Cemetery.

**Sheila Drake Yarbrough**, 72 of Athens, passed away on Wednesday, July 23. Sheila was a licensed cosmetologist for over 30 years. She loved thrifting and gathering treasures, reading, listening to music, and traveling. Sheila's funeral will be held at Companion Funeral Home (400 S. White Street, Athens, TN) on Sunday, July 27. The family will receive friends from 2-4 p.m. with the funeral service beginning at 4 p.m. Burial will immediately follow at Etowah Community Cemetery. Companion Funeral & Cremation Service of Athens, TN, and the Cody family are honored to assist her family with these arrangements.

**Stacy Dewayne "Bubby" Moses** passed away on Tuesday, July 22. He was a member of New Bethel Baptist Church of Etowah and a lifelong resident of McMinn County. Stacy was a mechanic by trade. The family will be having a private celebration at a later date. Companion Funeral & Cremation Service of Athens, TN, and the Cody family are honored to assist his family with these arrangements.

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