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Wednesday, August 6, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

TWU Students Conduct Cutting-Edge Research at Oak Ridge National Lab



Three Tennessee Wesleyan University students spent their summer gaining hands-on experience at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL), the nation's largest science and energy research facility.

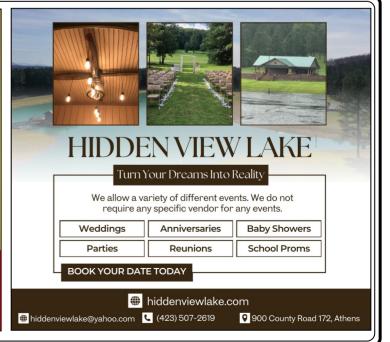
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Biology majors Sarah Lynne Northrop and Jacelyn Stone, along with chemistry major Kaelyn Pluta, represented TWU's Natural Sciences department through a competitive research internship program that paired them with TWU faculty and leading ORNL scientists. Northrop and Stone worked along-side TWU's Dr. Mali Hubert and ORNL researcher Dr. Matthew Craig to study how tree community composition affects soil organic carbon (SOC) responses to environmental changes such as drought and rewetting. Their research focused on the Birch effect—a process in which rewetting dry soil triggers a surge in microbial activity and carbon dioxide release. Pluta collaborated with TWU chemistry professor Dr. Oksana Gerlits and ORNL scientist Dr. Hugh O'Neill to investigate phase separation in the cellulose synthase 1 protein complex, a key player in plant cell wall formation.

"These research experiences not only deepen scientific understanding but also empower our students with the skills and confidence to lead in the sciences," said Dr. Hubert.

Tennessee Wesleyan University praised the students' contributions to advancing national research efforts and highlighted the program as a vital part of preparing students for careers in science. *Source: Chrisi Jackson, TWU*





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Athens, Tennessee

Etowah's Landon Plemons Earns Eagle Scout Award



Landon Plemons, a member of Boy Scout Troop 74 in Etowah, received the prestigious Eagle Scout Award—the highest rank in the Boy Scouts of America—during a special ceremony held Sunday afternoon, August 3, at Etowah First Baptist Church.

Former Scout Master Roy Johnson (pictured on left) presented the award, standing alongside Landon (center-left) and his proud parents, Amber and Michael Plemons (center-right and right respectively). The Eagle Scout rank recognizes outstanding leadership, service, and commitment to the principles of Scouting.

Photo by Gene Choate

◆ Tomorrow on *Hope From the Well*, host **Julie Tillis** invites Robin Nation to the program to discuss "Pray & Declare." *Hope From the Well* is heard every Thursday at 8:15 a.m. on WYXI RADIO, AM-1390 & FM-94.5.

AACA to Host Exhibit on East Tennessee Labor Uprising Through Graphic Novel Art

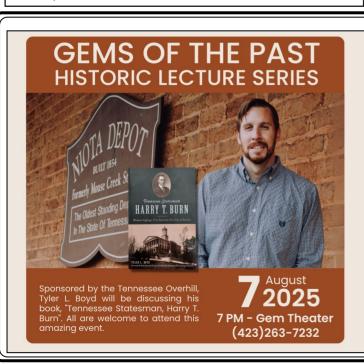


The Athens Area Council for the Arts will present *Trouble! At Coal Creek*, an exhibit by Tennessee artist and community organizer Austin Sauerbrei, from August 18 to September 26 at The Arts Center's Peggy Dow Performance Center.

Based on Sauerbrei's graphic novel of the same name, the exhibit tells the story of the Coal Creek War, a historic labor uprising in East Tennessee. The

display features original artwork from the book, draft pages at various stages of development, historical photographs, newspaper clippings, and an eight-minute video interview with a local historian who contributed to the project.

Sauerbrei, a lifelong comics enthusiast, uses visual storytelling as a form of popular education. He currently serves as Director of Statewide Organizing for Community eMpowerment (SOCM), a member-led advocacy group. He lives in Athens with his wife, Rev. Claire Brown, and their three children. An opening reception will take place Friday, September 12, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., offering refreshments and the chance to meet the artist. Admission to both the exhibit and reception is free. For more information, visit their webpage online at athensartscouncil.org/exhibitions. Source: Lauren Brown, Executive Director, AACA









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Athens, Tennessee

Friendly City Festivals Presents Kinslee Melhorn on Saturday, August 9



Friendly City Festivals announces the fifth concert in the 13th Annual Sounds of Summer series will feature local favorite Kinslee Melhorn. The concert will be held at Market Pavilion at 106 S. Jackson Street in downtown Athens, Tennessee starting at 7:00 p.m. this Saturday, August 9th. Concert goers are encouraged to bring their lawn chairs, blankets, family and friends for a toe tapping hand clapping night of entertainment. Food truck for the evening will be Kona Ice.

Kinslee is a county/pop singer-songwriter from Decatur, Tennessee. She blends personal story telling with the inspiration of her favorite artists like Taylor Swift, The Chicks and Jo Dee Messina. Known for her variety of cover songs and originals, Kinslee has taken the stage at festivals across the state including Cornbread Festival, Strawberry Festival, MooFest and multiple venues throughout her former home of Nashville. Her music can be found on all streaming platforms and you can follow her on her Facebook page Kinslee Melhorn Music for upcoming performance dates. Special thanks to backup band September Song.

The last concert in the 2025 Sounds of Summer series will feature Mendingwall with opening act Nate Viele on Saturday, August 16th.

This free to the public series is produced by Friendly City Festivals, a 501(c)3 subsidiary of Willsonthropic, Inc. and is made possible by the financial support of: The City of Athens Tourism Fund, McMinn County Tourism Board, Madison Avenue Pharmacy, Tennessee Overhill Association, Tennessee Arts Commission, Mayfield Dairy Farm, DENSO, Tonya Phenix/Senior Advisor Insurance, VEC Customer Shares, Citizens National Bank of Sevier County, Valley Oil, Starr Regional Medical Center, Kona Ice, Simmons Bank, Pendleton's Playground, Simmons Wealth Management Group, WarrenJackson CPAs, Athens Kiwanis Club, Athens Insurance and The Retirement Guys. Special thanks to The Daily Post Athenian, The Morning Fax and Athens Area Chamber of Commerce for media/advertising support. Written by: Meredith Wilson, Friendly City Festivals, Willsonthropic, Inc.







Never Miss an Update!



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Athens, Tennessee

Starr Regional Adds 24/7 Tele-ICU Services in Athens and Etowah

Starr Regional Medical Center has implemented a 24/7 teleintensive care unit (tele-ICU) service at its Athens and Etowah campuses, enhancing critical care access for patients in McMinn County.

The new service connects on-site ICU and emergency department staff with board-certified critical care physicians using a secure telehealth platform developed by Equum Medical and powered by Caregility. Through in-room devices equipped with high-definition cameras and two-way communication tools, remote specialists can assess patients, guide treatment plans, respond to emergencies, and conduct virtual rounds with hospital staff. The tele-ICU program currently supports the hospital's five-bed ICU and will expand to include five additional beds after completion of a \$12 million renovation and expansion project at the Athens campus. The project also includes medical technology upgrades and modernization of patient care areas.

The addition of tele-ICU services is part of Starr Regional's broader efforts to increase access to specialized care, reduce patient transfers, and improve treatment outcomes in a rural health-care setting. More information is available on their webpage at StarrRegional.com/telehealth.

Obituaries

David Ray Millsaps, 81 of McMinn County, passed away on Sunday, August 3. David was a dedicated member of Trinity United Methodist Church in Athens. He worked for over three decades as a milk receiver at Mayfield Dairy Farms, where he was known for his hard work and dependability. He also served his community as a constable for a time and later as a private process server, always taking pride in doing his job with integrity. Family will receive friends on Thursday, August 7 at Companion Funeral Home of Athens from 4-6pm followed by a service. David's wishes were to be cremated following his service. Companion Funeral & Cremation Service of Athens, TN, and the Cody family are honored to serve the Millsaps family during this time

James Edward Moore, 77 of Englewood, passed away on Friday, August 1. James proudly served his country in the United States Army during the Vietnam War. He later earned his bachelor's degree in organizational management from Tusculum College. James worked as an engineer at Bowater, where he retired after 23 years. He was a faithful member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. A Funeral Service will be held on Saturday, August 9 at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Athens at 1:00pm. Visitation will be held prior from 11:00am - 1:00pm. A Military Graveside Service will follow the service at Mars Hill Cemetery in Englewood. Companion Funeral & Cremation Service of Athens, TN, and the Cody family are honored to assist his family with these arrangements.



