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Sliger's Jewelers Celebrates 80 Years of Family Tradition in Athens



A downtown Athens business with deep family roots is marking a major milestone this year. **Sliger's Jewelers** is celebrating 80 years of serving the community.

Corbit and Hazel Sliger first opened the store after returning to Tennessee from California during the Great Depression. The couple initially set up shop inside Johnson's Hardware Store — now known as Johnson's Home Furnishings — before relocating a few years later across the street to 116 East Washington Avenue, where the business remains today.

In 1974, Corbit and Hazel retired and sold the store to their son, Gene Sliger, and his wife, Pat. The couple has now owned the business for 51 years. Their son, Stephen Sliger, joined the family enterprise in 1983 and specializes in jewelry repair. A trained metallurgist, Stephen provides expert craftsmanship and restoration services.

Through changing trends and evolving styles, Sliger's Jewelers has continued to offer a wide selection of diamond rings, pendants and earrings, along with Seiko and Bulova watches, clocks, engravable items and a complete gift line for special occasions. The store also provides professional jewelry repairs and complimentary gift wrapping.

A symbol of the store's longevity still hangs outside — the original illuminated sign installed by Corbit Sliger in 1958 remains in place today.

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

Athens, Tennessee

Three Fire Departments Battle Sunday House Fire in McMinn County



More than 40 firefighters from three departments responded to a residential fire Sunday afternoon on County Road 213 near the 300 block. Just after 4 p.m., crews were dispatched to a reported blaze at an approximately 1,800-square-foot, single

-story home. Neighbors, noticing smoke and flames coming from the residence, called 911. No one was home at the time of the fire. Several pets inside the home were safely rescued.

Firefighters with the **Athens Rural Fire Department**, **Clearwater Rural Fire Department**, and **Niota Rural Fire Department** worked to bring the blaze under control. Robbie Carroll served as incident commander. Also responding to the scene were the McMinn County Hazmat Team, the McMinn County Sheriff's Department, AMR, and McMinn County Chaplain Scott Duckworth. As with all residential structure fires, the cause remains under investigation.

Photo provided by David Prater, Niota Rural FD

Single-Vehicle Crash Reported Sunday Night in McMinn County



Emergency crews responded to a single-vehicle crash Sunday night near County Road 350 on High-

way 307.

Just after 9 p.m., a late-model Honda Civic left the roadway with one male occupant inside. The driver was evaluated at the scene by paramedics and released.

Responding agencies included AMR, the Niota Rural Fire Department, and the McMinn County Sheriff's Department. Chad Gates was in charge of the scene.

The crash remains under investigation by DJ Taylor, a trooper with the Tennessee Highway Patrol.

Photo provided by David Prater, Niota Rural FD

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Wednesday, March 04, 2026 Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 4 **Athens, Tennessee**

Pickup Truck Fire Reported Monday Afternoon in McMinn County



A vehicle fire was reported Monday afternoon on County Road 260 near the intersection of County Road 263.

Around 12:30 p.m., the driver of a 2001 Ford pickup noticed smoke coming from under the hood and pulled over. Emergency crews were dispatched to the scene.

The Niota Rural Fire Department responded, with Chief Travis Newberry in charge. Sgt. Sarah Cook with the McMinn County Sheriff's Department is investigating the cause of the incident.

No injuries were reported.

Photo courtesy of David Prater, Niota Rural FD




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Wednesday, March 04, 2026

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

Athens, Tennessee

McMinn County Arrest Reports

March 02, 2026

Tina Headon, 45 of Athens, charged with conspiracy to commit a felony, and theft of property a firearm, Bond \$10,000.

Patrick Wiseman, 36 of Athens, charged with conspiracy to commit a felony, domestic assault, and theft of property a firearm, Bond \$14,000.

David Neal, 24 of Athens, charged with domestic assault, Bond \$1,000.

Berean Marcedo, 20 of Athens, charged with domestic assault, Bond \$1,000.

Christopher McClure, 52 of Athens, charged with state violation of probation for possession of meth for resale, Bond \$500.

James Rawls, 59 of Athens, charged with possession of meth, simple possession, casual exchange of schedule I mushrooms, evading arrest, and driving on a suspended license.

Anthony Martin, 25 of Athens, charged with violation of probation for possession of paraphernalia, Bond \$1,354.95.

Daniel Janvron, 41 of Athens, charged with misuse of 911.

Jacob Burnett, 20 of Soddy Daisy, charged for casual exchange, possession of meth, Resisting stop, and theft of property in Bradley County, Bond \$13,000.

Those accused are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Information gathered using public sources.

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Wednesday, March 04, 2026

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

Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

Nancy Sue Brite Perdue passed away peacefully on February 19 at Willow Acres Assisted Living surrounded by love. She was born in Springfield, MO. Nancy lived a life marked with kindness, a generous heart and a beautiful smile. Throughout her life, she dedicated her time and talents to serving her Lord and Savior, her family and her community leaving a lasting impression on everyone fortunate enough to know her. She was the Director of the McMinn Education Foundation and was involved in community groups like the Garden Club and Altar Guild. A celebration of life service will be held on, Saturday, March 7, 2026, 12:30pm, at Smith Funeral Home Chapel. The family will receive friends at the Funeral Home from 11am-12:30pm prior to the service. Smith Funeral & Cremation Services of Athens is honored to serve the family of Nancy Sue Brite Perdue.

Marilyn Arnold Rowden, 83, of Athens, passed away Monday, March 9, 2026 at Terra Bella Assisted Living. She was a native of Rhea County Tennessee and longtime resident of McMinn County. Marilyn was an active member of Keith Memorial United Methodist Church since moving to Athens in 1964 serving as a Member of Catherine Keith Circle and Wesley Sunday School class, was a former nursery worker, Acolyte trainer and supported Meals on Wheels. She was active in community events serving as Past-President of the local chapter of the American Cancer Society, co-chairing "Relay for Life", past president of the Ladies Golf Association, Springbrook Golf & Country Club, and The Kim Rowden Memorial for Advanced Studies of Breast Disease, working with the founder Dr. Kamilia Kozlowski to provide screening and treatment for East Tennessee Women who have no insurance through her daughter Kim's Memorial. A funeral service will be conducted, 2:00 pm, Monday, March 9, 2026 in the chapel of Smith Funeral Home. The interment will follow in Cedar Grove Cemetery. The family will receive friends from 12:00-2:00 pm Monday prior to the service. Smith Funeral & Cremation Services of Athens is honored to serve the family of Marilyn Arnold Rowden.

Tennessee Wesleyan to Host Dental Hygiene Program Open House

Tennessee Wesleyan University will host an open house for its Dental Hygiene Program on March 14, 2026, from 10 a.m. to noon. Guests are invited to remain on campus following the event for a complimentary lunch and additional time with faculty and staff. The open house will give prospective students an opportunity to tour the university's dental hygiene facilities, meet faculty members and current students, and learn more about the program's curriculum and career pathways. University officials say the program features hands-on learning in modern dental hygiene labs designed to reflect real-world clinical settings. The program also emphasizes small class sizes, individualized faculty mentorship, and professional readiness through clinical preparation. Attendees will be able to ask questions about admissions requirements, financial aid, clinical experiences, and employment opportunities in the dental hygiene field. Those interested in attending are encouraged to RSVP through the university's website [HERE](#).

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