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Remembering the Crucifixion of our Lord

Friday, April 3rd at 7pm

Tuesday, March 31, 2026

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Athens, Tennessee

Athens Firefighters Contain Structure Fire on Velma Road

Firefighters with the City of Athens Fire Department responded to a structure fire Thursday night on Velma Drive, quickly bringing the blaze under control and preventing further damage.

Crews were dispatched around 9:30 p.m. on March 26 and arrived to find heavy fire on the left side of the home, with flames extending from a burning stack of pallets into the structure. Firefighters deployed multiple attack lines, entered the residence, and located additional fire in the ceiling and roof void space, which was extinguished during suppression efforts.

Six occupants were displaced as a result of the fire, and the American Red Cross was contacted to assist with temporary housing and support. AFD Chief Brandon Ainsworth praised the response, stating, "Rapid response and decisive firefighting efforts by our crews prevented the situation from escalating further."

The Athens Police Department assisted with scene control, while AMR provided firefighter rehabilitation. The cause of the fire remains under investigation. *Source: [City of Athens FD - Facebook](#)*

Stolen Camper Recovered in Lenoir City

A stolen camper reported in Philadelphia has been recovered following an investigation by the Monroe County Sheriff's Office.



Authorities said the camper was reported stolen on March 19 around 11:30 a.m. The owner had allowed her son to live in the camper, but while he was incarcerated, his ex-girlfriend allegedly removed it from the property without permission.

Detectives were able to track the camper to Lenoir City, where it was located and returned to the owner. Officials said the investigation remains ongoing.

Source: [Sheriff Tommy Jones - Facebook](#)

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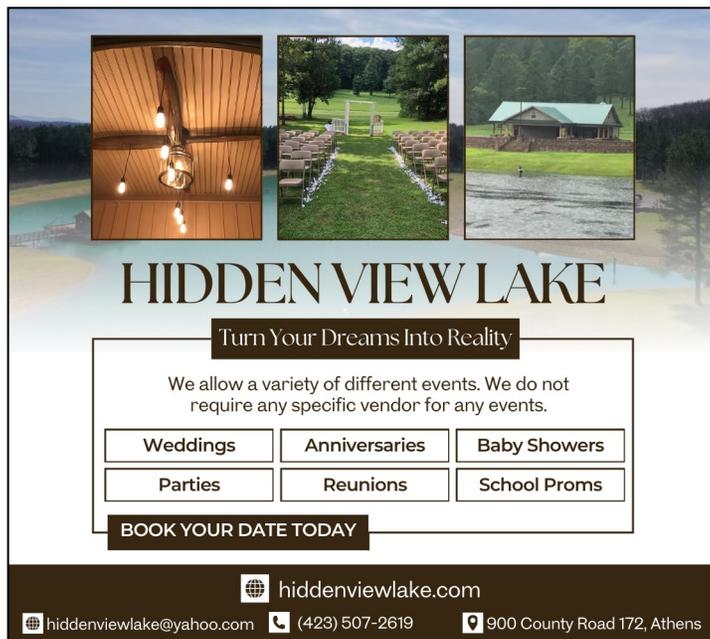


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1st 2022 BEST OF THE BEST

Tuesday, March 31, 2026 Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 2 Athens, Tennessee

Arts Council Opens Registration for April Classes



The Athens Area Council for the Arts is now accepting registrations for a variety of upcoming art classes at The Arts Center in Athens, with options available for teens and adults of varying skill levels.

Among the offerings is a free Live Drawing Studio session for ages 16 and older on Wednesday, April 8, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The session is open to all experience levels and allows participants to practice gesture and portrait drawing using a live (clothed) model. While no instruction is provided, easels and drawing boards are available, and participants are encouraged to bring their own materials and a small cash contribution for the model.

A Watercolor Studio class with instructor Sandy Brown will be held April 9 and 16 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Designed for intermediate to advanced artists, the course focuses on refining technique through critique, composition, and developing unity within paintings. The two-session class costs \$40, and students must provide their own supplies.

For those interested in ceramics, a seven-week Pottery Wheel class with Patricia Shook will run Tuesdays from April 14 through May 26, from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. The \$210 course covers foundational skills such as wedging, centering, and forming pottery, with all materials included. Additionally, current and former pottery students can sign up for open studio time for \$20 per month.

Participants are asked to register at least three days in advance. Registration is available online, by phone, or in person at The Arts Center, with in-person and phone registration avoiding online transaction fees.

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Tuesday, March 31, 2026

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 3

Athens, Tennessee

McMinn County Arrest Reports

March 29, 2026

Terrence Cochran, 46 of Etowah, charged with failure to appear for driving on a suspended license, Bond \$2000.

Tyler Johnson, 40 of Etowah, charged with child support, failure to appear for DUI, failure to appear for possession of meth for resale, Unlawful carry or possession of a weapon by a convicted felon, Bond \$5,000.

Ashley Gammie, 33 of Englewood, charged with failure to appear for disorderly conduct, state violation of probation for burglary other than habitation or non-public building.

Andrew Green, 34 of Athens, charged with DUI, leaving the scene of an accident, failure to give notice of an accident, violation of the open container law, assault against a first responder, disorderly conduct, driving on a revoked license, public intoxication, and retaliation for past action, Bond \$25,500.

Jose Lopez Perez, 31 of Cleveland, charged with DUI, and driving without a license, Bond \$6,000.

Robbie McKeehan, 50 of Athens, charged with fraudulent use of a credit card, financial exploitation of an elderly or vulnerable person, Bond \$15,000.

Those accused are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. Information gathered using public sources.

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Armed Man Arrested Near Sweetwater School, Charged with Multiple Offenses



An armed man was arrested Thursday outside a school in Sweetwater after being spotted on campus during an ongoing investigation.

According to police, officers with the Sweetwater Police Department were searching for a suspect who had allegedly made threats toward a local business and the Monroe County Justice Center. A school resource officer and an off-duty officer then observed a suspicious individual on the grounds of Brown Intermediate School.

The school was placed on a soft lockdown as a precaution while officers responded. The suspect, identified as Damarcus Taylor, was taken into custody without incident. Authorities recovered a small metal baseball bat and a knife during the arrest.

Taylor faces multiple charges, including carrying weapons on school property, harassment, threats of mass violence on school property, and disrupting a meeting or procession.

Source: WATE

Obituaries

Nellie Faye Duncan Baxter, longtime resident of Englewood, passed away on Sunday, March 29. She was a member of Englewood Church of God for over 48 years. The family will receive friends on Wednesday, April 1 from 12:00-2:00 PM at Englewood Church of God. Funeral services will follow at 2:00 PM at the church with interment services afterwards at Hampton Cemetery in Englewood. Ziegler Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Nellie Faye Duncan Baxter.

Derick Ralph Brown, 41, of Ten Mile, passed away on Friday, March 27. Derick was a fun-loving person, people loved being around and he always had a smile on his face. The family will receive friends from 11:30 – 1:30 pm Wednesday, April 1 at Good Samaritan Funeral Home in Athens with the funeral at 1:30pm. Interment will follow at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church Cemetery, Ten Mile. Good Samaritan Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

Betty Jean Webb Byars, of Athens, has passed away. She was a teacher of three-year-olds at Forrest Hills Daycare in Athens. She retired in 1996 after 21 years. A graveside service will be 2 PM, Thursday, April 2nd at McMinn Memory Gardens, Athens, TN. Good Samaritan Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

Susan Richeson Lee, 63, went to be with the Lord on March 27, 2026. She was born in Athens. She attended school and was part of the last graduating class at the old McMinn County High School; the Class of 1980. She was the sister of Vickie (John) Proffitt of Athens. Receiving of friends will be held on Tuesday, March 31, 2026 from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm in the chapel of Kyker Funeral Home, Sweetwater. Funeral Services will immediately follow at 7:00 pm with Rev. Jeffrey Haney and Rev. Todd Humbert officiating. Interment will be held on Wednesday, April 1, 2026 at the cemetery of Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church at 11:00 am. Kyker Funeral Home, Sweetwater is honored to serve the family.

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