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Wednesday, May 27, 2026

Page 1

Athens, Tennessee

Small Grease Fire Fills Michael's Restaurant with Smoke



Fire crews responded to Michael's Restaurant on Highway 411 North Thursday afternoon after smoke was reported inside the building around 2:30 p.m. When firefighters arrived, they found the restaurant filled with smoke that had drifted in from an adjacent business, where employees had already extinguished a small grease fire.

The fire itself was contained quickly, but smoke migrated into Michael's, prompting the emergency response. Etowah City Fire and Etowah Rural Fire both responded to the scene.

Photo by Etowah Rural FD

Community News You Can Use

- The Nancy Dender Gallery in Etowah will open a special exhibit of regional artist Bill McDonald on May 28, 2026, with an artist reception on May 30 from 4–6 p.m.; hosted by the Etowah Arts Commission, the show highlights McDonald's paintings of rural Southeast Tennessee and Southern Appalachian life.
- The Meigs Decatur Public Library will host a free beekeeping presentation by Jeff Long on Saturday, May 30, from 12–1 p.m. Long, a Calhoun beekeeper of 10 years and member of the Cherokee Beekeepers Association, will discuss beekeeping basics, the importance of bees, and will bring an observation hive with live bees. The library is located at 120 E. Memorial Drive in Decatur. Call 423-334-3332 for details.
- E.G. Fisher Public Library is seeking summer volunteers (ages 12+) to help with the Summer Reading Kick-Off Party, prize wheel, and events; a great way to earn service hours—apply online at: <https://forms.gle/NgkDD6KPkFZAiwK>.

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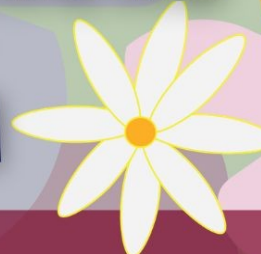
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MOMENTS of Praise
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PASTOR PETE MULLINS
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31st Annual Athens Soap Box Derby Rolls Out Saturday

The 31st Annual Athens Soap Box Derby will take place this Saturday, May 30, as Keith Lane is once again transformed into a downhill racetrack for one of the city's longest-running youth sporting traditions. The event serves as Athens' qualifier for the 88th All-American Soap Box Derby World Championships in Akron, Ohio, set for July 11-18.

Racers will compete in two divisions: Stock (ages 7-13, combined racing weight 200 lbs.) and Super Stock (ages 9-18, combined racing weight 240 lbs.). Organizers say drivers are still needed in both divisions, and a limited number of cars remain available on a first-come, first-served basis.

In preparation for race day, car inspections and official weigh-ins will continue on Thursday, May 28, from 5-9 p.m. in the gym at Keith Memorial United Methodist Church, 600 West Madison Avenue. Both Stock and Super Stock cars may check in during this drop-in period. Cars arrive in racing condition without screws in the top so inspectors can verify construction meets official rules. Racers should bring tools in case adjustments are needed, though organizers note that experienced teams and volunteers will be on hand to help. Cars weigh roughly 62 pounds before weights are added to reach the required racing totals.

On race day, Keith Lane will close at 4 a.m. from Cedar Springs to Powers Path. Residents may enter only at the Crestway intersection; all other access is restricted to derby traffic. The gravity-powered cars ride just 3.5 inches off the ground, reach speeds of about 21 mph, and race on a 950-foot track. Each heat consists of two electronically timed runs with lane and wheel swaps, with the lowest combined time determining the winner.

Practice begins at 7:15 a.m., followed by opening ceremonies at 8:00 a.m. and racing immediately afterward. Admission is free, and live coverage will air on WYXI AM 1390 and FM 94.5. *See graphic below.*

For more information, contact Athens Parks & Recreation at 423-744-2704.



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SPECIAL REPORTS OF THE LOCAL ATHENS RACE BEGINNING AT 10 AM ON SATURDAY, MAY 30

NATIONAL-INTERNATIONAL AKRON RACE IS SATURDAY JULY 18

WEEKLONG COVERAGE BEGINS ON MONDAY, JULY 13

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Athens Lions - 17th Annual Moooooo Run!!!



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Please see DSS for details on drawing. The drawing will be held at 11am on May 31st, if you would like to attend.



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McMinn County Arrest Reports

May 25, 2026

Ashley Crowder, 27 of Athens, charged with aggravated child abuse and neglect, Bond \$100,000.

Cornelius Hurst, 18 of Athens, charged with domestic assault, and simple possession casual exchange of Schedule 6.

Linda Melton, 60 of Athens, charged with aggravated felony assault.

James Walker, 58 of Niota, charged with violation of probation for driving on a revoked license, Bond \$640.95.

Caleb Newton, 35 of Etowah, charged with simple possession casual exchange of schedule 2 meth, schedule 4 xanax, and child support, Bond \$3,712.02.

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

Cadillac Overturns on County Road 480 in Englewood



A 2013 Cadillac CTS overturned Sunday afternoon on County Road 480 in Englewood after the driver lost control of the vehicle shortly before 3 p.m. The car struck an embankment and flipped.

The driver was injured and treated on scene by AMR, but did not require transport to the hospital. Englewood Rural Fire and Etowah Rural Fire responded to the crash, and THP Trooper Logan Ballew is investigating.

Photo by Lynn Ingram, Englewood Rural FD

Obituaries

Kimberlie Lois Edmonson, 61, of Athens, TN went to her eternal home on Sunday, May 24, 2026. Kim was a devout Christian who loved the Lord with all her heart. She enjoyed the outdoors and could be found most days out "Playing in the Yard". She got great joy in planting flowers and watching them grow. She also loved to plant and grow her vegetable garden. Her greatest joy was her children and her grandchildren. A memorial service will be planned in the near future. Good Samaritan Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Larry Wayne Lunsford, age 78, a native and lifelong resident of Athens, passed away on Saturday, May 23, 2026. He was an avid outdoorsman, loved fishing and hunting, spending time with his grandchildren, and loved any kind of sports. Larry was very talented in woodworking and artistry. A Celebration of Life will be announced at a later date. Ziegler Funeral Home has been entrusted with the care of Larry Wayne Lunsford.

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golden years without
wondering what comes next.**

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