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Athens City Council Fires City Manager Without Cause



Athens City Manager Dr. Randall Dowling has been terminated following a 3-2 vote by the Athens City Council following a special session on Thursday, June 4. The reason for his termination was not specified. The decision came during a pair of council meetings, where members discussed the potential impact a change in city leadership could have on ongoing retail development projects in Athens. No specific reasons for Dowling's termination were publicly provided. Discussion surrounding the matter was largely held during executive sessions, which are closed to the public. During the 5:30 pm meeting, council members discussed retail projects that are being considered for Athens and concerns that those opportunities could be affected by changes in the city manager's position. A second item of discussion involved Mayor Larry Eaton's belief that two previous executive sessions may have violated state law. As part of the City's contract with Dr. Dowling, he will receive six months of severance pay and \$30,000. Executive Assistant Bridget Roberts will be serving as the Interim City Manager. Source: Local3News.com

City of Athens Official Photo Left to Right: Councilmember John Duggan, Vice Mayor Jordan Curtis, Mayor Larry Eaton, Councilmember Steven Sherlin, Councilmember Perry McCowan

City of Athens Official Photo Left to Right: Councilmember John Duggan, Vice Mayor Jordan Curtis, Mayor Larry Eaton, Councilmember Steven Sherlin, Councilmember Perry McCowan

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Friday, June 05, 2026

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

Athens, Tennessee

Athens to Host 34-Team Youth Baseball Tournament



Elite TN Tournaments will bring 34 youth baseball teams to Athens this weekend for the Elite Championships, with games taking place at Athens Regional Park and McMinn County Bicentennial Park.

The two-day event features pool play on Saturday and single-elimination bracket play on Sunday, with teams traveling from across Tennessee and Georgia. Organizers expect the tournament to draw hundreds of players and family members to the area.

The tournament coincides with MooFest, creating a busy weekend for Athens and providing an anticipated boost to local businesses and sales tax revenue. Residents should expect increased traffic around tournament venues and throughout the city.

Source: Matthew Siniard, City of Athens

Future Lady Cherokee Flag Football Camp Set for July at MCHS

McMinn County High School is gearing up for its annual Future Lady Cherokee Flag Football Camp, inviting girls in grades 3–8 to take the field this summer. The two-day camp will run Tuesday, July 7 and Thursday, July 9 from 6–8 p.m. at Cherokee Stadium, offering young athletes a hands-on introduction to the fast-growing sport.

Participants will receive instruction in football fundamentals, take part in skills competitions, and work directly with current Lady Cherokee players and coaching staff. Organizers say the camp is designed to build confidence, teamwork, and foundational skills for girls interested in the program.

Registration is now open, and families may contact **Coach Jason Cardin** at his email for details:

jcardin@mcmminnschools.com

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Friday, June 05, 2026

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Athens, Tennessee

Church News & Events

- Redemption to the Nations Church will be handing out free food boxes on **Friday, June 12** from 6:30–7:30 p.m. The church is located at 2329 Clearwater Road in Athens.
- Watts Bar Community Church will host its monthly “Man Up Breakfast” on **Saturday, June 6 at 9 a.m.** at 1517 TN–Highway 68 near Decatur. All men of any age are invited for food and fellowship, regardless of church affiliation. The church is located on the hill on the right on Hwy. 68 going toward Watts Bar Dam.
- First United Presbyterian Church, invites the community to Sunday School on the 1st and 3rd Sundays at 9:30 a.m., followed by Morning Worship at 10 a.m. Services are held at 321 N. Jackson St., Athens, and are also available via Facebook Live. Minister Juanita McClure Lewis serves as pastor.
- Woodward Church of God will host a three-day indoor yard sale supporting its Operation Christmas Child ministry. Hours are June 4–5 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and June 6 from 8 to 11 a.m. at 507 Woodward Ave., Athens. Proceeds will benefit children around the world.
- **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 and Thursdays at **6:30pm** at **Spirit City Church North Etowah**.
- Tim Zimmerman & The King’s Brass will lead worship at First United Methodist Church, 3425 Ocoee St. North, Cleveland, on Sunday, June 7 at 10:45 a.m. The group is celebrating its 48th anniversary season. Performing more than 150 concerts a year, The King’s Brass is praised by critics as “superb in every way” and “truly unforgettable.”
- **St. Mary’s Legacy Clinic** offers free mobile medical care for the uninsured. Anyone who is medically uninsured is eligible to receive care. **St. Mary’s Catholic Church (1291 E Madson Ave, Athens) is the McMinn County location and accepts patients every 3rd Thursday of the month.**
- Union Hill Baptist Church will host “Let Me Tell You About My Jesus” Vacation Bible School on Saturday, June 6 at 10 a.m. at 258 County Rd. 659 in Athens. The event is open to everyone. For more information, call 423-920-0613.

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Friday, June 05, 2026

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Athens, Tennessee

MARV Volunteers Sought for June 18 Outreach Effort



The McMinn County Area Resource Van (MARV) will hold its next community outreach day on Thursday, June 18, with organizers seeking volunteers and referrals for residents in need.

Operated by the McMinn County Sheriff's Office in partnership with local ministers, healthcare providers and community organizations, MARV delivers food, hygiene supplies and resource information directly to underserved neighborhoods and rural areas throughout the county.

Volunteers should meet at the McMinn County Sheriff's Office at 8 a.m. Organizers expect to depart by 8:30 a.m. and complete the route by noon. Participants are encouraged to bring informational materials from their agencies or organizations to include in resource packets distributed during visits.

Anyone interested in volunteering should RSVP to jguy@mcminncountytn.gov. Organizers are also accepting referrals for individuals or families who may benefit from a visit from the resource van.

Source: McMinn County Health Dept., UT Extension - McMinn



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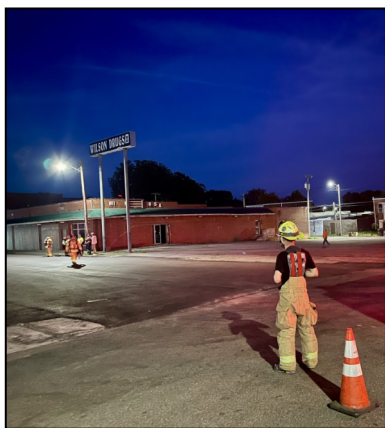


Friday, June 05, 2026

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

Athens, Tennessee

Gas Leak Reported in Downtown Englewood



Emergency crews responded to a natural gas leak in downtown Englewood Monday evening after a strong gas odor was reported near the former Wilson Drug Store building around 8:30 p.m.

Personnel with the Englewood Fire Department located the source of the leak and shut off the gas. No damage to nearby buildings was reported.

The Englewood Fire Department and local utilities board workers responded to the scene.

Photo courtesy of Lynn Ingram, Englewood FD

McMinn County Arrest Reports

June 03, 2026

James Cooper, 27 of Madisonville, charged with simple possession casual exchange, and drug paraphernalia, Bond \$14,000.

Kristen Acosta, 23 of Norcross, Georgia, charged with driving on a suspended license, fourth offense, Bond \$24,000.

Tracy McDermott, 54 of Athens, charged with two counts of child support, simple possession of schedule 6, Bond \$10,000.

Dylan Phillips, 21, charged with driving without due care, leaving the scene of an accident, and failure to give immediate notice of an accident.

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

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Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

Tommy Douglas O'Daniel, 86, of Athens, passed away on Wednesday, June 3. Tommy was a member of New Hopewell Baptist Church and was formerly associated with Plastic Industries. The family would like to offer their heartfelt thanks to the caring staff of NHC and Hospice of Chattanooga. Graveside services will be announced at a later time. Ziegler Funeral Home has been entrusted with the care of Tommy Douglas O'Daniel.

Phyllis Diane Stephens Nichols, 72, of Athens, passed away on Tuesday, June 2. Phyllis enjoyed spending her weekends exploring estate sales and shopping, often making a day of it every Saturday. Above all else, Phyllis treasured her family. A visitation will be held on Saturday, June 6 from 12:00pm - 2:00pm at Companion Funeral Home of Athens with the funeral service to follow. A graveside service will follow at Cedar Grove Cemetery. Companion Funeral Home of Athens and the Cody family are honored to assist the family with these arrangements.

Lawrence "Larry" Robert Langford, 89, of McMinn County, passed away Wednesday, June 3. He retired from Transport One as an over-the-road driver. He worked many jobs during his retirement and volunteered for St. Paul's Food Pantry (now Table Graces). Visitation will be held from 11:00 AM-1:00 PM on Saturday, June 13 at Ziegler Funeral Home, with a funeral service to follow. Interment will follow at 2:00 PM at McMinn Memory Gardens. Ziegler Funeral Home has been entrusted with the care of Lawrence "Larry" Robert Langford.

Sandra G. Newman Allen, 65, of Athens, passed away on Thursday, June 4. She retired from Thomas and Betts after 40 years of service. A visitation will be held on Sunday, June 7 from 12:00-2:00 PM at Ziegler Funeral Home, with a funeral service at 2:00 PM. Interment will follow at Liberty Hill Cemetery in Englewood. Ziegler Funeral Home has been entrusted with the care of Sandra G. Newman Allen.

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