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Tuesday, July 07, 2026

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Athens, Tennessee

**Structure Fire Destroys Vacant Building on County Road 959**



Fire crews from multiple departments responded early Sunday morning to a fully involved structure fire on County Road 959 in Riceville, discovered around 6:30 a.m. The vacant building was already engulfed in flames when firefighters arrived, along with a 2005 Buick that was also on fire.

Responding agencies included Claxton Fire, Etowah Rural Fire, Englewood Rural Fire, West Polk Fire, and VEC, with Claxton Firefighter Dexter Key serving as incident commander. Crews worked to contain the blaze and secure the scene.

*Photo provided by the Etowah Rural FD*

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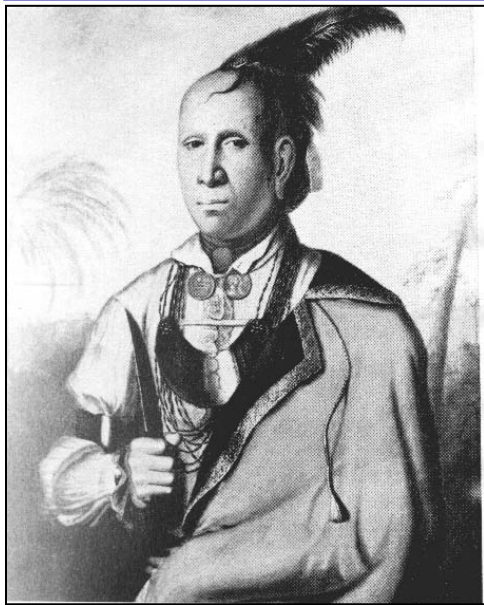
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## TN250 Exhibit Opens in Etowah Following July 4 Weekend



*Oconostota, an Overhill Cherokee war leader, played a key role in the 1760 Siege of Fort Loudoun, a major Cherokee victory that forced the British garrison to surrender during the Anglo-Cherokee War.*

A new traveling exhibit celebrating Tennessee's role in America's story is now open in downtown Etowah. The Etowah Historical Commission and Tennessee Overhill Heritage Association have brought "Our American Story: Voices from Tennessee" to the Nancy Cantrell Dender Gallery, where it opened Saturday, July 4, and will remain on display through July 29, 2026. The exhibit is free and open to the public.

Developed by the Tennessee State Museum as part of the state's observance of America's 250th anniversary, the exhibit highlights Tennesseans whose lives and legacies connect the Volunteer State to the broader American narrative. Through stories of influential figures across generations, "Our American Story" explores how Tennessee's heritage has shaped — and continues to shape — the nation.

To complement the statewide exhibit, the Etowah Historical Commission and Tennessee Overhill Heritage Association created an additional display and booklet featuring notable individuals from McMinn, Monroe, and Polk counties who made significant contributions to Southeast Tennessee and beyond.

The exhibit invites residents and visitors to reflect on the people, events, and experiences that tie Tennessee's history to America's 250-year journey.

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Athens, Tennessee

## McMinn County Arrest Reports

July 05, 2026

**Robert Shark**, 46, of Charleston, charged with failure to appear.

**Chad Dietz**, 28, charged with DUI and violation of implied consent.

**Troy Frazier**, 41 of Etowah, charged with drug paraphernalia.

**Jason Barracks**, 50 of Athens, charged with aggravated assault, violation of probation for DUI, second offense, Bond \$25,000.

**Nikita Bradford**, 36 of Etowah, charged with violation of probation for theft, Bond \$2,244.

**Joshua Taylor**, 38 of Athens, charged with failure to appear for simple possession, casual exchange, shoplifting, and theft of property, Bond \$8,000.

**James Mason**, 51 of Madisonville, charged with state violation of probation for possession of a firearm by convicted felon.

**The accused are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. Information gathered using Public Sources.**

## Storm Chances Build Through the Week

**Tuesday** — Morning fog clears to mostly sunny skies, high near **81°F**. Afternoon storms possible (50%). Evening partly cloudy, low around **68°F**.

**Wednesday** — Fog early, then mostly sunny with a high near **83°F**. Scattered showers and storms possible (40%). Night mostly clear, low near **69°F**.

**Thursday** — Showers and storms likely after 1 p.m. (60%). High near **83°F**. Night mostly clear, low around **70°F**.

**Friday** — Another round of afternoon storms likely (60%). High near **83°F**. Night partly cloudy with a chance of storms (40%), low near **69°F**.

**Saturday** — Storms likely (70%) under mostly sunny skies, high near **82°F**. Night partly cloudy, storms possible (50%), low near **68°F**.

**Sunday** — Showers and storms likely (60%). Partly sunny, high near **81°F**.

Source: [National Weather Service, NOAA](#)

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