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Friday, July 10, 2026

Page 1

Athens, Tennessee

## VA Resource Fair to Support Athens-Area Veterans on July 23

The VA Tennessee Valley Healthcare System will host a community resource fair in Athens later this month, offering Veterans and their families direct access to programs, benefits, and enrollment services. The free event will take place Tuesday, July 23, from 4–7 p.m., with remarks from VA leadership beginning at 5 p.m., at Keith Memorial United Methodist Church's Contemporary Worship Center, 600 W. Madison Ave., Athens.

The fair is designed to connect Veterans with key VA programs, including the PACT Act, Caregiver Support Program, Community Care Program, and other services that support health, wellness, and long-term care needs. Veterans will be able to enroll in VA health care on-site, explore available benefits, and meet directly with staff who can guide them through eligibility and application steps.

Representatives from the Tennessee Department of Veterans Services will also attend, offering help with state and federal benefits, claims questions, and additional support for Veterans and their caregivers.

The VA Tennessee Valley Healthcare System serves Veterans across Tennessee and Kentucky through two major medical centers—Alvin C. York VA Medical Center in Murfreesboro and the Nashville VA Medical Center—along with more than a dozen outpatient clinics. The system provides primary and specialty care, acute medicine and surgery, transplant services, spinal cord injury care, mental health services, and extended care programs.

*Source: Tracy Thomas, U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs*

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Athens, Tennessee

### Ribbon Cutting Welcomes Wonderfully Made Ultrasound Boutique



The Athens Area Chamber of Commerce recently celebrated a ribbon cutting for Wonderfully Made Ultrasound Boutique, now open at 2029 Congress Parkway S, Athens. The new Chamber member offers 2D, 3D, and 4D ultrasound scans, SneakPeek gender DNA testing, heartbeat animals, and keep-sake images for families to treasure.

Co-owners Kayley Ellison and Danielle Swafford were joined by Chamber representatives, family, and supporters as they marked the boutique's official opening. The business can be reached at 423-649-6257 for appointments and information.

### Community News You Can Use

- Applications are open for the 2026–2027 Leadership McMinn class, sponsored by the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce. More than 600 graduates have completed the program since 1988, gaining community insight and lasting personal and professional connections. Apply by contacting the Chamber via phone at 423-745-0334, by sending them an email at [julie@athenschamber.org](mailto:julie@athenschamber.org), or by picking up an application at the Chamber office.
- The McMinn County Board of Education will meet in Regular Session on Tuesday, July 14 at 5:30 p.m. at McMinn County High School in the library.
- The City of Athens Finance Department, led by Mike Keith, has earned the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association for its FY 2025 annual report. This marks the 34th consecutive year Athens has received the honor, the highest recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting.

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# UPCOMING CHURCH NEWS & EVENTS

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Friday, July 10, 2026

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Athens, Tennessee

## Church News & Events

- First Baptist Church of Niota will host **VBS, July 12-16** from **6-8 p.m.** for grades **Pre-K - High School**. For more information see their ad below.
- Vacation Bible School at Marshall Hill Baptist Church, 621 County Rd 255, Niota, will run July 12-18, 6-8 p.m. nightly. The theme is Emerald Crossing, an Irish Adventure through Psalm 23. A meal will be served each evening, and all ages are welcome.
- **Sacred Calling** will be in concert at **Solid Rock Baptist Church**, 4975 Hwy 11, Calhoun, on **Sunday, July 12, 2026 at 10:45 a.m.** All are welcome to join in worship through music.
- West End Baptist Church on Clark Street in Athens will hold Homecoming on **Sunday, July 12** at 11 a.m. with Jimmy Jackson leading the service, Travis Standridge providing singing, lunch is served, and all are welcome.
- **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**.
- **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 Madison Ave, Athens) is the McMinn County location and accepts patients every 3rd Thursday of the month.*
- East Athens Baptist Church will host **VBS 2026** on **July 12-16**, from **5-8 p.m.** at 301 Central Ave., Athens. The theme is *Emerald Crossing: An Irish Adventure Through Psalm 23*. Open to **Pre-K through 5th grade**, with **free supper** provided. Registration is now open.
- Allen Memorial United Methodist Church will welcome **former pastors** to lead worship throughout July: **Rev. Charla Sherbakoff (July 12)**, **Rev. Jeff Wright (July 19)**, and **Rev. Austin Meadows (July 26)**. All are invited to attend.
- Clearwater Baptist Church, 964 County Road 180, Athens, will begin a new GriefShare session on Thursday, July 23, 6-7:30 p.m. The 13-week, ongoing support group is open to the community and helps those grieving find hope, comfort, and guidance. Join anytime. More info at [find.griefshare.org/ministries/213135](http://find.griefshare.org/ministries/213135) or by calling the church office.



A vibrant poster for a Vacation Bible School (VBS) event. The background is a lush tropical rainforest with waterfalls, colorful birds, and butterflies. In the foreground, a young boy in a blue shirt and shorts is reaching out to a colorful parrot. A girl in a yellow shirt is also visible. The text includes the logo for fbcn (First Baptist Church of Niota), the title "RAINFOREST FALLS" in large, stylized letters, the subtitle "Exploring the Nature of God", and the event details: "VBS | JULY 12-16 FROM 6:00-8:00 PM" and "GRADES: PRE-K - HIGH SCHOOL".



A celebratory poster for Boy Scout Troop 74's 100th anniversary. The background shows a stone building, likely a depot, with a Boy Scout hat and a rolled-up flag in the foreground. The text includes "Thank you, ETOWAH" in large letters, "CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF SCOUTING" with a large "100" and fleur-de-lis symbols, "FOR 100 YEARS OF SCOUTING!", "BOY SCOUT TROOP 74 ETOWAH, TN", and "JOIN US AT THE DEPOT ON JULY 25-26!".



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Friday, July 10, 2026      Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 4      Athens, Tennessee

## McMinn County Arrest Reports

## Obituaries

**July 08, 2026**

**Noah Bixby**, 27 of Hixson, charged with a specially aggravated kidnapping, held for a Hamilton County warrant.

**Jacob Burnett**, 21 of Soddy Daisy, charged with evading arrest, reckless endangerment, and violation of registration laws, Bond \$25,000.

**Devin Lumpkin**, 31 of Calhoun, charged with domestic aggravated assault, and Vandalism over \$1,000, Bond \$32,000.

**Autumn Melton**, 40 of Sweetwater, charged with violation of probation for possession of paraphernalia. Bond \$1,336.45.

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

**Thurlow Edward "Ed" Williamson Jr.**, 72 of McMinn County, passed away on Monday, June 29. Ed served for over 24 years in the United States Marine Corps. Following his service in the Marines, Ed worked as a patrol officer with the Athens Police Department and later with McMinn County as a patrol deputy. The family will receive friends on Sunday, July 12 from 5:00 PM until 8:00 PM at the Chapel of Companion Funeral Home in Athens. A graveside service will be held on Monday, July 13 at 10:30 AM at Chattanooga National Cemetery. The United States Marine Corps will be present to render military honors. Companion Funeral & Cremation Service of Athens is honored to be entrusted with assisting the family during this time.

**Jesse Glenn Knox**, 85, of Etowah, passed away on Wednesday, July 8. Glenn was a member of Double Springs Baptist Church. He worked construction and for the L& N Railroad. He was a charter and founding member of Claxton Community Volunteer Emergency Services and a lifetime member. Graveside services will be held at 2:00 p.m., Tuesday, July 14 at Double Springs Baptist Church Cemetery. Bordwine Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

**Hans Albert Russell**, age 78 of Athens, passed away Tuesday, July 7<sup>th</sup>. He was a lifelong resident of McMinn County. A graveside service will be 11am Saturday (7-11) at Westview Cemetery in Sweetwater. Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home is in charge.



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