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Firefighters Stop Overnight Blaze at Athens Restaurant



Athens firefighters kept an overnight fire from spreading through Michael's Casual Dining after being called to the North Congress Parkway restaurant just before 12:45 a.m. Friday. Crews arrived to find smoke coming from the building and flames on the roof near a kitchen hood vent.

Firefighters entered through the rear of the restaurant, located the fire in the kitchen, and quickly brought it under control. The blaze was contained to the kitchen and the attic space above a washroom, preventing it from moving into other parts of the building. The restaurant sustained fire damage in the kitchen and smoke damage throughout.

No employees or firefighters were injured, and the cause of the fire has not yet been determined.

Source: [WTVC News Channel 9](#)

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Monday, July 27, 2026

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Athens, Tennessee

ACS Kids Connection Awarded Statewide LEAPS Grant

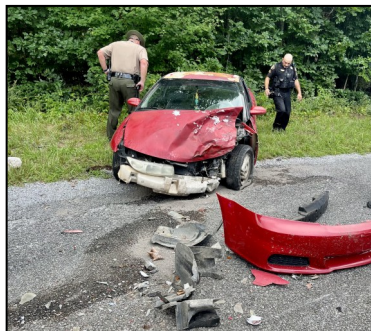
Athens City Schools has announced that ACS Kids Connection has been awarded the LEAPS Extended Learning Grant for the 2026–2027 school year. The Tennessee Department of Education received 79 applications requesting nearly \$20.4 million in funding, but only \$13,035,000 was available for 46 awards, making the competition highly selective.

School officials said the award highlights the strength of the Kids Connection program and its commitment to providing high-quality extended learning opportunities for students. The student referral and selection process will begin in August 2026, with more information to be shared with families as details are finalized.

Athens City Schools expressed excitement and gratitude for receiving the grant, noting the positive impact it will have on students and families throughout the upcoming year.

Source: Julie Lofland, Athens City Schools

Driver Injured in Head-On Crash on County Road 526



A driver was injured Saturday afternoon when a 1997 Saturn SC2 collided head-on with a 2011 Dodge Avenger on County Road 526 in Athens around 4:30 p.m. The driver of the Avenger was treated at the scene by AMR but refused transport. The driver of the Saturn was taken into custody by the THP.

Etowah Rural Fire, Englewood Rural Fire, and the McMinn County Sheriff's Department responded, and THP Trooper Jaylon Skipper investigated the crash.

Photos courtesy of Etowah Rural FD

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Monday, July 27, 2026

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Athens, Tennessee

McMinn County Arrest Reports

July 23, 2026

Nicholas Holden, 26 of Lakeside, Tennessee, charged with aggravated domestic assault.

General King, 49 of Cleveland, charged with driving on a revoked license, and drug paraphernalia.

Ruth Jones, 59 of Niota, charged with theft of property under \$1,000, Bond \$1,000.

The McMinn County Library Board will meet at E.G. Fisher Library at 6:00 pm on Monday, July 27.

A Special Session of the Athens City Council will meet at Athens City Hall beginning at 5:00 pm on Friday, July 31. They will meet to discuss action regarding a proposed WWII-themed mural. There will be opportunity for citizens to comment.

July 24, 2026

Shelby McMurray, 29 of Englewood, charged with criminal impersonation, and aggravated criminal trespassing, Bond \$8,000.

Tammy Kane, 54 of Etowah, charged with violation of probation for shoplifting, Bond \$492.21

Trevor Helton, 30 of London, Kentucky, charged with felony evading arrest, theft of property over \$60,000, Reckless endangerment, felony vandalism, and leaving the scene of an accident, Bond \$103,000.

Matthew Crisp, 46 of Athens, charged with public intoxication, Bond \$500.

Andrew Alexander, 42 of McMinn County, charged with theft of property.

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

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Monday, July 27, 2026

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 4

Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

Johnathan Mynatte McKeehan, 43, of McMinn County, passed away on Thursday, July 2. He had a deep love for animals and found great joy in spending time fishing. [Companion Funeral Home](#) is in charge of arrangements.

Norma Kay McKenzie Davidson, 85, of Jacksonville, FL, passed away on Tuesday, July 21. A graveside service will be held at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, July 28 in the Decatur Cemetery. [Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services](#) is honored to serve the Davidson family.

Chasady Rain Axley, 29, of Englewood, passed away on Thursday, July 23. Though her time with us was far too short, the joy, laughter, and love Chasady shared will remain in our hearts. Graveside services were held on Sunday, July 26 at 3:00 PM at Athens Free Saints True Holiness Church in Athens. [Ziegler Funeral Home](#) has been entrusted with serving the family of Chasady Rain Axley.

Elois Bell Meeks Maynard, 85, of Athens, passed away on Friday, July 24. She retired from Wal-Mart and was a member of Mt. Harmony Baptist Church in Riceville. Graveside services were 2:00 P.M. Saturday (7-25) in Hammonds Cemetery. There was no formal visitation. A celebration of life followed the graveside service at Mt. Harmony Baptist Church in Riceville. [Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home](#) in charge of arrangements.

Lillie V. Davis, 97, of Athens, passed away Friday, July 24. She was a former employee of the Robert E. Lee Hotel, Newton's Restaurant and ABB where she retired after many years of service. Memorial Services will be held at Woodward Ave. Church

of God at a date yet to be determined. [Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home](#) in Athens is in charge of the arrangements.

Monica Danielle Burns Keith, 52, of McMinn County, passed away on Thursday, July 23. She was an avid playing card collector and loved riding her motorcycle. Visitation will be held on Tuesday, July 28, from 12:00-2:00 PM at Ziegler Funeral Home. Funeral services will be at 2:00 PM. Interment will follow at Short Creek Baptist Church Cemetery. [Ziegler Funeral Home](#) has been entrusted with serving the family of Monica Daniel Burns Keith.

Allan "Al" Boyd Hairris, 85, of Etowah, passed away on Tuesday, July 14. Al loved working on the farm, and driving his tractor was one of his favorite things. Al was a strong loving family man, who enjoyed nothing more than time with his family. Family and friends will assemble at McMinn Memory Gardens on Wednesday, July 29 for an 11:00 a.m. graveside service. [Bordwine Funeral Home of Etowah](#) is in charge of arrangements.

Betty Regina Davis, 83, passed away on Saturday, July 25 in Athens. Regina attended Tennessee Tech University. Regina lived in Dalton, Athens and Chattanooga for many years, and in each place she made herself useful in the church choir and women's group, and visiting shut-ins or delivering meals. Graveside service will be Wednesday at 11:00 am at Mt Herman Church cemetery in Polk County. There will be no formal visitation. [Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home](#) in charge of arrangements.

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