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Tuesday, August 25, 2026

Page 1

Athens, Tennessee

2026 Sounds of Summer Concert Series Closes Out 12th Season

When Tim Hughes started talking about creating a free community concert series back in 2015, we all thought he had lost his mind. But, 13 years later we're celebrating his vision by completing a successful six concert season in 2026.

From kicking off the series with Cole Sitzlar at MooFest, September Song, Mendingwall at 4th of July, Dexter Thomas Band, Scenic City Sound in between and ending with Confederate Railroad at Athens Regional Park, the 2026 series was one for the books.

My sincere thanks to my partner in crime, Joel Webb/Integrity Sound. Joel and I have set together through many a concert and his professionalism and friendship is a big part of Sounds of Summer's longtime success.

A round of applause is due for: Stefani Burchfield, our Friendly City Festivals' graphics guru for all the eye catching artwork publicizing the event; Brianna Baker for all the Facebook updates; and Leanne Malloy/Athens Web Services for keeping the FCF website up to date.

And, who better than Boggess Videography/Josh Boggess and Donnie B Photography, aka Don Bindrim to capture each performance perfectly on film.

If you attended the Confederate Railroad performance at Athens Regional Park on August 15th, you experienced a new look for Sounds of Summer despite the scorching heat. The event served as a test run for the 2027 series, and I cannot thank the following people and departments enough for helping make that vision a reality: Interim City Manager Bridget Roberts; Matt Siniard and the Parks and Recreation Department; the Athens Fire Department; Public Works; the Athens Police Department; and the McMinn County Rescue Squad. Their behind-the-scenes planning and dedication helped the evening run smoothly, and Friendly City Festivals is forever grateful.

Another group of guys that made things go smoothly for the Confederate Railroad concert is the McMinn County Amateur Radio Club. Robert Murphy, Dale Williams, Kenny Witt, Mike Elkins, David Baker, Cleve Rankin, Bill Warner and Joe Knox manned the entry gates and took up money which was a huge contribution. Special thanks to Bill's wife, Sherilynne Warner who helped me get the band from Cracker Barrel down to the stage on time!

Media support was made possible by The Morning Fax, The Daily Post Athenian and the Monroe County Advocate Democrat. Thank you to each one of you for all you do for our community.

Sounds of Summer is a free to the public series produced by Friendly City Festivals, a 501(c)(3) subsidiary of Willsonthropic, Inc. and made possible by the financial support of: The City of Athens Tourism Fund, McMinn County Tourism Board, Madison Avenue Pharmacy, Tennessee Overhill Association, Tennessee Arts Commission, DENSO, VEC Customer Shares, Citizens National Bank of Sevier County, Simmons National Bank, Simmons Private Wealth, Mayfield Dairy Farm, Valley Oil, Starr Regional Medical Center, Kona Ice, WarrenJackson CPAs, Athens Kiwanis Club, Athens Insurance, Pendleton's Playground, Let's Bounce Rentals, Smile More Orthodontics, The Financial Mart, REMAX Freedom Realty, KARM Stores and River Valley Health.

Thanks Athens and McMinn County for your support of Sounds of Summer! And, stay tuned for East Tennessee's favorite fall festival-Pumpkintown Saturday, October 10th! It's gonna be here in 47 short days! *Written by: Meredith Willson, Friendly City Festivals President*



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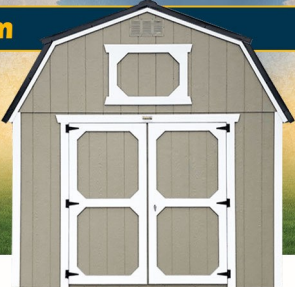





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Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 2

Athens, Tennessee

Downtown Community Meeting Moved to Today, August 25

MAIN STREET ATHENS

Downtown Community Meeting

AUGUST 25 6:00pm

Simmons Bank
204 W. Washington Avenue
Downtown Athens

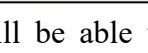


Join us to tour the newly renovated Simmons Bank, and enjoy delicious samplings from Biskit NV, with thanks to these downtown sponsors!


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Main Street Athens has shifted its monthly community meeting to **TODAY, Aug. 25 at 6 p.m. at Simmons Bank on Washington Ave.**, due to the upcoming Battle of Athens lecture scheduled at Tennessee Wesleyan University on Aug. 27.

Attendees will be able to tour the newly renovated Simmons Bank and enjoy refreshments provided by Biskit NV, thanks to downtown sponsors Blue Skies Curbside Recycling, Greeks Bearing Gifts, and Sulins Eye Care. Organizers encourage the community to join the meeting—and also attend the Battle of Athens lecture on Thursday, August 27th.

Community News You Can Use

- The Good Faith Clinic, a United Way agency, will be open Thursday, August 27 at 3 p.m. for refills and doctor visits. Test Results will be provided beginning at 3:45 p.m.
- The Athens Board of Zoning Appeals meets Aug. 26 at 1 p.m. in the City Council Chambers. The agenda includes a Use on Review request from the Athens-McMinn Family YMCA for a child day-care center at 2352 Denso Drive
- The Athens Area Chamber of Commerce invites the community to join them TODAY, Tuesday August 25 at 1:30 pm as they celebrate their latest ribbon cutting. [The Groves at Athens Assisted Living and Memory Care](#) is celebrating their Grand Reopening and invites the community to come enjoy a bite to eat and explore everything their community has to offer.

THE MCKAMEYS
and JEFF TOLBERT and PRIMITIVE ROAD



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Tuesday, August 25, 2026

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 3

Athens, Tennessee

McMinn County Arrest Reports

August 23, 2026

Jason McDermott, 51, of Athens, charged with domestic assault. Bond \$1,000.

Amanda Neal, 36, of Athens, charged with failure to appear for shoplifting, and Criminal trespassing. Bond \$8,000.

Christy Ellis, 54, of Cleveland, charged with state violation of probation. Bond \$1,000.

Mark Veyer, 62, of Sweetwater, charged with DUI, possession of a handgun while under the influence, resisting stop, and violation of implied consent. Bond \$5,000.

Amanda Bucklew, 43, of Athens, charged with

leaving the scene of an accident. Bond \$1,000.

Alan McLemore, 34, of Riceville, charged with shoplifting, theft of property.

Kimberly Benton, 43, of Athens, charged with simple possession of schedule 6, simple possession of schedule 2 meth, drug paraphernalia, criminal trespassing, public intoxication, and violation of probation for paraphernalia. Bond \$33,000.

Adam Buccarelli, 42, of Sweetwater, charged with contributing to the delinquency of a minor. Bond \$26,000.

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

Honoring Two Former Homecoming Queens at Centennial Celebration

The City of Athens helped mark Cook School's 100th anniversary by recognizing two women with a special place in the school's history. **Ann Buchanan**, 94, who was crowned Homecoming Queen in 1950, and **Minnie Long**, 96, crowned in 1946, returned for Saturday's celebration and were each presented with new Homecoming Queen tiaras.

The moment highlighted both their long-standing connection to Cook School and the century of history the school represents in the Athens community.

Congratulations to Ann Buchanan and Minnie Long for helping celebrate this milestone and for their lasting role in Cook School's story.



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Athens, Tennessee

Peoples Bank Launches Community Heroes Loan Program



Peoples Bank of East Tennessee has introduced a new Community Heroes Loan Program designed to help city and county employees purchase required job-related equipment. The program was developed after conversations with City of Sweetwater officials, who could no longer offer payroll deduction for employees needing specialized gear.

The loan program provides unsecured loans from \$500 to \$2,000 with fixed rates, no origination fee, and flexible repayment options for eligible public servants, including police, firefighters, emergency responders, public works staff, and other city and county employees.

Sweetwater representative Jessica Morgan said the change in payroll deduction created a challenge for many workers, and the bank's partnership offered a practical solution. Bank leaders say the program reflects the core of community banking—listening to local needs and removing barriers for those who serve the public. The Community Heroes Loan Program is now available at all Peoples Bank of East Tennessee branches. Eligible employees can contact their local branch for details.

Source: Kristien Scott, People's Bank of East Tennessee

Obituaries

Billy Michael Spurling, 63, of Decatur, passed away on Wednesday, August 19. Billy was a loving father who cherished his children and the time he spent with family and friends. He enjoyed playing darts and shooting pool, and he will be remembered for the friendships, laughter, and memories he shared with those around him. Billy's life touched many people, but his greatest legacy will always be the love he gave as a father and grandfather and the memories he leaves with the people who knew him. The family will receive friends from 3 - 4 p.m., on Thursday, August 27 in the Chapel of Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services. No formal funeral service will be held. [Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services](#) is honored to serve the Spurling family.

Linda Faye Givens Peeler, age 72, passed away on Saturday, August 22, 2026. She was a native of Sweetwater and longtime resident of Athens. She was a member of Englewood Church of God, where she taught the young girls' class on Wednesday nights. The family will receive friends from 5:00 to 7:00 PM on Thursday, August 27, 2026, at Englewood Church of God. Funeral services will follow at 7:00 PM with graveside services at 11:00 AM on Friday, August 28, 2026, in Sunrise Cemetery in Englewood. [Ziegler Funeral Home](#) has been entrusted with serving the family of Linda Faye Givens Peeler.

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