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McMinn and Meigs Counties



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SEPT. 12 - NOV. 14
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Burning Wood Pile Sparks Woods Fire Near Etowah



Firefighters from the Etowah Rural Fire Department and Englewood Rural Fire Department responded to a woods fire around noon Tuesday after a property owner burning a wood pile on County Road 894 lost control of the fire as it spread into nearby wooded areas.

According to the Etowah Rural Fire Department, the property owner was burning a pile of wood when the flames extended beyond the intended burn area and ignited surrounding woods. Fire crews responded to contain the fire and prevent further spread.

Escaped debris burns are the leading cause of wildfires in Tennessee, according to the Tennessee Division of Forestry. The agency advises residents to burn only on calm days, choose locations away from buildings and flammable materials, keep water and fire-control tools nearby, and remain with the

fire until it is completely extinguished. Tennessee forestry officials also recommend notifying neighbors and the local fire department before conducting a debris burn.

The National Fire Protection Association similarly warns against outdoor burning during windy or dry conditions because embers can quickly ignite nearby vegetation and spread beyond the burn site. The organization recommends having a hose, bucket of water, or shovel readily available and ensuring any fire is completely out before leaving it unattended.

As autumn approaches and many homeowners begin clearing limbs, brush and yard debris, fire officials encourage residents to use extra caution with outdoor burning. A small debris fire can quickly become a larger emergency when weather conditions change or embers are carried into dry vegetation. *Photo courtesy of the Etowah Rural FD*

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McMinn County Living Heritage Museum

Fall Sale 2026

Trash and Treasure II

SEPTEMBER 10-12

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Friday 10 AM - 5 PM
Saturday 10 AM - 3 PM

HISTORY FOR LUNCH:
HISTORY OF THE MELUNGEONS WITH JERRI HILL
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Programs sponsored by C. Scott & Muriel S. Mayfield Family Foundation, Tennessee Arts Commission, Hugh M. Willson Family Foundation, and City of Athens

Museum Hours:
Tuesday - Friday: 10 AM - 5 PM
Saturday: 10 AM - 1 PM
Sunday - Monday: Closed

Admission:
Adults: \$5.00
Senior 60+: \$3.00
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More Information
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www.livingheritagemuseum.org



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Athens Parks and Rec Opens Applications for 2027 Baseball, Softball Tournaments

Athens Parks and Recreation is now accepting tournament applications for the 2027 baseball and softball season at Athens Regional Park.

Located just off Interstate 75, Athens Regional Park offers artificial turf infields, free family-friendly amenities including a playground and splash pad, and ample space to accommodate teams, spectators and tournament activities.

Tournament organizers interested in hosting events at the facility are encouraged to complete a tournament request application and submit it as soon as possible to recreation@athenstn.gov. Parks and Recreation officials noted that submitting an application does not guarantee a tournament reservation. Applicants are asked to ensure all contact information is included on the form.

For additional information or questions regarding tournament applications, contact Athens Parks and Recreation by phone at 423-744-2704, by email at recreation@athenstn.gov, or in person at 122 Regional Park Drive, Athens, TN 37303.

Athens Parks and Recreation officials encourage interested organizations to apply early as planning for the 2027 tournament season gets underway.

Community News You Can Use

- The Athens City Schools board of Education will meet at the ACS Administration Building on Monday, Septmeber 14 at 5:30 p.m. Their agenda can be viewed online on the Athens City Schools website [HERE](#)
- The McMinn County Solid Waste Committee will meet at 5 p.m. on Sept. 15, 2026, in the Blue Room to discuss a Class 3-4 permit application.
- The Good Faith Clinic, a United Way agency, will be open TODAY, Thursday, September 10 at 3 p.m. for refills and doctor visits. Test Results will be provided beginning at 3:45 p.m. **The Good Faith Clinic is free primary health care for residents of McMinn and Meigs counties, ages of 18-64, who do not have any form of medical insurance, including TennCare.** The clinic meets on the campus of Christ Community Church at 18 S Congress Parkway in Athens. *RE-MINDER: The Good Faith Clinic is open the 2nd, 4th, and 5th, Thursdays of each month.*




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Thursday, September 10, 2026

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Athens, Tennessee

Prestige WrenchWorks joins the Chamber



A ribbon cutting was celebrated recently for new Athens Area Chamber of Commerce member, Prestige Wrench Works LLC, located in Athens and surrounding areas. Prestige WrenchWorks is your go to mobile car maintenance shop They can be reached at (423) 951-0725.

Chamber friends joining the celebration and pictured here left to right are: Shannon Willis (Athens Chamber), Paul Semenoff (Chamber Diplomat), Anthony Orozco (Owner, Prestige Wrench Works LLC) and Family, Tina Mathis (Chamber Diplomat) Back: Stephanie Devine, Robert Preston (Chamber President/CEO), Joseph Ladner (Chamber Diplomat), Brandon Johnson, John Rodriguez (Chamber Board), Walt Bowman.

Source Julie Simbeck, Program Director, AACC

ACT Announces Auditions for Award-Winning Musical *Ragtime*

Athens Community Theatre (ACT) will hold auditions for the Tony Award-winning musical *Ragtime* on Oct. 26 and 27 at 6 p.m. at The Arts Center.

Directed by Tyler Peaden with music direction by Matthew Crabtree, the production is seeking a large cast of performers ages 16 and older from a variety of backgrounds. The show includes several prominent roles for Black performers.

Set in turn-of-the-century New York City, *Ragtime* follows the intersecting stories of an upper-class wife, a Jewish immigrant and a Harlem musician as they navigate themes of opportunity, prejudice, hope and the American dream during a time of significant social change.

Audition participants should prepare 18 bars of a song, read from the script, and be prepared to take simple direction. Those planning to use an accompaniment track must submit it in advance to:

operations@athensartscouncil.org. Be sure to include your name and song title in the email subject line.

Anyone interested in assisting with the production, whether onstage or behind the scenes, is encouraged to attend auditions. Participants should also bring their work, school and family schedules covering the rehearsal and production period from Oct. 28, 2026, through Feb. 28, 2027. Performances are scheduled for Feb. 19-28, 2027.



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Thursday, September 10, 2026

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Athens, Tennessee

McMinn County Arrest Reports

September 08, 2026

William Shuling, 77, of Calhoun, charged with domestic assault, and aggravated assault. Bond \$15,000.

Katie Keller, 29, of Lebanon, charged with violation of probation for paraphernalia. Bond \$6,000.

Nikita Bradford, 36, of Etowah, charged with shoplifting, and drug paraphernalia. Bond \$2,000.

Holly Green, 33, charged with state violation of probation in Blount County.

Nadar Eladi, 28, of Dearborn, Missouri, charged with being a fugitive from justice, and simple possession casual exchange of schedule 6. Bond \$228,000.

Those accused are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Information gathered using public sources.

Obituaries

Shelia Jane Kennedy Minge, 78, passed away on Sunday, September 6. Her faith was an important part of her life. She loved reading her Bible and played piano at her Church. A memorial service will be conducted 3:00 pm, Sunday, September 13, 2026 at Smith Funeral Home Chapel. The family will receive friends from 2:00-3:00 pm, Sunday at the funeral home prior to the service. [Smith Funeral & Cremation Services of Athens](#) is honored to serve the family of Shelia Jane Kennedy Minge.

Nina Carlene Boyd was carried to Jesus' arms by angels on September 8, 2026. She was born on May 6th, 1939. She was a member of Oak Grove Baptist Church. A visitation will be held on Friday, September 11, 2026, from 5:00-7:00 PM at Ziegler Funeral Home. Funeral services will follow at 7:00 PM. A graveside service will be held on Saturday, September 12, 2026, at 11:00 AM at Oak Grove Cemetery in Riceville. [Ziegler Funeral Home](#) has been entrusted with serving the family of Nina Carlene Boyd.

James Edward "Jim" Gesicki, 83, of Loudon, passed away on Saturday, September 5. He served in the United States Marine Corps during the Vietnam War. For many years he worked for the City of Largo as a heavy machine operator and environmentalist. He had a strong Christian faith. In his earlier years, Jim loved running marathons and sailing. Later in life he was happiest on board a cruise ship or at the family's "Cabin in the Sky" in the Tennessee mountains. What he liked even more was watching his family enjoy those places with him. A private memorial will be held for close family. [Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home](#) in charge of arrangements.

Robert Michael Simpson, 73, of Ten Mile went home to be with the Lord on September 1, 2026. Robert was a devout Christian who was dedicated to his faith and work with the Church. He was a devoted and loving husband, amazing father, and a selfless man who found joy in helping others. He was loved by many and will be missed immensely. A Visitation will be held on Friday, September 11, 2026 from 4:00pm-7:00pm at [Companion Funeral Home of Athens](#)

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