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Driver Injured in Rear-End Crash Involving Cattle Trailer in Delano

A driver was seriously injured in a crash involving a cattle trailer and a utility construction vehicle on Dentville Road in Delano.

According to emergency responders, a 2017 Vector 300 spreader truck was changing lanes in a work zone where utility construction was underway when it was struck from behind by a 2021 Ram 3500 pulling a cattle trailer.

The driver of the Ram sustained extensive injuries and was airlifted by LifeStar from the West Polk Fire Department to Erlanger for treatment.

Mutual aid was requested for the incident. Responding agencies included Etowah Rural Fire Department, AMR, Polk County Sheriff's Department, Claxton Fire Department, West Polk Fire and Rescue, and Tennessee Highway Patrol Trooper Harrison McSpadden, who investigated the crash.

West Polk Fire Chief Keith Jeskee served as incident commander.

Photo provided by the Etowah Rural Fire Department.



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•Wed: Etowah Across from Johnsons 10:30 - 2
•Thu: Athens Family Dollar 10:30 - 2
•Fri: Sweetwater Main St Marketplace 10:30 - 2:30
•Sat: Sweetwater Grain Bin
Christmas Barn Sale - 5209 Holt Rd 9 - 5

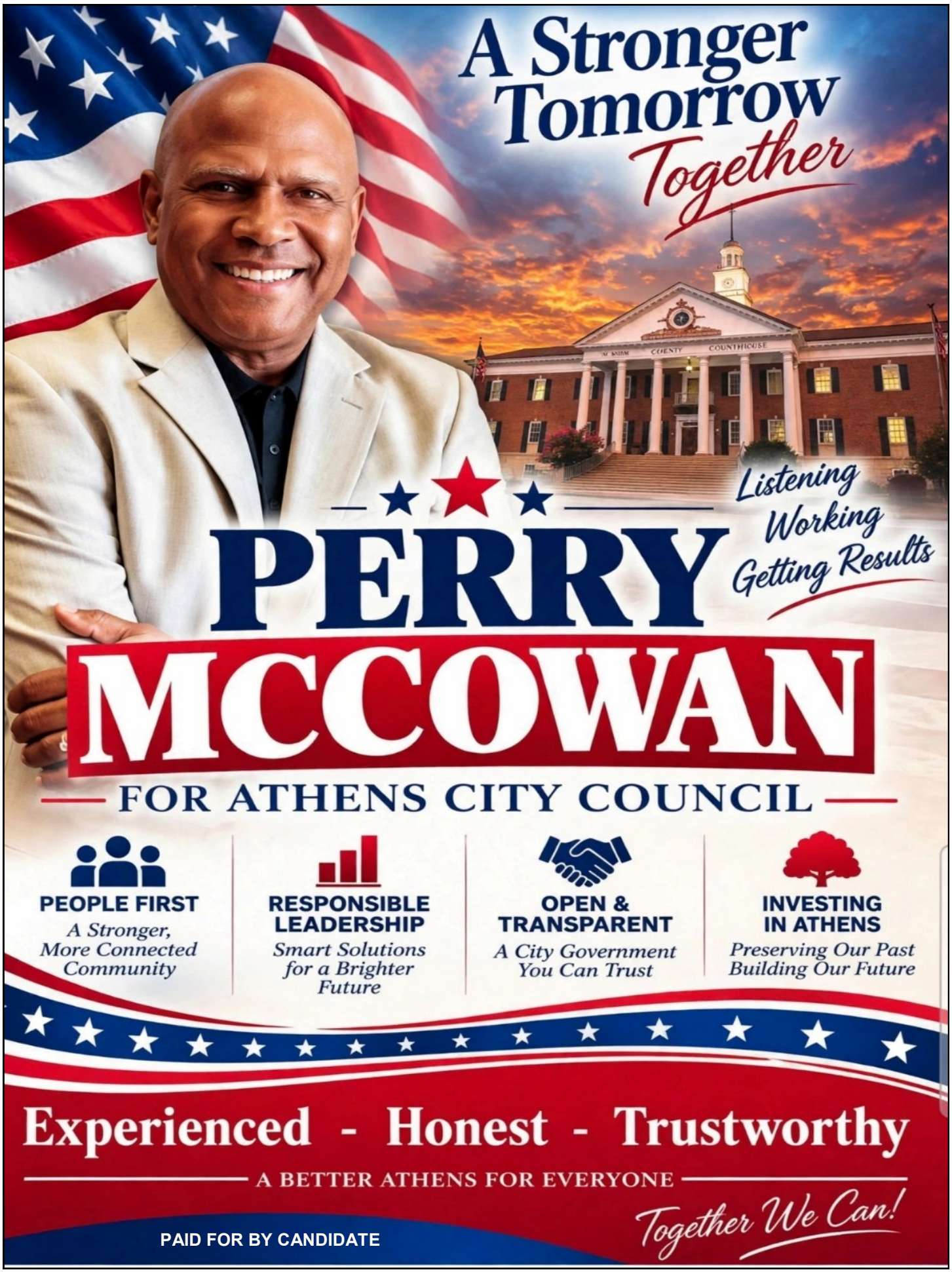
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Fire Destroys Mobile Home; Investigation Underway



A mobile home on Highway 39E at County Road 464 was destroyed by fire early Saturday morning, prompting an investigation by local and state authorities.

Firefighters arrived around 4:30 a.m. to find the residence fully engulfed in flames. Because neighbors reported that the home is typically occupied, additional resources were called to the scene. All three residents were later located at separate locations. Authorities said a domestic disturbance had occurred before the fire, and one resident alleged another was responsible for setting the blaze.

The McMinn County Sheriff's Office and the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation's Arson and Bomb Unit are investigating the incident.

Responding agencies included Englewood Rural Fire Department, Claxton Fire Department, Etowah Rural Fire Department, Mount Vernon Fire Department, Christianburg Fire Department, Madisonville Fire Department, and Conasauga Fire Department. Athens Utilities Board and Notchey Creek Fire Department provided assistance by covering calls in the Englewood area during the incident. Englewood Rural Fire Captain Josh Roach serving as incident commander.

Photos by Lynn Ingram, Englewood Rural FD

Community News You Can Use

- The City of Athens Planning Commission meeting originally scheduled for Monday, November 2 has been CANCELLED due to not having any business for the agenda in November.
- Tennessee Wesleyan University will host a free STEM Day for students in grades 7-12 on Nov. 4 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., featuring hands-on science labs, a campus tour and lunch. Students may register online at: https://tnwesleyanjrm.my.salesforce-sites.com/events#/list.
- The City of Athens Public Works Department will begin loose leaf collection on Nov. 2 at 7 a.m. Residents should rake leaves 3-5 feet from the road and avoid placing them in streets, ditches, on sidewalks or around obstacles. Leaf crews will follow designated routes and will not provide call-in pickups. Zone information is available at www.athenstn.gov/public-works.
- A preliminary magnitude 1.9 earthquake was recorded at 6:30 a.m. Saturday with its epicenter located about 2.8 miles east-northeast of Riceville and 4.2 miles southwest of Athens, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.



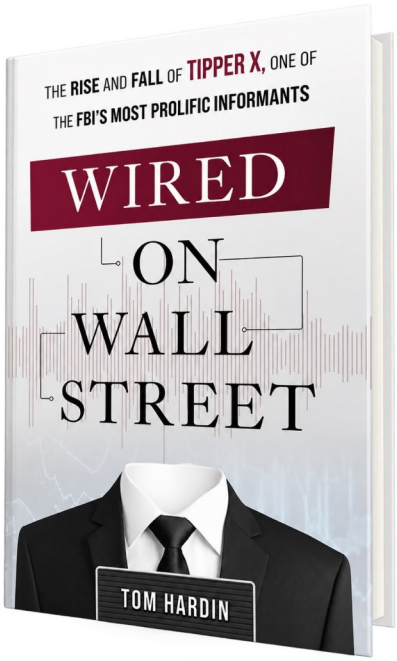


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McMinn County Arrest Reports

October 29, 2026

Brandon Rakeem, 30, of Athens, charged with public intoxication. Bond $1,500.

Freddie Vann, 28, of Athens, charged with shoplifting theft of property, and violation of probation. Bond $7,000.

Juan Gonzalez, 55, of Athens, charged with leaving the scene of an accident, and DUI.

Carolyn McKenzie, 45, of Athens, charged with driving on a revoked license. Bond $2,000.

John Henson, 44, of Madisonville, charged with theft of property, and violation of probation for theft. Bond $6,000.

Anthony Ricker, 38, of Athens, charged with simple possession casual exchange of meth, drug paraphernalia, and violation of probation for driving on a suspended license. Bond $23,000.

Megan Chariot, 36, of Athens, charged with shoplifting theft of property, and driving on a suspended license. Bond $2,000.

October 30, 2026

Tristan Johnson, 22, of Calhoun, charged with parole violation for child abuse.

Desmond McCowan, 52, of Chattanooga, charged with DUI. Bond $2,000.

Hannah Bennett, 23, of Athens, charged with failure to appear for theft of merchandise. Bond $2,000.

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







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Etowah Awarded $350,000 Downtown Improvement Grant

The City of Etowah has been awarded a **$350,000 Downtown Improvement Grant** through the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development as part of a statewide effort to revitalize downtown districts and strengthen local economies.

Gov. Bill Lee and TNECD Commissioner Stuart C. McWhorter announced more than $3.9 million in Rural Economic Opportunity funding for 14 Tennessee Main Street and Tennessee Downtown communities. The grants will support projects such as building façade improvements, wayfinding signage, gateways and streetscape enhancements.

Etowah was among the largest grant recipients in this year's program, receiving $350,000 for downtown improvements. Grant recipients are required to provide a 25% local match.

State officials said the program helps communities invest in their downtown districts, creating more attractive spaces for residents, businesses and visitors while encouraging economic growth. The funding is part of Tennessee's ongoing effort to support rural communities and preserve the character and vitality of downtown areas across the state.

Obituaries

Nathaniel Andy Sliger, 42, of Knoxville, formerly of Etowah, passed away on Thursday, October 29. Andy was a graduate of McMinn Central High School Class of 2002, where he was in the marching band and enjoyed being a member of the FFA. He went on to study animal science at Hiwassee Community College and finished with a bachelor's degree in animal science from The University of Tennessee. A graveside service was held on Sunday, November 1 at Green Hill Cemetery. **Bordwine Funeral Home** in charge of arrangements.

Theresa Strickland, 63, passed away on Thursday, October 29. Her career in nursing was marked by compassion and kindness, reflecting her dedication to helping others. Funeral services will be held at Good Samaritan Funeral Home, Monday, November 2, at 2:00 PM, with visitation starting at 1:00, with burial to follow at Green Hill Cemetery. **Good Samaritan Funeral Home** is in charge of arrangements.

Thomas (Tom) Pikciunas, age 81, of Athens, TN, passed away unexpectedly on Monday, October 26, 2026. Tom proudly served four years in the U.S. Air Force after his graduation from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. He retired after twenty years as Vice President of Operations for Heil Trailer International. A Funeral Mass will be held 12:00 Noon, Tuesday, November 3, 2026 at St. Mary Catholic Church with visitation at 11, followed by interment at the church. **Smith Funeral & Cremation Services of Athens** is honored to serve the family of Thomas Pikciunas.

