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West Greene Student Wins MEDIC T-Shirt Design Contest



MEDIC Regional Blood Center has announced that Briley of West Greene High School is the winner of its 2026 student T-shirt design contest.

More than 30 original designs were submitted by local high school students and narrowed to four finalists before public voting concluded Nov. 1. Briley's design received the most votes and will be featured on MEDIC's March 2027 donor T-shirt. She will also receive a $500 e-gift card.

MEDIC, an independent nonprofit blood center, supplies blood products to 24 hospitals and air and ground medical transport services across 23 counties in East Tennessee and Southeastern Kentucky. The organization encourages residents to donate blood, noting that donated blood requires several days of processing before it is available for use in emergencies.

The Athens Donor Center is located at 927 Decatur Pike, next to Ingles and their phone number is 423-453-5846.

More information about blood donation opportunities is available at: www.medicblood.org.

Community News You Can Use

- The Good Faith Clinic, a United Way Agency, will be open this Thursday, November 12 for doctor visits and prescription refills at 3pm and test results at 3:45pm. 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.
- Conasauga Baptist Church is holding revival services this week thru Friday, Nov. 13 at 7 pm. A baptizing service along with food and fellowship will be included Friday night. The church is located at 649 County Road 475. Etowah (Old Mecca Pike)
- Save the date! The annual Jimmy Liner Memorial Christmas Parade is scheduled for December 7th at 6:30 pm in downtown Athens. The rain date is December 14th. This year's theme is "Have a Dolly Jolly Christmas" in honor of the late Dolly Parton. Anyone interested in participating or needing additional information may contact Julie by email at: Julie@athenschamber.org or by calling (423) 745-0334. Applications must be submitted by December 1st.

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Pumpkintown 2026 A Huge Success

When the 2026 Friendly City Festivals group held its first Pumpkintown planning session back in June after a successful MooFest, we all agreed on one thing – to make the 24th annual Pumpkintown the best ever! And, after months, weeks and days of planning and an unanticipated change of date due to the weather, we feel our wish came true on Saturday, October 24th.

Picture perfect weather ushered in toe tapping live entertainment on three stages, the beat of Native American drums, the tantalizing smell of festival food, all sorts of tempting items for sale from local businesses and 290 arts, crafts and food vendors plus a record crowd of over 22,000 visitors. So, thanks to the support of our community, sponsors, vendors and visitors, we think Pumpkintown 2026 was a resounding success!

And, that success is due to the support of several community groups that sponsored a variety of activities that make a festival stand out. Hosted by the McMinn Regional Humane Society, the Mutt Strutt featured over 40 pets in their Halloween finery and 4 dogs were adopted during the Paw Print activity at Fullers Frame Shop.

The McMinn County Living Heritage Museum's 42 nd annual quilt show brought in several visitors to tour the museum and see the colorful array of quilts on display. Another exciting activity during the day was the dedication of "McMinn Answered The Call" WWII mural sponsored by the Patriot Memorial Project. And TWU welcomed many alumni during their Homecoming 2026 event.

Without a doubt, Pumpkintown's most beloved part of the festival is the Scott Crisp Memorial PowWow. This year's record crowd watched as a true intertribal gathering unfolded before their eyes making history and heritage come alive through the troopi9ng of the colors, the blowgun demonstration and the harmony of the flute. My heartfelt thanks to Felicia and Javier Alfaro who have kept the PowWow spirit alive since Scott's death in 2016 along with Robert Redhawk Eldridge, Sharlene Brooks, Jack Lynn, Joey Pierce and Medicine Scout. We greatly appreciate the commitment and dedication they've shown to make this a true memorial to Scott and the centerpiece of Pumpkintown.

A festival of this magnitude doesn't happen magically, but we do have a group of magicians aka Friendly City Festivals that certainly make it look easy! Jim Brooks is FCF's entertainment executive, and we so appreciate his magic touch with booking solid entertainment for the festivals. Special thanks to Joel Webb and Integrity Sound Solutions for managing the sound for three stages.

Thanks go to Darren and Jessica Casteel with East Tennessee Entertainment for all their behind the scenes logistics and can-do attitude. From putting out road banners to remembering all those last-minute details that can make or break an event, we are thankful for their input.

Special thanks to vendor gurus Michael Priest and Brianna Baker. Working and supporting our vendors takes a special kind of festival geek and Michael and Brianna have it down to a science. From reworking the entire vendor map of downtown in coordination with graphics guru Stefani Burchfield, to making off the booth space number AND typing in 330 vendors into an Excel spreadsheet, these three have my heartfelt gratitude. And a huge shout out is in order to my sister-in-law Deb Willson, Ben Burchfield, Michael, Stefani, Brianna with her special guests Harlee and Harper Baker and Darren and Jessica along with Breyer and Brinkley Casteel for all their help during the epic booth space numbering party. Special thanks to Deb Goins for masterminding the way we number the booths!

Checking in over 300 vendors and making sure angst is at a minimum is no easy task and a big shout out to Jonathan Womac, Hugh Willson, Deb Willson, Michael Priest, Joy Early, Jordan Curtis and David Passmore for all their efforts in making check in a breeze.

A big round of applause goes to those whose creative marketing magic produced big city advertising and publicity that rivals any New York ad agency; Leanne Malloy/Athens Web Services for our spiffy updated website; Brianna Baker for keeping us updated on Facebook; Josh Boggess/Boggess Videography and Brant Helms for producing Oscar worthy videos; Stefani Burchfield for the eye catching graphics; and Simon Rhodes, City of Athens Communications Director for multi media promotions. Special thanks to McMinn County Economic Development Authority, The Morning Fax and The Daily Post-Athenian for all the publicity.

And we want to thank the many other who made this event run smoothly behind the scenes-Rick Clayton along with the McMinn County trustees who picked up/set out tables and chairs under Market Pavilion for the event, Mouse Creek Golf Course for the use of a golf cart for early voting, McMinn County Living Heritage Museum for graciously donating the use of their tables and chairs for the day, Parks and Recreation for the portable electric panels, Pavilion stage and keeping the public bathrooms picked up and Public Works for always going above and beyond with coordinating trash pick up and street closings. And we are so thankful for Grace House for whisking away the tables and chairs after the festival ended.

Anytime a city our size has over 22,000 people come through, parking is invariably an issue. Friendly City Festivals is thankful for the patience and understanding shown by our downtown community, Rusty Rollins/Food City and CVS for this year and year's past.

Thank you Team Athens aka The City for herculean effort they put into downtown for weeks before and during the festival. Thank you, thank you thank you – all departments did our city proud and please know you are appreciated! Our sponsors are the ones who make it possible for Friendly City Festivals to present our events free of charge to the public and we are eternally grateful for: The City of Athens Tourism Fund, McMinn County Tourism Board, McMinn County Economic Development Authority, Madison Avenue Pharmacy, Tennessee Overhill Association, Tennessee Arts Commission, DENSO, VEC Customer Shares, Citizens National Bank, 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, East Tennessee Entertainment, The Financial Mart, RE-MAX Freedom Realty, KARM Stores and River Valley Health.

It's been a pleasure to chair Pumpkintown for the past 20 years with this exceptional group of volunteers, supporters and community. Stay tuned for more information about our plans for 2027 – Pumpkintown turns 25 and there's a change coming for Sounds of Summer!





Vols Pull Away From Kentucky, 34-6, Keep Playoff Hopes Alive

Tennessee turned a close game into a convincing win Saturday night at Neyland Stadium, scoring 21 fourth-quarter points to defeat No. 6 Kentucky 34-6. The Vols led just 13-6 entering the final quarter before pulling away behind a defense that forced three turnovers and kept the Wildcats out of the end zone.

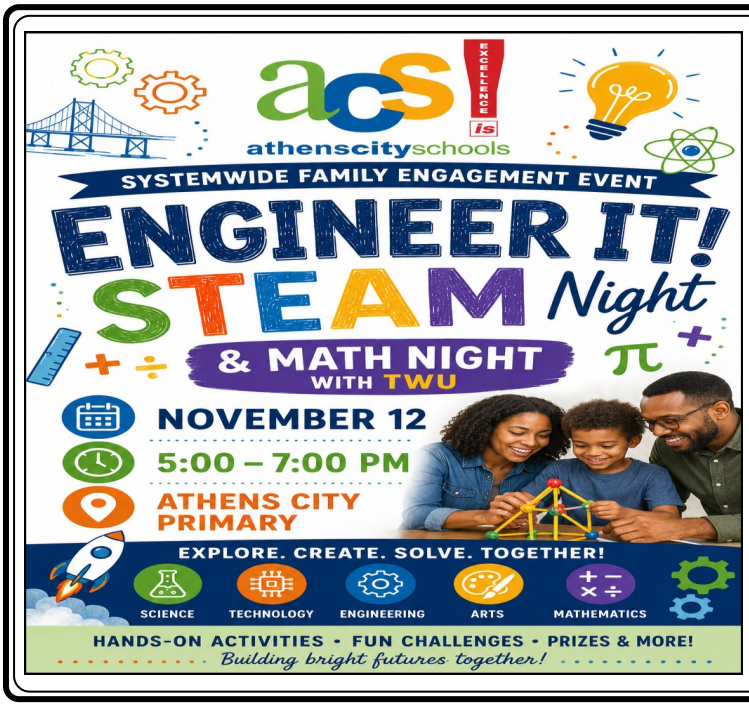
Linebacker Arion Carter led the effort with 14 tackles and two sacks, while DeJuan Lane added an interception. Tennessee's running game also shined, with Daune Morris breaking loose for a 66-yard touchdown run and DeSean Bishop rushing for 109 yards and two scores. Backup quarterback Faizon Brandon added a fourth-quarter touchdown pass to Mike Matthews as the Vols put the game away.

The win improved Tennessee to 7-2 overall and 4-2 in SEC play. It also moved the Vols up seven spots to No. 9 in both the AP Top 25 and USA Today Coaches Poll, their highest ranking since early October.

Just as important, Tennessee strengthened its College Football Playoff case. The Vols were ranked No. 13 in the first CFP rankings and are expected to climb after the decisive win over a top-10 Kentucky team. With three regular-season games remaining, Tennessee remains firmly in the hunt for a spot in the 12-team playoff field.

Up Next: Tennessee travels to Texas A&M next weekend looking to keep its momentum rolling. The Aggies enter the game at 4-5 overall and 1-5 in SEC play, but the Vols know another conference win would further boost their playoff résumé as the postseason picture begins to take shape.

Written by: J.P. Vasquez, Color Analyst, Vamos Vols! (Tennessee Football en Español)



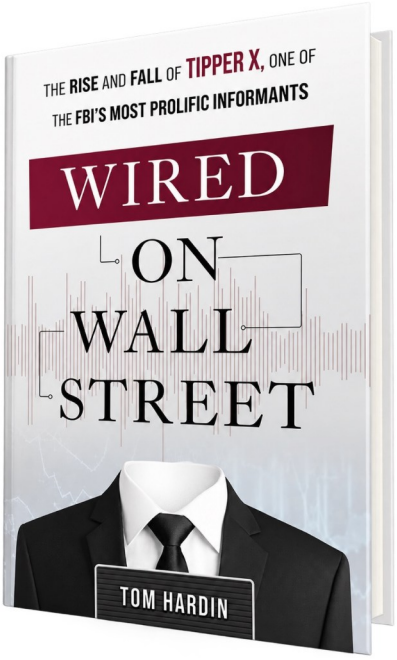


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McMinn County Arrest Report

November 8, 2026

Justin Jack, 38, of Benton, charged with failure to appear for DUI.
Jesse Ray, 35, of Athens, charged with domestic assault. Bond $2,000.
Christopher Crabtree, 50, of Decatur, charged with failure to appear for a violation of an order of protection, driving on a suspended license, violation of registration laws, failure to have a tail light on equipment, and failure to have insurance. Bond $3,000.
Jake Cabotix, 36, of Athens, charged with disorderly conduct. Bond $3000.
Dylan Boggess, 28, of Benton, charged with state violation of probation for evading arrest.
Melissa Goodwin, 48, of Sweetwater, charged with domestic assault.
Willie Matlock, 66, of Athens, charged with disorderly conduct. Bond $1,000.
Matthew Duncan, 23, of Seymour, Tennessee, charged with leaving the scene of an accident, driving on a revoked license, and violation of an interlock device.
Jimmy Hughes, 56, of Athens, charged with DUI.
Crystal Brown, 44, of Philadelphia, charged with failure to appear for criminal trespassing, and criminal trespassing. Bond $4,000.

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



Obituaries

William H.C. "Bill" Duggan, 87, a native and lifetime resident of Athens, passed away Saturday, November 7, 2026. Bill was a fine man and loved by all who knew him. He loved his grandchildren dearly and enjoyed vintage cars. There will be no formal visitation or service**.** **Ziegler Funeral Home** has been entrusted with the care of William H.C. "Bill" Duggan.

Clyde "Pee Wee" Mobley Jr., 55, of Athens went to be with the Lord on November 7, 2026. Clyde had a deep love for the outdoors and enjoyed camping, hiking, hunting, and fishing. One of his favorite places to visit was Cades Cove, where he could enjoy the beauty of nature. He was happiest outside and would much rather spend his time outdoors than indoors. A Celebration of Life will be held on Tuesday, November 10, 2025 at Marshall Hill Baptist Church (621 County Road 255, Niota, TN) from 5:00pm - 8:00pm**.** **Companion Funeral and Cremation Service of Athens** and the Cody family are honored to assist the family with these arrangements.

Ruby "Louise" Lyle Vincent, age 90, of Riceville, passed away on Saturday, November 7, 2026. She was employed with AT&T for over 30 years and was of the Baptist faith. Graveside services will be held at 2:00 PM on Wednesday, November 11, 2026, at Riceville Cemetery. The family would like to extend special thanks to Hospice of Chattanooga, (specifically Nurse Jessica and CNA Denise) for their care. **Ziegler Funeral Home** has been entrusted with the care of Ruby "Louise" Lyle Vincent.

Sharon Graham Colbaugh, age 73, of Harrison, TN, passed away on Saturday, November 7, 2026. Sharon dedicated her career as a registrar at Memorial Hospital in Chattanooga, where she was known for her professionalism and warm demeanor. Sharon was proud to serve her community through her work, making lasting connections with colleagues and patients alike. A devoted member of Bayside Baptist Church, Sharon found joy and fellowship in her small groups class, where she cherished the bonds with her fellow congregants. The family will receive friends from 5 to 7 p.m., on Wednesday, November 11, 2026, in the Chapel of Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services. A funeral service will be held at 11 a.m., on Thursday, November 12, 2026, at Shiloh Baptist Church with the Rev. Mike King officiating. Interment will follow in the Shiloh Cemetery. **Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services** is honored to serve the Colbaugh family.