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Etowah Awarded $350,000 for Downtown Improvements

The City of Etowah has been awarded $350,000 through the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development's Downtown Improvement Grant program to support enhancements in the city's historic downtown district.

The funding can be used for a variety of projects, including building façade improvements, gateways, streetscapes, courtyards, wayfinding signage, entertainment venue upgrades, roof repairs and sprinkler systems.

Etowah received one of the largest grants awarded during this funding cycle. In total, more than $3.9 million was distributed to 14 Tennessee communities through the program.

The Downtown Improvement Grant program is designed to help communities revitalize downtown areas, support local businesses and enhance the appeal of city centers for residents and visitors alike.

Community News You Can Use

- The **Athens Utilities Board** (AUB) office will be closed Thursday and Friday, Nov. 26-27, in observance of Thanksgiving. Standby crews for electric, water, wastewater, natural gas and fiber services will remain on call during the holiday weekend to respond to emergencies and customer needs. Regular office hours will resume at 7:30 a.m. Monday, Nov. 30.
- **Tennessee Wesleyan University** will host its annual Campus Christmas Tree Lighting on Monday, Nov. 30, at 5:30 p.m. on the Quad. The community is invited to enjoy hot chocolate, Christmas songs, scripture reading, and an opportunity for children to write letters to Santa as the holiday season begins. ***See their ad with a link on Page 3.***

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SUNDAY LUNCH @ TWU
Holiday Hours Update
Nov 29: Closed
Dec 6: Last Sunday Lunch of 2026.
Sunday Lunch will resume on Jan 17, 2027!
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EastTNGives Campaign Encourages Support for Local Communities

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES SINCE 1986
EAST TENNESSEE FOUNDATION 40 years

The East Tennessee Foundation is inviting residents across the region to give back to their communities through its second annual EastTNGives campaign on Giving Tuesday, Dec. 1st.

The campaign encourages donors to "give where you live" by supporting local community funds that provide grants for a wide range of needs, including education, youth programs, arts and culture, public safety, food security, and environmental initiatives. To help maximize donations, ETF will match the first $50 of each gift while matching funds remain available on Dec. 1.

Serving a 25-county region, the East Tennessee Foundation works with local advisory boards that help identify community needs and recommend grant awards to address them. Donors may choose to support the community where they live, a hometown, or another East Tennessee area that holds special meaning to them.

In addition to community funds, donors may contribute to the Emerging Needs Grant Fund, which supports projects and urgent needs throughout ETF's service area.

"EastTNGives is an opportunity to give back to the community where you live, where you grew up, or where your family still calls home," said ETF Vice President of Strategic Engagement and Communications Lisa Ford. "Gifts of all sizes can create lasting change and help make lives better and communities stronger for generations to come."

Donations can be made through the EastTNGives campaign at www.etf.org/EastTNGives.

Tennessee Wesleyan University is seeking an Assistant Director of Communications

Help share the stories, achievements, and experiences that make TWU distinctive. This full-time, on-campus position is ideal for a strong writer and creative communicator with experience in public relations, journalism, marketing, or communications. Responsibilities include news writing, media relations, digital content, publications, social media, and storytelling across campus. Higher education experience is preferred.

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Athens Announces Street Closures for Christmas Events

The City of Athens has announced temporary street closures for two upcoming holiday events, the Old Fashioned Downtown Christmas on December 5 and the Jimmy Liner Memorial Christmas Parade on December 7.

For ***Old Fashioned Downtown Christmas***, the following streets will be closed from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturday, December 5: White Street from College Street to Bank Street; Madison Avenue from Church Street to Green Street; Washington Avenue from Church Street to Green Street; Hornsby Street from Church Street to Green Street; Jackson Street from College Street to Highway 30; Long Street from Washington Avenue to Madison Avenue; and Baxter Street from Washington Avenue to Highway 30. The city parking lot also will be closed during the event.

For the ***Jimmy Liner Memorial Christmas Parade***, closures will be in effect from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Monday, December 7, along Keith Lane from Crestway Drive to Madison Avenue, Madison Avenue from Keith Lane to Jackson Street, Jackson Street from Madison Avenue to Cook Drive, White Street from Coach Farmer Drive to Madison Avenue, and Washington Avenue from Jackson Street to Keith Lane. City officials noted that streets adjacent to the parade route also will be blocked during the event.

Motorists are encouraged to watch for detour and traffic control signs, allow extra travel time, and use caution around pedestrians, spectators and event workers. **For more information, contact the Athens Public Works Department at 423-744-2745.**



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AACA to Feature Two Regional Artists in Holiday Exhibits

The Athens Area Council for the Arts will feature two new exhibits, *From Dark to Light* by local artist Chris Ingram and *Out of the Blue* by Chattanooga artist Reagan Schmissrauter, now through Dec. 11 at The Arts Center.

Ingram's exhibit focuses on the role of light in painting, featuring landscapes, architecture and outdoor scenes inspired by years of plein air painting and observation. A longtime artist, educator and art historian, Ingram is also currently at work on the World War II mural in downtown Athens.

Schmissrauter's *Out of the Blue* showcases a collection of paintings created during the summer of 2026. The exhibit highlights blue-toned landscapes and scenes inspired by the outdoors, painted from locations both near and far.

Ingram's work will be displayed in the Willson Exhibit Room and Hallway Gallery, while Schmissrauter's collection will be featured on the Gallery Wall in the Peggy Dow Performance Center. Admission to the exhibits and reception is free and open to the public.







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McMinn County Arrest Report

November 23, 2026

Delano Ellison, 36, of Athens, charged with public intoxication. Bond $3,000.

Lisa Crowder, 59, of Riceville, charged with DUI, and violation of an interlock device.

Kimberly Hodge, 59, of Vonore, charged with failure to appear for driving on a revoked license. Bond $2,000.

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

Note: The Morning Fax staff will be taking Thanksgiving Day off to spend time with our families. We will be back in your INBOX on Friday!

Eaton Presented with Eagle Foundation Award

The Eagle Foundation presented an award to former Athens Mayor Larry Eaton on Monday night for his help in preventing the euthanasia of a Bald Eagle that had been severely injured.



Those attending the special presentation were Eagle Foundation members: (L-R) Paul Shaw, Rich Benjamin, Barbara Joines, James Rogers (Board Chairman and composer/singer of "Fly Eagle Fly"), Lori Moore (CEO), Kay Collier Pittman, John Stokes, Award Winner Larry Eaton, Kindle Wynant (avian care specialist) and "Challenger" (the world's most famous bald eagle). ***Submitted Photo***



