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Morning Fax[®]

Today's News... This Morning

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THE BACK TO NORMAL
COMEDY TOUR
FEATURING SCOTT DAVIS
Sunday, July 11 | 6:00 PM
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Wednesday, July 7, 2021

Athens, Tennessee

Community News You Can Use

- ✓ The McMinn County 4-H Department will be presenting "Adulthood 101" on July 16th from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The clinic is open to 9th-12th grade 4-H'ers. The fee is \$10. It will help young people learn how to communicate professionally, change a tire, manage finances, and more. Sign up by calling 745-2852.
- ✓ Head Start is having several more drive-thru recruitment events this summer for income eligible families. They will be at the Athens Center, 625 Green St., today taking applications for Athens, Calhoun, Riceville, Niota & Meigs Co. Head Start.

◆ COVID-19 VIRUS UPDATE Tuesday 7-06

Tennessee:	868,322 cases up 185	12,577 deaths up 1	
COUNTY	CASES	ACTIVE	DEATHS
McMinn	6,672	4	103
Meigs	1,429	0	24
Monroe	5,990	11	97
Polk	2,113	2	24
Bradley	15,325	26	155
Rhea	4,389	4	82

One More July 4th Photo

District Attorney General Steve Crump took this photo of fireworks in Sweetwater. It comes from his Facebook page.




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Help for Addiction to Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, Bondage, Anger Management and more Life Issues. Free Outreach Deliverance Classes are held every Thursday 7:00 pm at Planted in Christ Outreach Fellowship. Located at: 317 Maple Street in Athens. For more information: call 423-435-8986



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Wednesday, July 7, 2021

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

Athens, Tennessee

Chief Couch on Police Work

Athens Police Chief Cliff Couch recently wrote an article that was published in the American Police Beat magazine. The article was titled: "Changing People's Lives." Here is the article, published with permission of the author.

There was a time when I couldn't imagine doing anything else. When I'd go to social events and listen to new acquaintances describe what they did for a living, I'd catch myself waiting for them to ask how they could get out of their six-figure careers and get into my profession. I couldn't imagine that anyone could possibly want to do anything else with their life besides law enforcement. When I embarked on my career, I did so with optimism, convinced that I'd change the world.

That feels like ages ago. Recently, I was startled by the realization that I'd be hard pressed to recommend this career to a young person who asked my opinion. I'm sure some of that change has to do with me: I'm older now. I've traded much of my blissful ignorance for the realistic world-view that comes with middle age. But much of my shifting opinion is, no doubt, due to the changing world around me. America is at a crossroads, a battleground between competing ideologies. The law enforcement profession is caught smack-dab in the middle of that fight. There are certainly things that we could do differently, but the reality is that a cop is likely to be criticized no matter how they act. Much of the time, we're damned if we do and damned if we don't.

These things most certainly play a role in the doubts I'd have about recommending the field to a potential practitioner. But there's more to it than that. It's also something more basic, more ancient. Long before self-proclaimed experts were arm-chair quarterbacking on social media, cops still got disillusioned. Criminologists have long known that the men and women who wear a badge go through changes throughout their career. They start to question just how worthwhile their hours in the cruiser are. You don't need a PhD to understand why. Law enforcement consists of addressing the same evils... over and over and over. After a few years, an idealistic young cop starts to realize that maybe (just maybe) they aren't making a difference after all. No matter how many bad guys they catch, there's always more. No matter how many victims they try to help, there's always another ruined life to be dealt with. The calls never stop, the bad guys rarely stay in jail and the drugs never really go away. All too often, justice simply goes unserved.

At some point all cops learn that (no matter how great they are at their job) they can't change The World. The myriad problems facing our society can't be remedied by arresting all the bad guys. After seeing enough offenders who were themselves victims of various sins, they begin to even question just what constitutes a "bad guy". They learn that the numerous social, political and economic issues that play into the crime rate are far beyond the control of a lone police officer.

As an administrator, I feel the same sense of helplessness as a law enforcement leader every time a racially charged incident rocks the nation. To turn on the news during these times is to recognize an unfathomable divide between the law enforcement community and some segments of the population we're sworn to serve and protect. To see the fear and distrust toward our profession, while knowing how strongly my desire to serve and protect extend to them... such a sense of helplessness is hard to define.

The World is a big place and the challenges therein are great. There's no doubt then that one person can't change it. But perhaps our disillusion is misplaced. Perhaps it's wrong to think that way.

When an officer goes to their tenth burglary call of the week, it's easy to feel like they aren't making a difference. The burglaries are, after all, still occurring. People are still getting hurt. What's easy to lose sight of is the fact that what is their tenth call may be the victim's first. We walk in the world of crime and pain till we grow numb to it, but it's a traumatic experience for

Couch Article (Continued)

those who don't. They're likely scared, worried. They've not only lost their property, but likely their sense of security too. The way that an officer handles that call can have a tremendous effect (for good or ill) on that person's life. It can change their world.

The World can be a cruel place and cops often see the worse it has to offer. It is easy to become discouraged and disillusioned when confronted with those difficult truths. But we meet people in their darkest hour. Every time someone calls for our help, we have the opportunity to alter the course of their life, to have a tremendous impact on the way they view *their* lives and *our* profession.

The same might be said for our own collective problems; those that face our profession as a whole. The issues between the law enforcement community and minority communities across America are messy and complicated. They're rooted in generations of political, economic and social issues that are largely beyond our control. I can't change that. I can't stop the protests, shootings, or fear and distrust that are sweeping across our nation. But I can make sure that my town is the exception. I can make sure the members of my community know that I have a love for them as my fellow man, that they can trust me and my fellow officers. I can make sure they know I have a deep and honest desire to bridge the divide, even if I don't have all the answers. I may not be able to change the nation, but I can change my community one call at a time.

It is this knowledge; the fact that we can and should make an impact in our own little corner of The World, that should drive us as we get up and come back to work every day. It's this reality that should compel us to continue performing our duties with zeal long after the shallow naïve motives that first drew us to the job have faded in the harsh light of reality. It's this possibility that should give us hope even when we're faced with unrealistic expectations and undeserved criticism.

We can't change The World, but we can change people's worlds.

Obituaries

♦ **Phillip Deane Perry**, age 73, of Athens, died Sunday at his residence. He was a consulting engineer employed by TVA and several other companies. He served in the Air Force during the Vietnam Conflict. Graveside services will be Friday at 11 a.m. in McMinn Memory Gardens. There will be no formal visitation. Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home is in charge.

♦ **George Edward Harbison**, age 79, of Calhoun, died Saturday at his home. He was a former mayor of Calhoun and worked with Olin for 35 years. He served in the TN Air National Guard. Funeral services will be Sunday, July 11th, at 2:30 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Calhoun, with visitation on Saturday from 5 to 8 p.m. at the church. Smith Funeral Home is in charge.

TUESDAY'S MARKET REPORT: Stocks started the week mixed after posting record highs in the week prior. Technology stocks led the market while energy stocks were the biggest laggard. The NASDAQ outperformed the Dow. At the closing bell, The Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 208.98 to 37,577.37. The S&P 500 was down 8.8 to 4,343.54, and the NASDAQ was up 24.32 to 14,663.64.