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Monday, January 6, 2025

Page 1

Athens, Tennessee

Starr Regional Announces First Baby Born in 2025

Starr Regional Medical Center welcomed its first baby of 2025, Layton Rhett Akers, born on January 1 at 1:55 p.m. to Haley Woods and Damian Akers of Spring City, Tennessee. Layton weighed 7 pounds, 8 ounces, and measured 19 inches. Haley praised the care provided by Starr Regional, sharing that her family has always trusted their maternity services. The hospital's Center for Women & Babies offers comprehensive prenatal and postnatal care, ensuring a positive experience for new parents.

To celebrate Layton as the first baby of the year, the family received gifts, including a handmade quilt, gift cards from local pediatric practices, a gift from the McMinn County Education Foundation, and a basket of infant care items.

The Center for Women & Babies, located in Athens, Tennessee, continues to provide high-quality, compassionate care to families in the region.

Source: Starr Regional Medical Center



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• Tuesday-Madisonville-Will Sav -10:30 - 2:00

• Wednesday-Etowah Across from Johnsons-10:30 - 2:00

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Monday, January 6, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

Carl Edward McNeely, Sr., 86 of Riceville, passed away on Friday, January 3, with his family at his side. He was a member of Short Creek Baptist Church and a member of the Laborers Union #846. Through the Labor Union, Carl was employed at both Watts Bar and Sequoyah Nuclear Plants. He was later employed at Rogers Creek Elementary School. Visitation will be held from 11:00-1:00 PM on Tuesday, January 7 at Ziegler Funeral Home. Funeral services will be held at 1:00 PM in the funeral home. Ziegler Funeral Home has been entrusted with the care of Carl Edward McNeely, Sr.

Sean Eric Plemons, 48 and lifelong resident of McMinn County, passed away on Friday, January 3. He was a grill cook at Cracker Barrel. Sean was a member of Trinity United Methodist Church. Visitation will be held from 12:00-2:00 PM on Thursday, January 9 at Ziegler Funeral Home. Funeral services will follow at 2:00 PM at the funeral home. Ziegler Funeral Home has been entrusted with the care of Sean Eric Plemons.

Joyce Ann Chumley Monroe, 87 of Decatur, passed away Friday, January 3. She was a devoted member of Walnut Grove Baptist Church for over 60 years. A Memorial Service will be held at 3 p.m. on Friday, January 17, 2025, at Walnut Grove Baptist Church. The family will receive friends from 2 - 3 p.m., prior to the service. Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services is honored to serve the Monroe family.

Robin Dalphine Varnell, 63 of Decatur, passed away on Thursday, January 2 surrounded by her family. She was a skilled nurse for over 35 years. She was a lifelong member of Calvary Missionary Baptist Church in Decatur. A funeral service will be held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, January 7, 2025, in the chapel of Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services. Interment will be held at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, January 8, 2025, in the Decatur Cemetery. The family will receive friends from 5 - 7 p.m., prior to the service on Tuesday.

Gladys Sim Brinkly Partin, 91 of Englewood passed away on Friday, January 3. There will be a graveside service on Tuesday, January 7, 2025 at the McMinn Memory Gardens Mausoleum at 2:00pm. Companion Funeral Home of Athens and the Cody family are honored to assist the family with these arrangements.

Edward Belk, age 92 and affectionately known as Ed, passed away peacefully at his home in Etowah, Tennessee, on January 2, 2025. Ed was a lifelong resident of Etowah and a devoted craftsman and carpenter. Over the years, he contributed to the construction of numerous homes in the Seven Cedars neighborhood. Later, as a self-employed carpenter, he built homes throughout McMinn County, leaving behind a legacy of skilled craftsmanship and dedication to his trade. A graveside service will be held on Tuesday, January 8, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at Green Hill Cemetery in Etowah, Tennessee. Those wishing to join the procession are invited to meet at Bordwine Funeral Home in Etowah at 12:00 p.m.



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Monday, January 6, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

Annual Santa Run Spreads Holiday Cheer



The Englewood Rural Fire Department held its annual Santa Run on Christmas Eve, spreading holiday cheer throughout Englewood. Santa and his helpers delighted children by passing out toys and chatting with them. Fire department members, along with their family and friends, participated in escorting Santa and distributing gifts. *Photo by Lynn Ingram, Englewood Rural Fire Department*

Community News You Can Use

- Meigs Decatur Friends of the Library Presents: Meet the Author - Reba Rhyne. This free event will take place on Saturday, Jan. 11 at 12:00 pm at the Meigs Decatur Public Library (120 E. Memorial Dr., Decatur). The featured series is *The Tipton Chronicles*. Reba Rhyne's *Tipton Chronicles* is a historical series that blends fact, fiction, legend, and family lore. The series delves into the rich and complex history of her ancestors spanning thousands of years.
- The Athens Planning Commission will meet today, January 6, 2025 at 12:00 noon. They will address key issues including approving two residential developments: a 93-home project on Cedar Springs Road and Keith Lane and a 40-home project off Davis Place Drive. The commission will also discuss establishing boundaries for the proposed Athens Historic Preservation Association Commercial District downtown and consider drafting regulations to protect single-family homes within the proposed district. Note: According to local social media, property owners in the area of the project on Cedar Springs Road and Keith Lane are opposed to the new subdivision and are planning to attend the meeting. The meeting has been moved to the city council chambers to accommodate a larger number of people that are expected to attend.

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Monday, January 6, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

Fire Destroys Etowah Property, 1 Injured



Early Monday morning, a barn on County Road 804 in Etowah was found fully engulfed in flames upon the arrival of fire personnel. The blaze resulted in the total loss of the barn, a 2021 motor home, a G-3 boat, a 2007 Kubota tractor,

two lawnmowers, tools, and other belongings. The cause of the fire remains undetermined.

During the response, a neighbor experienced chest pains while assisting by using a water hose to cool the portion of the house closest to the barn. He was transported to Starr Regional Hospital in Etowah by AMR. Multiple agencies, including Etowah Rural Fire, Claxton Fire, Englewood Rural Fire, and the McMinn County Sheriff's Department, responded to the scene under the command of Etowah Rural Fire Chief Adam Hafley.

Photos courtesy of Lynn Ingram, Englewood Rural Fire Dept.

Athens Fire Causes Extensive Damage



Late Thursday night, a mobile home on County Road 560 in Athens caught fire, originating in the bedroom and quickly spreading

throughout the structure. The fire caused heavy heat and fire damage to the home. The occupants were checked for smoke inhalation but did not suffer any serious injuries.

Englewood Rural Fire, Athens Rural Fire, AMR, and the McMinn County Sheriff's Department responded to the scene to assist in controlling the fire and ensuring the safety of those involved.

Photo courtesy of Englewood Rural Fire Department.

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Our guest speaker will be the Executive Director here at Dominion of Athens, Larry Griffin!

Larry Graduated from Southern Adventist University with a degree in Long Term Healthcare and has served seniors for 35 years. He has worked in Assisted Living, Memory Care, and in the Nursing Home setting.

Larry has stated Dominion of Athens is the most exciting place he has ever worked!

Please join us on January 8th at 11am as Larry shares about his life experiences in healthcare and in the Memory Care setting. Lunch will be served.

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Monday, January 6, 2025 **Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 5** **Athens, Tennessee**

Chicken House in Delano Catches Fire



On Friday morning around 10 a.m., fire crews responded to a report of a chicken house fire on Hwy 163 in Delano. Upon arrival, it was determined that the fire had been caused by

spontaneous combustion of chicken litter inside the building. The fire was quickly brought under control by Claxton Fire, Etowah Rural Fire, and Englewood Rural Fire departments. Etowah Rural Assistant Fire Chief Kevin Elliott took command of the scene.

Photo by Lynn Ingram, Englewood Rural Fire Department.

#1 Vols Continue Undefeated in SEC Opener




Tennessee men's basketball dominated No. 23 Arkansas, 76-52, in their SEC opener on Saturday at Food City Center, improving to 14-0 and matching the program's best start in history. Chaz Lanier led the way with a season-high 29 points, including five 3-pointers.

including five 3-pointers.

Igor Miličić Jr. contributed 13 points, a career-high 18 rebounds, and five assists. Zakai Zeigler added 12 points and seven assists. The Vols' defense was stellar, holding Arkansas to just 37.7% shooting, including a 32.7% mark after the first six minutes. Tennessee dominated the glass, finishing with a 51-29 rebounding advantage. Arkansas struggled offensively, with D.J. Wagner leading their scoring with 17 points, but the

team was limited to just 52 points, marking their lowest total in nearly a year.


The victory marks Tennessee's seventh-largest win over a ranked opponent and the second consecutive year the Vols have opened SEC play with a dominant win over a top-25 team. Next, Tennessee will visit No. 6 Florida on Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the Stephen C. O'Connell Center in Gainesville, Fla., broadcast live on ESPN2. *Source: UT Athletics*



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