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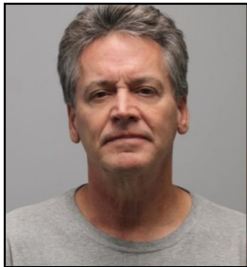
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Thursday, February 27, 2025

Page 1

Athens, Tennessee

## Christian Pastor Pleads Guilty to Sex Crimes



A Cleveland pastor has pleaded guilty to sexual exploitation of a minor after investigators discovered child sexual abuse material on his laptop.

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In the summer of 2023, the Cleveland Police Department (CLPD) received a tip from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) regarding a user in Cleveland who had attempted to upload illicit images to BingImage, an AI-assisted tool. The platform blocked the uploads and reported the incident to NCMEC.

Authorities traced the uploads to the home of Richard Lee Sentell, senior pastor at Cornerstone Church of God. A search warrant led investigators to a laptop hidden between a mattress and box spring, which contained 124 unique images of child sexual abuse material. Further examination revealed Sentell had actively sought such content for several months.

On February 21, 2025, Sentell pleaded guilty to sexual exploitation of a minor. He was sentenced to eight years in prison without the possibility of parole. *Source: [WDEF](#)*

## Lawsuit Alleges McMinn County Negligence in Veteran's Jail Death

A lawsuit has been filed against McMinn County, accusing officials of "deliberate indifference" in the death of a disabled Navy veteran who was fatally attacked by another inmate.

The lawsuit, brought by the victim's son, claims that 48-year-old Timothy Cook was placed in a holding cell with 24-year-old Jerrod Jones after being arrested for DUI in early 2018. Despite Jones' known history of attacking other inmates—including an incident just weeks prior—jail staff failed to separate him from others, according to the lawsuit.

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Jones assaulted Cook inside the holding cell, causing severe injuries. Cook died about a week later in the hospital. Jones was later convicted for his death.

The lawsuit argues that McMinn County's policy of placing all recently booked inmates in the same holding room directly contributed to Cook's death. Cook, a Navy veteran, was laid to rest with full military honors.

*Source: [WTVC NewsChannel9](#)*

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Thursday, February 27, 2025 Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 2 Athens, Tennessee

## Obituaries

**Joyce Ann Morrow Miller**, 81 of Englewood, passed away on Monday, February 24. She was a longtime member of the Church of God and operated Miller's Wholesale Carpet in 1970 alongside her husband. The family will receive friends from 1-3 PM on Saturday, March 1 at the Church of God at McMinn County. A celebration of life service will follow the visitation at the Church. Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home in Athens is in charge of the arrangements.

**Carey Hooper**, 44 originally of Etowah, TN., passed away Tuesday, February 4. Carey was an avid fisherman and Tennessee Vols fan. A memorial service will be held at 12:30 p.m., Saturday, March 1 in the chapel of Bordwine Funeral Home. The family will receive friends from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Saturday prior to the service. Bordwine Funeral Home of Etowah is in charge of arrangements.

**Bobby Joe Little**, 54 of Loudon, passed away on Monday, February 24. He put his heart into everything he did. He loved music and going to concerts, often with his kids. Bobby was especially known for his quick wit and sharp sense of humor—he could always find a way to make people laugh, no matter the situation. A graveside service will be on Saturday, March 1 at 11:00 a.m. at Prospect Baptist Church Cemetery, Loudon, TN. Good Samaritan Funeral Home, Athens is in charge of arrangements.

We encourage you to e-mail results from local school sporting events for use in the Morning Fax. If you take a newsworthy photograph, send it to: [wyradio@gmail.com](mailto:wyradio@gmail.com)

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## TWU sets enrollment record for Spring 2025 semester

Tennessee Wesleyan University announced a record enrollment to begin the Spring 2025 semester following the previously announced record in the Fall 2024 semester. The Spring semester enrollment of 1,181 represents a 15.7% increase over Spring 2024 numbers. The record enrollment is due to increases in several areas. The number of students in the Wilhelm Dental Hygiene Program and Dual Enrollment program both saw spring records. The number of students in graduate programs also set new spring records, with individual records in the Executive MBA, Executive MS, and Master of Science in Morning Fax Sports Leadership programs.

In addition to the increases in the programs listed above, the retention rate for transfers also reached a spring record at 95%. Through strong academic programs, service-learning opportunities, student organizations, and athletics, Tennessee Wesleyan University is transforming the lives of nearly 1,200 students to become enlightened servant leaders who believe in serving others, pursuing knowledge, and leading by example. Visit [twesleyan.edu](http://twesleyan.edu) to learn more.

Source: Blake McCaslin, TWU VP for Marketing, Communications, and Community Engagement

## Sons of the American Revolution Swear in Six New Members

Six new members were sworn into the Hiwassee Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution. Patriot Legacies of Blount County presented the program and gave useful information on how to find patriots.



L-R Fred Underdown SAR National Trustee Morning Fax Today's News, This Morning  
 New members Carter Holmes, Richard Holmes (Father & Son) Ivan Cardin, Edgar Bohannon III & IV (Father & Son), Frank McKenzie, and Ed Waldron Chapter President.

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**Save the Date: Friendly City Festivals return for 2025!**

Friendly City Festivals is pleased to announce the dates for its 2025 festival/concert schedule!

**National MooFest**, McMinn County's beloved dairy festival, is scheduled for Saturday, June 7. Taking place from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. in historic downtown Athens, Tennessee, the festival features several popular activities including the Maggie Strutt, local shopping, live entertainment on three stages plus MooGrass Jam Session, over 300 food, crafts and arts vendors, Mayfield Dairy Farms contests, and AgAvenue. MooFest is presented by Friendly City Festivals, The City of Athens, McMinn County Tourism Board, and Mayfield Dairy Farm.

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**The 14th Annual Sounds of Summer** concert series will be on Saturday nights at 7:00 p.m. at Market Pavilion in historic downtown Athens. The lineup features:

- Saturday, June 7th - Emi Sunshine
- Saturday, June 28th - Run Katie Run
- FRIDAY, July 4th - Sweet Georgia Sound (7:00 PM Before the Fireworks at Regional Park!)
- Saturday, July 19th - Authentic Unlimited
- Saturday, August 9th - Kinslee Melhorn & September Song
- Saturday, August 16th- Nate Viele & Mendingwall

One of the premier fall festivals in East Tennessee for 22 years, **Pumpkintown**, will be held on Saturday, October 11 from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. The Scott Crisp Memorial PowWow, live entertainment on two stages, the infamous Mutt Strutt, historical walking tour, local shopping, over 200 food, craft, information and arts vendors are just a few of the treats in store for you on October 11th!

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### Cherokee Basketball suffers weekend defeat



On Monday night, the Lady Cherokees lost 80-61 in the District 5-4A girls consolation game to Walker Valley. McMinn was led by Hannah Clark with 15 points, followed by Aven Hennessee with 14 points, Molly Trentham with 12 points and Lily Sliger with 9 points. Molly Trentham and Aven Hennessee were

named to the all-tournament team.

On Tuesday night, the Cherokees lost 81-72 in the District 5-4A district championship game to Walker Valley. Jaxon Gonzalez led the Cherokees with 22 points, followed by Reece Frazier with 19 points and Joc Williams with 14 points. Reese Frazier, Madden Cobb and Jaxon Gonzalez were named to the all-tournament team.

The Lady Cherokees will face Bradley Central in the Region 3-4A opening round this Friday at 7:00 PM at Bradley Central. The Cherokees will play Howard in opening round of region play this Saturday evening at 7:00 PM at home.

*Cherokee Basketball Coverage by: Shane Sewell*

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### SOFTBALL: #7 Lady Vols Run-Rule Radford in Home Opener



In its home opener Wednesday night at Sherri Parker Lee Stadium, No. 7 Tennessee claimed its 11th run-rule victory of the season, dominating Radford 10-1.

Tennessee (14-3) exploded in the third and fourth innings, scoring nine runs on eight hits. The surge was highlighted by a pair of two-run home runs—one from [Sophia Nugent](#) in the third and another from [Taylor Pannell](#) in the fourth.

Freshman Erin Newer shined in her fifth start, improving to 3-0 on the season. The right-hander threw four innings, allowing one hit, striking out six, and walking two batters. [Charli Orsini](#) closed out the game for the Lady Vols, giving up two hits, one run, and one walk.

[Amayah Doyle](#) got the scoring started in the second inning with a towering solo shot over the left-field fence. Tennessee expanded its lead in the third when [McKenna Gibson](#) extended her hitting streak to 14 games with a double to left, driving in Pannell for a 2-0 advantage.

The Lady Vols executed a textbook double steal, with [Laura Mealer](#) stealing second and [Zoie Shuler](#) stealing home to make it 3-0.

Nugent capped the third with a two-run blast, her fourth of the year, pushing the lead to 5-0.

Pannell's towering shot to right-center in the fourth—her eighth home run of the season—stretched the Lady Vols' advantage to 7-0.

Nugent later drove in the run-rule run with a two-run double to right, bringing the score to 9-0. The inning ended with a 10-0 score after [Gabby Leach's](#) RBI single up the middle.

Radford scored its only run in the fifth, following a walk and a double to right-center.

### DUE UP

Tennessee will play host to Delaware State, Indiana State, and UT-Martin for the Tennessee Invitational in Knoxville, running from February 28 to March 2. *Source: [UTSports.com](#)*

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Thursday, February 27, 2025 Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 6 Athens, Tennessee

### Cleveland Man Faces Grand Jury After Preliminary Hearing in Ex-Wife's Murder Case

A Cleveland man accused of murdering his ex-wife appeared in court last Friday for a preliminary and bond hearing, where a judge ruled the case would proceed to a grand jury.

Craig Liner, 61, is charged with first-degree and felony murder in the killing of his ex-wife, realtor Karen Liner. During the hearing, Cleveland Police Detective Don Nation testified that surveillance footage from a neighboring home captured Liner pulling into Karen's driveway in broad daylight and firing five shots. He was later seen exiting the garage, getting into a white sedan, and then stepping out again to fire at **Morning Fax** least one more shot.  
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Liner's cousin, Jay Collins, also testified, stating that Liner had spent the evening before the murder at his home, acting normally. The next day, however, Liner allegedly returned, seeking to dispose of several guns and telling Collins, "It's over" and "I finished it." Collins later contacted authorities.

After reviewing testimony from eight witnesses, Judge Clay Collins determined the evidence was strong and denied bond. The case will now go before a grand jury on April 28 to decide if it will proceed to trial. Liner remains in custody as the investigation continues. *Source: [Local 3 News](#)*

### Community News You Can Use

- Tennessee Wesleyan University will host its **Spring Open House on Tuesday, April 1**. Prospective students are encouraged to attend and see first-hand the academic, social, and athletic advantages of Tennessee **Morning Fax** Wesleyan. Dr. Forrest and other campus Today's News. This Morning. leaders and students will be present to answer questions and experience a day in the life of a Tennessee Wesleyan Bulldog. Individual or group tours can also be scheduled by visiting: [tnwesleyan.edu](http://tnwesleyan.edu)
- **Main Street Athens** has announced the Grand Opening of The Food Hub, a first of its kind in Tennessee. The Food Hub is a shared business space designed to support food and beverage entrepreneurs by reducing the high costs and risks of starting a new **Morning Fax** business. It offers access to a fully Today's News. This Morning. equipped commercial kitchen, mentoring opportunities, and low-cost solutions tailored to help aspiring restaurateurs and food producers launch and grow their ventures. The Grand Opening will take place on Thursday, March 27 from 12pm to 2pm at 3B W. College Street in Athens. For more info, call (423) 333-0329 or email [info@mainstreetathens.org](mailto:info@mainstreetathens.org)

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