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## Large Fire Destroys Former Credit Union Building at Bowater Plant in Calhoun



A major fire destroyed a 25,000-square-foot building at the Bowater Plant in Calhoun on Monday night. The fire broke out in the old credit union building, which was being used as a storage facility.

According to Mutual Aid Chief Billy Roach, the first unit arrived at 10:45 p.m. to find heavy smoke and visible flames. Calhoun Fire Department immediately requested a full Tri-State Mutual Aid response, bringing in multiple agencies from across the region. Over 3,000 feet of hose were used to reach hydrants and supply water to the scene.



Fire crews from more than a dozen departments worked through the night until 8:30 a.m. Thursday. No injuries were reported, but the building was declared a total loss. Calhoun Fire Department will determine whether an investigation is necessary.

*Photo Credits: MA Chief Dewey Woody and MA Chief Billy Roach*

*Source: [Tri-State Mutual Aid Association - Facebook](#)*

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Friday, June 20, 2025

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

Athens, Tennessee

## Community News You Can Use

- Starting in the 2025-26 school year, a new Tennessee law will restrict student use of cell phones and electronic devices during class. Exceptions will be made for emergencies and health needs. Schools will set their own procedures for managing devices.
- The community is invited to **Celebrate Juneteenth on Saturday, June 21**, with **two events** in Athens.

From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., the McMinn County NAACP will host an event at Cook Park (414 Cook Drive), featuring educational displays, poetry, book giveaways, and a special presentation on the park's history.

Immediately following, from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m., the Valor Guild will continue the celebration at Market Park Pavilion (106 S. Jackson St.) with live music, poetry, games, dancing contests, food, and vendor booths.

Both free events honor Juneteenth—the day in 1865 when enslaved people in Texas learned of their freedom—and aim to celebrate African American history, culture, and community.

## Submerged Vehicle Recovered from Blythe's Ferry Boat Ramp



On Tuesday, June 17, the Rhea County Sheriff's Office, with assistance from the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office, recovered a vehicle submerged near the Blythe's Ferry Boat Ramp. The recovery followed multiple reports and concerns from the

public about the visible vehicle.

The car had been underwater since a crash in the winter of 2018. The driver, who was the only person involved, was uninjured. At the time, recovery efforts were halted due to environmental and technical difficulties. Prompted by ongoing public concern, Rhea County authorities coordinated with Hamilton County's Underwater Recovery Team to remove the vehicle. Officials confirmed there was no foul play involved and the case remains closed.

The vehicle has been successfully removed and no longer poses any environmental or safety risk. Authorities thanked the public for their vigilance and praised the cooperation between agencies in completing the operation.

Source: [Rhea County Sheriff's Dept.](#)

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Friday, June 13, 2025

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 3

Athens, Tennessee

## Church News and Events

- **Niota UMC** will be hosting a free week-long summer camp on July 14-18 in partnership with Camp in the Community at their church in Niota. The summer camp is open to all children ages 5-14. The camp will run from 8:30-4:30pm (Friday ends at 2pm) and includes breakfast and lunch. Sign up soon to secure your spot. To register, visit: <https://www.campinthecommunity.org/host/niota>
- **Planted In Christ Outreach Fellowship** (317 Maple Street, Athens) holds Outreach Deliverance Classes every Thursday at 7:00pm.
- **Celebrate Recovery** meets every **Tuesday** at 6:00pm at Woodward Ave. Church of God in Athens. They also meet every **Thursday** at 6:00pm at Watts Bar Community Church in Decatur.
- **SRBC Kids presents: Kingdom Seekers** on Sunday Nights at 5:30pm at **Solid Rock Baptist Church** (4975 Hwy. 11, Calhoun). This event combines, God, music, games and fun into a very special all ages affair.
- **Athens Lutheran Church** (710 Forrest Ave, Athens) invites children ages 6-12 to their Vacation Bible School/ From June 23 - 27 from 9 a.m. to 12:30p.m. Lunch will be provided. Register online at: [AthensLutheranChurch.org](http://AthensLutheranChurch.org)
- **East Niota Baptist Church** will host a One Day Vacation Bible School for grades 1 - 6 on Saturday, June 21, 10 am - 5 pm. Lunch and snacks will be provided, along with a Family Program and dinner starting at 4:30 pm.
- **Englewood First Church of God** is sponsoring a marriage conference hosted by Larry and Anna Lawrence on June 20-21st with child care provided. You can sign up at [englewoodfcog.com](http://englewoodfcog.com). The cost is \$35 and includes a meal Friday night and a light breakfast on Saturday morning. Scholarships are available if needed to cover the cost.
- **Oak Grove Baptist Church** is holding a Women's Celebration on Saturday, June 28 from 10:30am-1pm at the Niota Depot Event Center (201 E. Main St., Niota). Admission is \$20 and includes the ladies brunch, fellowship and sweet treats. For tickets, contact Lisa Dotson: (423) 368-2069 or (423) 829-5305.
- **The Etowah Area-Wide Annual Gospel Meeting** will be held at the Etowah Church of Christ, 501 Athens Pike, Etowah. The meeting will be held on June 23, 24, 26, 27, & 28 every day at 7pm. Speakers include Mike Williams (Liberty Hill), Mark Stephenson (Etowah), Stephen Null (Madisonville), Aaron Pope (Liberty Hill), and Lee Cox (Union Grove). See ad on page 4. Services are available online at: [youtube.com/@etowahchurchofchrist](http://youtube.com/@etowahchurchofchrist).

We encourage you to e-mail community events, church news, or other items of interest for possible use in The Morning Fax. If you take a newsworthy photograph, send it to: [wyradio@gmail.com](mailto:wyradio@gmail.com)

The United Way of McMinn & Meigs Counties is currently seeking a new

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of United Way of McMinn & Meigs Counties is responsible for leading the organization in its mission to improve health, education, and financial stability in the community. The role involves strategic planning, fundraising, community engagement, and overseeing operational and administrative tasks to ensure the organization meets its short- and long-term goals. This position will remain open until filled.

Click here for full job description and application information.

United Way



United Way of McMinn & Meigs Counties

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**Monday:**  
You're gonna need more oil-Mike Williams-Liberty Hill

**Tuesday:**  
The walls of Jericho-Mark Stephenson-Etowah

**Thursday:**  
The seven ones-Stephen Null-Madisonville

**Friday:**  
All leafed out, but no fruit to give-Aaron Pope-Liberty Hill

**Saturday:**  
7 things God wants us to know-Lee Cox-Union Grove

**Etowah Church of Christ**  
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# GoComics

**Friday, June 20, 2025**

**Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 4**

**Athens, Tennessee**

## Supreme Court Upholds Tennessee Ban on Gender-Affirming Care for Minors



On June 18, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a Tennessee law banning gender-affirming care for minors in a 6-3 decision. The ruling in *United States v. Skrmetti* allows the state to enforce its 2023 law prohibiting puberty blockers, hormone therapy, and surgeries for individuals under 18. The decision also clears the way for similar laws in 24 other states to take effect. The court found the law does not violate the Constitution's 14th Amendment and declined to weigh in on the medical debate, stating that such policy decisions are best left to elected officials.

The decision drew mixed reactions. Supporters called it a victory for parental and state rights, while LGBTQ+ advocates warned it will negatively impact transgender youth. The ruling is expected to further divide state policies on transgender health-care and may influence future legal battles over transgender rights in areas like sports, education, and public accommodations. *Source:* [CBS News](#), [The Guardian](#), [BBC](#)

## Leadership McMinn Class of 2025

The Leadership McMinn *Class of 2025* recently celebrated its graduation with a breakfast sponsored by Front Porch Catering and Southern Events as well as a trip to The Lost Sea Adventure. The graduates are (in no particular order): Sean Conway, Dana Mashburn, Nicole McConkey, Ashley Burrage, Travis Stewart, Brett King, Lara Crockett, Alison Bull, Kayla Augenfeld, Taylor Moses, Katrina Ferguson, Angela King, Bridget Roberts, Stefani Burchfield, Nina Varhan, Sarah Harris, Bradley Alexander, Deborah Vaughn, Rebeckah Coleman, Jerri Hill, Cody Huggins, Tina Mathis, Daniel Reed and Courtney Long.



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Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 5

Athens, Tennessee

McMinn County Arrest Reports

Obituaries

**Benjamin Rogers**, 38 of Riceville, was arrested by the MCSO for Failure to Appear. No Bond.

**Robert Douglas**, 52 of Athens, was arrested by the Athens PD for Violation of an Order of Protection. Total Bond: \$2,000.

**Kayla Partain**, 33 of Athens, was arrested by the Athens PD for DUI, Simple Possession/Casual Exchange of Schedule II Oxycodone, Simple Possession/Casual Exchange of a Schedule IV Controlled Substance, and a Violation of Implied Consent. Total Bond: \$11,000

**Jonathan Gibson**, 32 of Sweetwater, was arrested by the MCSO for Failure to Appear. Total Bond: \$6,000

**Jose Hammonds**, 18 of Cleveland, was arrested by the MCSO for Aggravated Robbery and Conspiracy to Commit. Total Bond: \$35,000

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

250617

**Dennis Michael Maloney, Sr.**, 84, passed away on Thursday, June 19. Arrangements will be announced at a later time. Ziegler Funeral Home has been entrusted with serving the family of Dennis Michael Maloney, Sr.

WYXI Live Broadcast Today

WYXI Radio is excited to announce that they will be supporting the Friends of the Library - McMinn County and E.G. Fisher Public Library. From 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Host of *the Trading Post*, J.P. Vasquez will be broadcasting the Friends of the Library's annual book sale from the cafeteria of McMinn County High School. There will be the opportunity to sign up for many different giveaways with no purchase necessary. Please consider supporting the Library by visiting the annual book sale. This **cash-only** fundraiser aims to raise money for E.G. Fisher Public Library's ongoing efforts to strengthen and enrich our community.

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