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Today's News...This Morning

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Monday, December 5, 2016

Athens, Tennessee

Local and Area News

◆ TORNADO RECAP AND AFTERMATH

The EF-2 tornado that hit the Athens area last Wednesday morning left behind a 12-mile-long path of damage. It first touched down on Cedar Springs Road at the intersection of County Roads 700 and 705, near Wheatland Hills. It then skipped to the Eastside Shopping Center on White Street, where it damaged the roof of Genesis Baptist Church and the old Van Dyke mansion on the hill behind the church. It destroyed the Save A Lot store and caused heavy damage to C&D Tire and the gas station across the street. (FYI in 1974 a tornado hit that same shopping center, and damaged the Big K store and several vehicles in the parking lot) The tornado crossed the creek and ripped the roof off the Daily Post Athenian building on S. Jackson Street. It then destroyed the Verizon cellphone tower and the Athens Utilities Board tower on the ridge. The next stop was the Slack Road/Cherry Street area, where houses were damaged, trees and utility poles were blown down, and power, cable, and phone lines were downed. The WYXI Radio studio and transmitter buildings were hard hit. The AM transmitter was destroyed when it was soaked by three inches of water after the building's roof blew off. A 10-foot satellite dish was blown about 100 yards and demolished. The studio roof was heavily damaged, causing water to leak into the building. WYXI is back on the air on now on 94.5 FM. (See more on Page 2)

NATIONAL & WORLD NEWS

◆ Dolly Parton is going a step further to help the victims of wildfires in the Great Smoky Mountains of Tennessee where the singer grew up. She is planning a telethon to support the many who have lost their homes in the devastating blazes. It will air from Nashville Dec. 13th.

◆ YOUNG GIRL DOES HER PART TO HELP

Hundreds of citizens of McMinn County and the surrounding areas began donating items for the victims of last week's tornado. Most donated cleaning supplies, clothing, food, and other basic necessities. A young Athens girl, Lorelai Ziegler, wanted to help by donating her own toys to children who lost their belongings. Tom Trotter with the McMinn County Emergency Management Agency sent us the photo on the right of Lorelai along with (Left to Right) Athens Mayor Chuck Burris, Mark Cochran, Assistant to McMinn County Mayor John Gentry, Lorelai and her dad, Jarrod Ziegler.



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Monday, December 5, 2016 **Morning Fax® ...Today's News This Morning - Page 2** Athens, Tennessee

More on Tornado Recap & Aftermath

The tornado hit the Fairview Baptist Church and Fairview Christian Academy campus, damaging or destroying virtually every building. Fairview Christian Academy will be meeting temporarily at the former Four Star Academy on Matlock Road.

The tornado then traveled along Highway 307 virtually wiping out Deerfield Estates. There were 34 houses at Deerfield Estates. Several were destroyed and the others were badly damaged. The 20 injuries occurred in or near Deerfield Estates. The tornado moved through the Mount Harmony Community, damaging scores of houses and taking the steeple off the historic Mount Harmony Baptist Church. The tornado ended just before reaching the Monroe County line. Before the much needed rain started Saturday night, tarps had been placed on the roofs of the damaged houses. Several hundred volunteers showed up with chain saws, front end loaders, and other equipment. Jason Robertson with Erosion Solutions helped to clear and even create roads so workers could reach some of the areas. Members of the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief team helped remove trees. McMinn County Mayor John Gentry says the Athens business community has been wonderful, with Lowes providing free tarps and other materials, and several restaurants sending meals for victims, utility workers, and volunteers. Among those restaurants was Lotus Thai which lost its power. They donated all the food in the restaurant. The Gondolier, Bojangles, Dominoes, Little Caesars, Papa Johns, and Cracker Barrel were among those who donated food. Gentry said E&E Manufacturing turned their cafeteria over to the workers and volunteers, and told them to eat all they wanted at no charge. Others who helped include United Grocery Outlet, Tractor Supply, Hiwassee Building Supplies, and Mayfield Dairy.

Obituaries

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• **David Cox**, age 70, of Athens, died Thursday at Starr Regional Medical Center of Etowah. He was a veteran of the U. S. Navy and was a member of the VFW, American Legion, and AmVets. He had lived for the past 10 years in McMinn County. A private family service will be held at a later date. Serenity Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

• **William Roy "Bill" Lovelace**, age 82, of Etowah, died Saturday at Starr Regional Medical Center of Athens. He was retired from Bowater Southern Paper after 42 years of service. A graveside service will be held at 11 a.m. Thursday at Green Hill Cemetery. There will be no formal visitation. Serenity Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

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Today In History, December 5th

1782 - Martin Van Buren, our 8th President, was born.

1839 - General George Custer was born. Custer and his soldiers were all killed by Indians in the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

1848 - President James K. Polk announced that gold had been discovered in California, leading to the "gold rush" of 1848 and 1849.

1901 - Walt Disney was born in Chicago. He created such famous cartoon characters as Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse and came up with the idea for two very popular theme parks, Disney Land and Disney World.

1932 - R & B singer Little Richard was born.

1933 - National Prohibition came to an end as Utah became the 36th state to ratify the 21st Amendment to the Constitution, repealing the 18th Amendment.

1994 - Republicans chose Newt Gingrich to be the first GOP speaker of the House in four decades.

2008 - A judge in Las Vegas sentenced O.J. Simpson to 33 years in prison.