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Today's News... This Morning

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Thursday, January 25, 2024

Athens, Tennessee

Shooting Incident - Behind Athens Walmart

The City of Athens Police Department responded to the local hospital in reference to a shooting incident Wednesday. Officers made contact with nurses and advised they had a female patient with an apparent gunshot wound to her lower extremities. Upon arrival officers made contact with a male subject who stated he was with the female when the shooting occurred. The Patrol Division turned the scene over to Detectives with the Special Services Division. The case is active and still under investigation. The shooting stemmed from an argument between the male and female and alcohol was likely a factor in this incident. The shooting occurred in the back parking lot of the Athens Walmart, which was contained to inside the vehicle, right as Walmart was opening up Wednesday morning. Officers and Walmart's Loss Prevention team made sure that this was an isolated incident, and no patrons were in danger. Both parties involved in the incident were not affiliated with Walmart. The female victim has been transported to a local trauma center for further care. "I am proud of the quick response by the Patrol division and the information they were able to obtain on a hectic scene. The information was relayed to Detectives and a person of interest was detained quickly. This communication between the two divisions played a crucial role in locating and apprehending the suspect within minutes of the shooting. Our thoughts and prayers go out to both parties involved in this unfortunate incident," stated Lieutenant Witt. For more information, please contact the Athens Police Department, Chief Fred Schultz at 423-744-2730.

COMMUNITY NEWS YOU CAN USE:

✓The Mid East TN Community Chorus will have their first meeting next Monday night, January 29 at 7 pm at Tennessee Wesleyan University's chorus room. For more information contact Elise Howell at 423-381-0008.

Local and Area News

◆Brandon Wesley Lethco, 36, of Tellico Plains pleaded guilty on Monday to six counts of rape of a child. He received a 25-year sentence to be served at 100 percent without the possibility of parole. Officials said Monroe County Sheriff's Office and the Department of Children Services were integral in working this case. The prosecution was headed by Assistant District Attorneys General Dorothy Cherry and Connaught O'Connor.

◆An Etowah man pleaded guilty on Monday to killing his father and was given a life prison sentence. John Scott Ball, 47, pleaded guilty to the first-degree murder of his father, John Henry Ball. He was also charged with abuse of a corpse. John Scott Ball shot his father, cut up the corpse in Polk County AND then attempted to bury his father's remains in the mountains in Monroe County. A hiker found the remains in the Tellico Plains area in May 2022. The prosecution of this case was due to the multiple law enforcement agencies working together to bring justice to the Ball family. Those agencies were the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, McMinn County Sheriff's Office, Etowah Police Department, Polk County Sheriff's Office, Monroe County Sheriff's Office, Cleveland Police Department, the 10th Judicial Drug Task Force, and the 10th Judicial District Attorney's Office. The prosecution was headed by Assistant District Attorneys Aaron Chaplin and Krista Cochran, along with Assistant Victim Witness Coordinator Danielle Uselton.



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McMinn County Living Heritage Museum

Upcoming Events

HERITAGE SCHOOL:

Herbal Remedies with April Greer
Saturday, Jan. 27th @ 11:00
Natural home remedies for your ailments.
free for members \$5 for non-members.

History for Lunch:

History of The Battle of Midway
with Museum Director Brett King
Thursday, Jan. 25th at Noon
free admission

REDWORK EMBROIDERY WITH MADDI GARVIN
SATURDAY, FEB. 3RD @ 11:00 AM
CREATE A VALENTINE THEMED EMBROIDERY DESIGN TO SHARE WITH A LOVED ONE!
\$5 FOR MEMBERS \$10 FOR NONMEMBERS
CLASS SIZE IS LIMITED TO 12



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Hours:
Tuesday - Friday: 10 AM - 5 PM
Saturday: 10 AM - 1 PM
Sunday - Monday: Closed

Admission:
Adults: \$5.00
Senior 60+: \$3.00
Students: \$3.00

More Information

522 W Madison Ave.
Athens, TN 37303
423-745-0329
www.livingheritagemuseum.org

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Thursday, January 25, 2024

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Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

◆ **Patricia Ann Bryant**, age 86, of Franklin, OH, passed away Monday, January 22nd, at Terra Bella Assisted Living, in Athens. She was born in Middletown, OH. Pat was a loving Wife, Mother, Mother-in-law, Grandmother, Sister, and Aunt. A celebration of life will be Wednesday (1-30) at Baker-Stevens-Parramore Funeral Home in Middletown, OH. Family and friends are invited to sign the online registry at: zieglerfuneralhome.com Ziegler Funeral Home of Athens is in charge of local arrangements.

◆ **Debra Vincent**, age 69 of Englewood, passed away on Saturday, January 20. She was a faithful member of Truth and The Life Baptist Church. Debra enjoyed spending time tending her plants and flowers, she could grow anything. Visitation will be from 5-6 p.m. on Thursday, January 25th at Good Samaritan Funeral Home, Athens with the funeral at 6:00 p.m. this evening. Family and friends will assemble at 9:00 a.m., Friday, January 26th at the funeral home and proceed to McMinn Memory Gardens for the 10:00 a.m. committal service. Good Samaritan Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

TODAY IS:

- National Opposite Day (fun day of switcheroos)
- National Irish Coffee Day
- National Florida Day (Founded in 2017 by National Calendar Day® to celebrate Florida as the 27th state to join the Union)

State and National News

◆ The rape of a child is one of the most heinous crimes someone can commit, but does the perpetrator deserve the death penalty? Rep. William Lamberth of Portland, who also serves as House Majority Leader, says yes. Lamberth introduced legislature that would make the death penalty a sentencing option if the accused was over the age of 18 and the victim was under the age of 12. If the bill becomes law, it will likely face stiff legal challenges. In 2008, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the death penalty for those convicted of raping a child should be deemed unconstitutional. But Rep. Lamberth thinks, with a more conservative high court currently seated, they could get a different outcome.

◆ State Representative Jason Zachary of Knoxville, has filed a controversial bill seeking to make "trafficking" a minor for an abortion illegal in Tennessee. HB 1895, known as the "abortion trafficking of a minor" bill, was filed by Zachary's staff on Monday, the anniversary of when Roe v. Wade was passed. According to the text of the bill, any adult who "recruits, harbors, or transports a pregnant unemancipated minor," for a "criminal abortion," helps that minor obtain abortion-inducing medication, or "conceals an act constituting a criminal abortion" could be charged with a Class C Felony. The bill states that it is not a defense if the pregnant minor consented to the abortion. The bill also does not include any exclusions for pregnancies caused by incest, rape, or include any protection for adults who were assisting a pregnant minor who faced abuse or neglect by their parent or guardians.

◆ **Here's some good news:** The Tennessee Department of Transportation or TDOT began repairing potholes on East Tennessee roadways caused by the recent snow storm. AND BY THE WAY....If your car is damaged by a pothole, you can report it to TDOT by calling 833-TDOT-FIX (836-8349).