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Today's News... This Morning

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(See page 3 for more news)

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**HERITAGE
ANTIQUES**

Friday, February 16, 2024 Athens, Tennessee

Deputy's Body Found in River

On Wednesday evening a Meigs County deputy went missing after his patrol car went into the Tennessee River while he was taking a woman to the county jail. Deputy Robert "R.J." Leonard, a rookie with the Meigs County Sheriff's Office, was called to the scene of a disturbance Wednesday night on the Highway 60 bridge near the Birchwood Community. His body was recovered, from the Tennessee river around 6:30 p.m. on Thursday. Authorities say crews recovered the body of a woman in the back of the deputy's patrol vehicle Thursday afternoon. The woman Deputy Leonard had arrested has not been identified, but authorities have been in contact with her family.

Community News You Can Use

- ✓ The City of Athens Public Works Department announces the sidewalk and parking spaces 5 and 6, and the loading zone on Jackson Street from Green Street to Madison Avenue will be closed from Friday, February 16, 2024, at 6:30 a.m. until Friday, May 31, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. This closing is continuous throughout the project. The purpose of this closure is for building remodeling. For more information, please contact the Office of the Public Works Department at 423-744-2745.
- ✓ The City of Athens Parks and Recreation Department is now accepting applications for certified lifeguards for the Ingleside Pool. The summer pool season will be in operation beginning May 24th and running through end of August. The City of Athens is seeking mature, dependable, friendly staff to continue operating the Ingleside Pool in a professional capacity. The starting rate of pay for lifeguards is \$12 per hour. Please complete applications and turn into the Human Resources Department. Applications can be obtained online or in the Human Resources office at City Hall. If interested in a lifeguarding position, but not yet certified, the City of Athens is hosting a Red Cross Lifeguarding Course on May 16-20. Continued at right ⇨

Church News and Events

- SEE PAGE 3 FOR BURKES GOSPEL JUBILEE BENEFIT ON SUNDAY
- Dumplin Valley will be in concert at Rocky Mount Baptist Church on Sunday, March 3 at 10:45 a.m.
- There will be a Gospel Benefit Singing for Mason Holliday on February 23 at 7 p.m. at Solid Rock Baptist Church. There will also be a bake sale and auction beginning at 5:30 p.m.
- There will be a surprise benefit singing for the Dewayne Lee Family at Nonaburg House of Prayer, corner of Co Rd 461 and Hwy 39E in Englewood on Saturday, February 17 at 7 p.m.
- Trinity Trio will be special guest singers at Bethel Baptist Tabernacle on Sunday, February 18 at 10:30.
- Planted In Christ Outreach Fellowship, 317 Maple Street, in Athens, invites you to attend Outreach Deliverance Classes every Thursday at 7:00 p.m.
- Celebrate Recovery meets at the following churches: The Englewood Church of God every Sunday at 6 p.m. and Woodward Avenue Church of God every Tuesday at 6 p.m.
- Mars Hill Presbyterian Church (205 North Jackson Street) is sponsoring a free children's playgroup on Mondays, 9-11 a.m. for ages 0-5. For additional information, contact the Church Office (423-745-1403) or Mary Ann Reed (910-200-2905).

COMMUNITY NEWS Continued: Registration is available online at athenstn.gov or in the Parks & Recreation office. For more information, please contact the Office of Parks & Recreation at (423) 744-2704 or email the department at recreation@athenstn.gov.
✓ On Saturday, March 9th at 11:00, The McMinn Living Heritage Museum will have a beginners Italian lesson with Joyce Simpson in buying items at a grocery store and a department store.

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AT **SOLID ROCK**

February 23rd 7:00 p.m.

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Friday, February 16, 2024

Morning Fax® Today's News This Morning Page 2

Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

♦**Marlin Edward Albrecht**, age 93, of Spring City, passed away on January 29, with two of his daughters by his side. He was born in New Hartford, MN. After serving for 21 years both in the Army (2 yrs) and Air Force (19 yrs), he retired as a Tech Sgt E-6 on October 1, 1970. He was very proud of his service as Crew Chief with the 22nd Air Refueling Squadron for the KC-97 Refuelers, and while stationed at March Air Force Base in 1958, he was part of the SAC crew who performed in the historical and record setting endurance flight in support of the "Ice Island" operation. He was a veteran of both the Korean and Vietnam Wars. After retiring, he was self-employed and engaged in several business ventures including owning an automatic car wash, check cashing stores, rental and property investments, and gold mining, to name a few. There were two hobbies Marlin loved more than anything -- airplanes and motorcycles. He studied to get his private pilot's license at age 56. He was an avid motorcycle rider until this past year. He also enjoyed working in his yard, landscaping, planting trees and working on projects. If he was able, he was active outside. The family will hold a Celebration of Life on Sunday, March 3, at the Decatur SDA Church, Decatur, TN at 11:00 a.m. Marlin's ashes will be interred at the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery in Preston, MN at a later date, to be determined by the family. Companion Funeral Home of Athens is in charge of arrangements.

♦**Ronald Peter "Pete" Stieb**, age 84, passed away Tuesday, February 6, in metro Atlanta, where he moved a year earlier to be closer to family. He was born in Granite City, IL. After graduating from Southern Illinois University in June 1963, Pete accepted a position at aerospace manufacturer.... Obituaries Continued at right⇒

Obituaries Continued

Ronald Peter "Pete" Stieb: McDonnell Douglas in St. Louis. He demonstrated great interpersonal skills and a knack for sales, which led him next to Broyhill Furniture Industries – a move that ultimately led to a long-term, dedicated career in the furniture industry. He was quickly promoted to a management position, and he and his family relocated to Broyhill's home office in Lenoir, NC. Pete next accepted a position as Vice President of Trogdon Furniture Industries in Toccoa, GA, before taking over as President of Athens Furniture Industries in Athens, TN. He had a second career later in life as an Investment Advisor with Edward Jones in Navarre, FL, and enjoyed watching the stock market for many years even after retirement. Pete loved people and making them laugh, and even kept a folder in his desk drawer titled "Jokes". He was candid, and his friends and family knew they could count on him for real and honest advice. He was a man of taste who enjoyed nice things – including fine dining, beautiful beaches, home décor, and his wardrobe. He was a sharp dresser and maintained his dignity throughout the last years of his life. In celebration of his life, a mass will be held on Friday, March 1, at 10:30 am at St. Elizabeth Catholic Church in Granite City, IL, followed by interment at Calvary Catholic Cemetery in Edwardsville, IL. He will be laid to rest next to his mother, father, and paternal grandparents.

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, e-mail it to: wyradio@gmail.com

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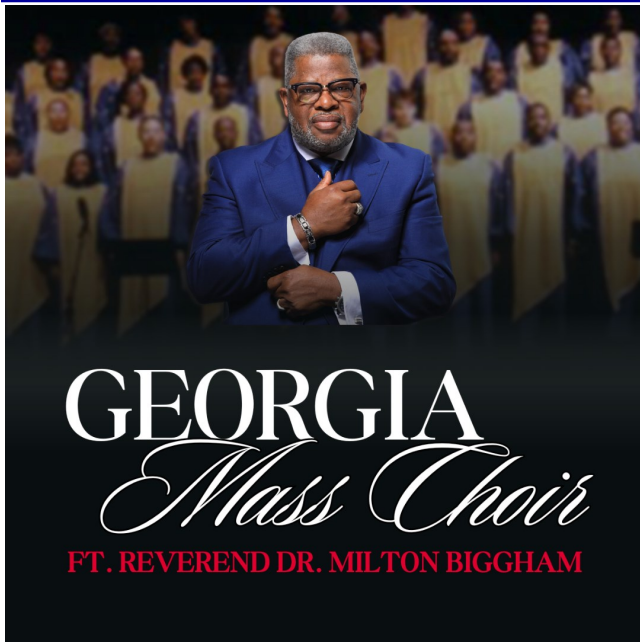
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Georgia Mass Choir in Athens on Sunday



Renowned Gospel vocal ensemble, Georgia Mass Choir, performs under the direction of Reverend Milton Biggham in Athens, Tennessee, on Sunday, February 18, at 5 pm. Georgia Mass Choir headlines this benefit concert for Burke's Gospel Jubilee, a Sunday morning radio show that airs on WYXI AM 1390 and FM 94.5. The concert is free and, while no admission is charged, event organizers will accept donations as a love offering to celebrate the show's 54th anniversary. Burke's Gospel Jubilee has aired on WYXI every Sunday from 9am to 10am since 1967. The show was founded by W. E. Burke in July of that year and is currently hosted by volunteers Stanley Blair, Karen King, and Jasmine Porter-McDermott. Proceeds from the benefit concert will go toward the expenses required to keep Gospel Jubilee on the air. Primarily, the event celebrates Gospel Jubilee's more than fifty years of heritage and provides our community access to world class gospel performances. This benefit concert is sponsored by Athens Area Council for the Arts (AACA) and McMinn County, Tennessee. The Douglass Family Gospel Sing-

ers begin the program. These days, the group consists of Douglass sisters Margie Moore of Harriman, Glenda Copeland of Harriman, Willie Mae Springs of Rockwood, and Ivory Dowdell of Oak Ridge. Together they deliver a unique blend of quartet-style inspirational music. "We call it gospel with a Douglass Family twist," explains Moore, the group's manager. The sisters carry on the tradition started by their parents, the late Charles and Lillie Mae Douglass of Harriman, who both came from families of quartet singers.

The headlining performance is by Georgia Mass Choir featuring the Rev. Dr. Milton Biggham. In his more than 40 years in the gospel music industry, Biggham has recorded, performed with, written for and/or produced some of the biggest names in gospel, including the Rev. James Cleveland, Albertina Walker, the Rev. Clay Evans, the Rev. Timothy Wright, LaShun Pace, The Mississippi Mass Choir, Dorothy Norwood, Inez Andrews, and others. Biggham is credited with the discovery of Kirk Franklin and Donnie McClurkin. Biggham produced Franklin's first hit, "Joy," with the Georgia Mass Choir and McClurkin's debut hit, "Speak To My Heart" with the New York Restoration Choir.

As co-founder of the New Jersey Mass Choir, the Florida Mass Choir and the DFW Mass Choir, Biggham helped start a thriving choir music scene in the 1980s. In 1983, he founded the award-winning, 100-voice Georgia Mass Choir, with whom he scored a handful of Grammy nominations. In 1996, the Georgia Mass Choir was brought to the attention of Hollywood producer Penny Marshall, resulting in a featured role in the Touchstone film, "The Preacher's Wife," starring Denzel Washington and Whitney Houston, for which Biggham also served as gospel music director. For his work in traditional gospel, this Vietnam veteran who has more than 500 compositions to his credit, including "Prayer Will Fix It Every Time," "The Storm Is Over," "I Still Have A Praise Inside Of Me," "I'm Blessed," "Come On In The Room," and "I Owe You The Praise," has become one of the most sought-after producers on the gospel music scene.

The concert will be held at Light of Life Faith Ministries International Church, located at 1112 Congress Parkway North in Athens. The church, was formerly known as the Overcoming Faith Christian Center. It was founded in 1985 by Dr. Harold McCowan of Athens. The church began an extensive construction project several years ago and is now one of the largest facilities in this area and seats from 500 to 800 people. Dr. McCowan is a native of Athens and received his Doctor of Divinity Degree from the New Life Bible College in Cleveland, TN.

For more information about the Georgia Mass Choir Benefit concert call Karen King at 423-829-7021 or Stanley Blair at 423-745-0298. More information about McMinn County, Tennessee is available at mcminncounty.gov

For more information about AACA programs go to athensartscouncil.org or call 423-745-8781. Office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The Arts Center is located in Historic Downtown Athens, Tennessee, in the Main Street District, at 320 North White Street.