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Wednesday, April 16, 2025

Page 1

Athens, Tennessee

McMinn County Education Foundation Honors 77 Youth Leaders



The McMinn County Education Foundation recently celebrated 77 outstanding students from across the county, naming them Youth Leaders during a special ceremony held at Tennessee Wesleyan University.

Each student earned the title through a competitive application process that included a summary of their activities and achievements, two letters of recommendation from adults who had witnessed their leadership, and a personal essay exploring the connection between reading and leadership. Winners were selected through a blind review conducted by local community leaders, ensuring fairness and focus on merit.

Every public school in the area was represented among the honored students, showcasing the depth of talent and leadership present throughout McMinn County. The event was highlighted by a motivational keynote speech from Mr. Jack Allen, who shared insights on the "5 Habits of Real Leaders," leaving students inspired to continue developing their leadership skills.

As part of their recognition, each Youth Leader will be invited back to Tennessee Wesleyan University in late October to experience "A Day in the Life of a College Student," offering them a glimpse into future academic and leadership opportunities.

Source: Ginger Robinson, Executive Director, McMinn County Education Foundation

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Athens, Tennessee

Barbara Ensley's 'HERstory' Exhibit Celebrates Women Through Art



The Etowah Arts Commission will feature a powerful solo art exhibit titled *HERstory* by local acrylic artist Barbara Ensley throughout the months of May and June. A resident of Athens, Ensley invites the public to attend the

opening reception on **Friday, May 16, from 5 to 9 p.m.**

HERstory is a vibrant and thought-provoking collection of over 30 paintings, offering a bold exploration of self-discovery, female empowerment, spiritual awakening, and the sacred feminine. With each brushstroke, Ensley pays tribute to the multifaceted experiences of women — honoring their struggles, celebrating their triumphs, and illuminating their enduring strength and wisdom.

This exhibit promises to be a moving tribute to the power and resilience of women, making it a must-see for art lovers and community members alike.

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Photos Courtesy of Barbara Ensley, Painting: Vessel

Community News You Can Use

- The Athens Utilities Board Budget and Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 17 at 11:30 A.M. They will review March financial statements as well as allow time for public comment for pre-approved speakers.
- The McMinn County Highway Department has announced that McMinn County Road 186 AKA The Begum Road will be closed Wednesday, April 16, from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. for road construction.
- Mark your calendars to come out and support the ACS athletes this year as they compete in the Special Olympics on Saturday, April 26th at McMinn County High School. The event begins at 10 a.m.

Listening Reminder: Women at the Well founder, Robin Nation and host, Julie Tillis invite you to listen to *Hope From the Well!* They will be discussing the concept of *"Wonderfully Made Free"* *Hope From the Well* is heard every Thursday at 8:15 am on WYXI RADIO, AM-1390 & FM-94.5.

EASTER EGG HUNT



Wednesday, April 16
6:30 PM

Grades K-8

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Wednesday, April 16, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

McMinn Cherokees Varsity Baseball Stymied By Walker Valley



McMinn County Varsity Cherokees had trouble keeping up with Walker Valley in a 7-0 loss on Monday.

Walker Valley got on the board in the top of the second inning after McMinn County Varsity Cherokees committed an error, Hayden Harrison stole home, and Owen Sneed singled down the left field line, each scoring one run.

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Walker Valley added to their early lead in the top of the third inning after Harrison singled down the left field line, Cooper Cantrell walked, and Satchel Cole hit a sacrifice fly, each scoring one run.

Marshall Goodner led things off on the hill for McMinn County Varsity Cherokees. The right-handed pitcher gave up five hits and six runs (one earned) over three innings, striking out two and walking two. Titus Torbett stepped on the hill first for Walker Valley. The starting pitcher surrendered six hits and zero runs over seven innings, striking out 11 and walking three.

Chase McDonald led McMinn County Varsity Cherokees with two hits in four at bats. Harrison went 1-for-3 at the plate and led the team with two runs batted in. Torbett led Walker Valley with two hits in three at bats. Walker Valley didn't commit a single error in the field. Jordan Smith had the most chances in the field with 11.

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TWIDUNE

Wednesday, April 16, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

Monroe County Authorities Seize Fentanyl in Early Morning Drug Bust



In the early hours of Monday, April 14, 2025, Monroe County Sheriff's Office Detectives, in collaboration with Agents from the 10th Judicial District Drug Task Force, executed a search warrant targeting illegal drug activity in the Madisonville community off Sneed Road.

The operation was part of an ongoing investigation into the illegal sale of Fentanyl, a powerful and potentially deadly synthetic opioid. During the search, law enforcement officers discovered approximately 12.1 grams of suspected Fentanyl, along with multiple other Schedule drugs, drug paraphernalia including digital scales and baggies, and several thousand dollars in cash. One individual was taken into custody and is currently being held at the Monroe County Justice Center. Authorities emphasize that all suspects are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

The Monroe County Sheriff's Office and Narcotics Division reaffirm their commitment to protecting the community and continue working diligently to combat the spread of dangerous drugs throughout the region.

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Source: [Sheriff Tommy Jones - Facebook](#)

Starr Regional Medical Center Releases 2024 Community Benefit Report

Starr Regional Medical Center has published its 2024 Community Benefit Report, outlining its continued efforts to support the health and economic vitality of McMinn County.

In 2024, Starr Regional added 102 providers across multiple specialties, including anesthesiology, cardiology, emergency and family medicine, nephrology, OB/GYN, radiology, teleneurology, and telepsychology. The hospital also made over \$9 million in capital improvements, including the purchase of an MRI scanner, CT scanner, da Vinci robotic surgical system, and a Cysto table.

The report notes that Starr Regional provided more than \$49.3 million in health services to those in need, reinforcing its commitment to accessible care for all. It also supported its approximately 655 employees with over \$46.4 million in salaries, wages, and benefits, and invested nearly \$130,000 in professional development and tuition assistance.

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Additionally, the hospital contributed \$9.7 million in local and state taxes and maintained support for numerous local organizations, including the American Cancer Society, Athens Area Council for the Arts, Friendly Fellow Club, Good Faith Clinic, and Isaiah 117 House.

Source: [Brandi Armstrong, Starr Regional Medical Center](#)

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Wednesday, April 16, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

Vanessa Chrisman Darity, 65 of Athens, passed away on Thursday, April 10, in Athens, GA. She loved her family fiercely and was always there for those she cared about. A Funeral service to celebrate Vanessa's life will be held on Thursday, April 17 at 3 p.m. in the Chapel of Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services. The Family will receive friends from 1 to 3 p.m. prior to the service. Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services is honored to serve the Darity Family.

Rickey Harold Boles, 59 of Ten Mile, passed away on Saturday, April 12. He enjoyed working on junk cars and riding motorcycles. A Funeral service will be held on Saturday, April 19, 2025, at 2 p.m. in the Chapel of Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services. Interment will follow in the Friendship Cemetery in Spring City. The family will receive friends from 12 noon to 2 p.m. prior to the service. Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services is honored to serve the Boles Family.

Thomas Andrew Sparks Jr., 82 of Athens, passed away on Monday, April 14. There will be no formal services at this time. Companion Funeral & Cremation Service of Athens, TN and the Cody family are honored to assist the family with these arrangements.

Wanda Lee Harris Jones, of Englewood, passed away on Thursday, April 10. She was a member of the First Church of God in Englewood. She started the HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America) in McMinn County where she taught for 15 years. She taught students from McMinn High and Central High during school hours and adult CNA classes at night. The family will receive friends on Thursday, April 17 from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. with a funeral service beginning at 7 p.m. located at Companion Funeral Home of Athens. Companion Funeral & Cremation Service of Athens and the Cody family are honored to assist the family with these arrangements.

James Brent "Bud" Satherlie, 32, of Athens, went to his heavenly home on Tuesday, April 8. He was a member of Mt. Harmony Baptist church in Riceville. Bud's family held a private service on Monday, April 14, and he was laid to rest at Sunrise Cemetery. Companion Funeral & Cremation Service of Athens, TN and the Cody family are honored to assist Bud's family with these arrangements.

Ruth Ellen Prock, 73 of Etowah, peacefully passed away on Saturday, April 12. No services are scheduled at this time. Good Samaritan Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

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