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2412 Congress Pkwy South, Athens**Tuesday, December 30, 2025****Page 1****Athens, Tennessee**

## Englewood Rural Fire Department Spreads Holiday Cheer with Annual Santa Run

The Englewood Rural Fire Department held its annual Santa Run on Christmas Eve, bringing holiday cheer to neighborhoods throughout the community.

Santa Claus, joined by Mrs. Claus this year, visited families along the route and delivered toys to children. The event drew a strong turnout as residents gathered to celebrate the holiday tradition.

The Englewood Rural Fire Department extends wishes to the community for a safe, prosperous, and happy New Year.

*Photos by Englewood Rural FD*

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Tuesday, Dec. 30, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

## Brush Fire Burns 9 Acres on County Road 484

A brush fire burned approximately nine acres of woodland and brush Saturday afternoon on County Road 484 after strong winds caused a controlled burn to spread out of control.

The incident occurred around 2 p.m. while the property owner was burning brush. Officials confirmed the owner had a valid burn permit. Fire crews worked for approximately four hours to bring the fire under control.

Multiple agencies responded, including Etowah Rural Fire, Etowah City Fire, Englewood Rural Fire, Claxton Fire, Athens Rural Fire, Athens City Fire, West Polk Fire, Conasauga Fire, Mount Vernon Fire, and the Tennessee Division of Forestry. Bradley County Fire and Madisonville City Fire were placed on standby.

Englewood Rural Fire Capt. Jack Ingram was in command of the fire scene, with Englewood Rural Fire Chief Billy Roach overseeing operations.

## Jan 9 Concert Celebrates the Divas of Pop & Rock at The Arts Center in Athens

Athens Area Council for the Arts (AACa) is pleased to present **Mic Drop: The Women Who Rule Music**, Friday, January 9, 2026. Directed by Traci McKenzie, **Mic Drop** is the next installment of AACa's 2025-26 House Blend Concert Series.

Traci McKenzie is an Athens Community Theatre director (The Addams Family, School of Rock) and performer (9 to 5: The Musical), who also directed last season's smash hit **Look What You Made Us Do**.

**Mic Drop** is a diverse collection of songs that span genres and decades. And each one shares a defining trait: they were written or made popular by women. Larae Graves will emcee the evening of legendary hits. Performers bringing the songs to the stage include Mahala Kelby in her House Blend debut, along with returning performers Miah Baker, Raegan Graves, Crystal Hall, Lindsey "Lu" Kimball, Alex Lauterbach, Natalie Leonesio, Emerson McKenzie, Kinsley Melhorn, Stephanie Roberts, and Christen Webb.

September Song, AACa's House Band, provides live accompaniment led by Andrew Kimball on guitar, Joe Littleton (bass), Kyle Littleton (lead guitar), and Matt Flowers (drums).

All **House Blend Concert Series** shows are in the Sue E. Trotter Black Box Theater at The Arts Center. Prices for House Blend tickets range from \$15 to \$40. Some events are catered and include light hors d'oeuvres or a full dinner; the higher ticket price for these events reflects the included meal. *Source: Lauren Brown, AACa*

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Weekdays  
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Noon - 12:30 pm

Tuesday, Dec. 30, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

## McMinn County Arrest Reports

**12-26-25**

**Amanda Neal**, 36 of Athens, charged with disorderly conduct, and criminal trespassing.

**Amanda Hyde**, 42 of Sweetwater, charged with failure to appear for driving without a license.

**Demetri Foster**, 33 of Athens, charged with domestic assault, Bond \$2,000.

**Shane Garren**, 31 of Englewood, charged with vandalism.

**Vanessa Gamble-Brezano**, 27 of Athens, charged with failure to appear for driving without a license, Bond \$4,000.

**12-28-25**

**James Guffey**, 31 of Englewood, charged with drug paraphernalia, violation of probation for domestic assault, and failure to appear for Drug paraphernalia, Bond \$6,028.40.

**James Raspberry**, 59 of Cleveland, Texas, charged with domestic assault, simple possession, casual exchange of meth, and drug paraphernalia, Bond \$24,000.

**Brandi Davis**, 44 of Decatur, charged with DUI, open container law, and child endangerment under 8 years old, Bond \$4,000.

**Chaston Walker**, 38 of Decatur, charged with state violation of probation in Meigs County, Bond \$10,000.

**Daniel Sledge**, 41 of Athens, charged with public intoxication, and criminal trespassing, Bond \$3,000.

**Timothy Taylor**, 42 of Niota, charged with DUI, and leaving the scene of an accident, Bond \$1,500. (*See Page 4*)

**Christopher Nichols**, 44 of Athens, charged with burglary.

**Savannah Murphy**, 31 of Etowah, charged with violation of probation for possession of paraphernalia, and Child support, Bond \$1,418.45.

**Rachel Carley**, 40 of Houston, Texas, charged with domestic assault, possession of meth for resale, and Drug paraphernalia, Bond \$24,000.

**Those accused are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.**

Information gathered using public sources.



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Athens, Tennessee

## Driver Located After Crashing Vehicle and Leaving Scene in Niota



Authorities responded to a single-vehicle crash just after 9 p.m. Friday at the intersection of County Roads 255 and 256 involving a 2020 Nissan Altima.

The vehicle, driven by a 42-year-old man, struck a concrete mailbox and a utility pole. When first responders arrived, the driver was not at the scene. Niota Fire Department responders later located the man walking along County Road 263 toward his residence. The driver was evaluated by EMS and later transported to the Justice Center, reportedly in connection with a DUI investigation.

Niota Rural Fire, Athens Rural Fire, Clearwater Fire departments, AMR, the McMinn County Sheriff's Department, and the Tennessee Highway Patrol responded to the incident.

*Photo by Chad Gates of Niota Rural FD*

## Obituaries

**Kenneth "Ken" Rodney Dulaney**, 69 of McMinn County, passed away on Tuesday, December 23. He served as a sales representative with CLA (Clifton-Larson-Allen) accounting firm of Houston. A visitation will be held from 5:00 to 7:00 PM on Tuesday, December 30 at Ziegler Funeral Home. Graveside services will be held on Wednesday, December 31 at 11:00 AM at Old Fashioned Baptist Church Cemetery. Ziegler Funeral Home has been entrusted with serving the family of Kenneth "Ken" Rodney Dulaney.

**Laura Louise Oliver Morrow**, 93 of Madisonville, passed away on Saturday, December 27. She was a member of Riceville First Baptist Church. A celebration of life will be held at Fairview Baptist Tabernacle Church, Sweetwater, TN on Tuesday, December 30, 2025 from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Family Life Center. Good Samaritan Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements

**Joe K. Brannon**, age 92, passed away on Friday, December 26, 2025. He retired from Bendix in Cleveland after 29 years. Joe loved to garden, was an avid reader of the Gospel, and attended Hilltop Baptist Church. Visitation will be held on Wednesday, December 31, 2025, from 12:00-2:00 PM at Ziegler Funeral Home with a funeral service at 2:00 PM. Interment will follow at Riceville Cemetery. Ziegler Funeral Home has been entrusted with serving the family of Joe K. Brannon.

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