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Athens Police Arrest Suspect After Shooting on Fisher Street



The Athens Police Department is investigating a shooting that left a 36-year-old woman injured Sunday morning at a home on Fisher Street. Officers arrived to find the victim suffering from a gunshot wound to her upper extremity. She was transported to a regional trauma center for treatment. Her name has not been released.

Police determined the suspect was still inside the residence and believed to be armed. After giving verbal commands, officers safely took 51-year-old **Steven Wilkerson Jr.** (pictured) into custody without further incident.

Wilkerson Jr. is charged with:

- Attempted First-Degree Murder
- Felon in Possession of a Weapon
- Employment of a Firearm During the Commission of a Dangerous Felony

His bond is set at **\$750,000**. Police note that all charges are allegations and Wilkerson Jr. is **presumed innocent** unless proven guilty in court.

The Athens Police Criminal Investigations Division processed the scene, and the case remains under investigation. Anyone with information is asked to contact Detective Blake Witt at 423-744-2730. *Source: [City of Athens Tn Police Department](#)*

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Monday, May 18, 2026 **Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 2** **Athens, Tennessee**

Driver Injured After Vehicle Flips in Sweetwater



A 73-year-old woman was injured Thursday afternoon when her vehicle left Highway 68 in Sweetwater and overturned multiple times, according to first responders. The crash happened around 5 p.m. The woman was driving a late model BMW traveling north when she experienced a medical emergency, causing the car to leave the roadway and come to rest in the grassy area of the Circle K parking lot. Witnesses reported the vehicle flipped three times before stopping.

The woman, who was the only occupant, was transported by ground ambulance because no medical helicopters were available at the time. Niota Fire Department, the McMinn County Sheriff's Office, and THP responded to the scene, and AMR transported the patient to UT Medical Center in Knoxville.

Photo provided by the Niota Fire Department.

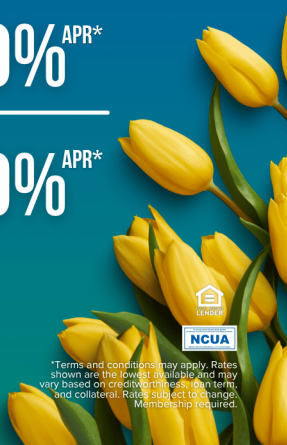
Community News You Can Use

- The Athens-McMinn Family YMCA will participate in the Summer Food Service Program, providing free meals to all children throughout the summer. Meals are available on a first-come, first-served basis with no eligibility requirements and no discrimination in service. Multiple sites across McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, and Polk counties will offer breakfast, lunch, snacks, or non-congregate pickup options depending on location. Service dates and times vary. Click to see a full list of meal sites, schedules, and pickup details: [Complete list of Open Sites](#)
- Athens City Schools will hold its last day of school on Tuesday, May 26, operating on an abbreviated schedule with early dismissal for all grade levels. Families can view the full dismissal times and the district's end-of-year message by clicking or tapping the following link: [ACS LAST DAY](#)


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Monday, May 18, 2026

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 3

Athens, Tennessee

Athens Public Works Announces Street Closures and Holiday Schedule

The City of Athens Public Works Department has released several upcoming closures and schedule changes affecting motorists and city services in late May.

Richardson Street Closure for Paving Richardson Street from Haley Street to Oak Street, will be closed from Monday, May 18 at 8 a.m. until Tuesday, May 19 at 4 p.m. Crews will be paving the asphalt surface, and drivers are urged to use caution, follow detour signs, and expect delays.

Memorial Day Holiday Closures City: offices—including the Municipal Building, Public Works, Recycle Center, and Animal Shelter—will be closed Monday, May 25 for Memorial Day. All will reopen Tuesday, May 26. Residential garbage normally collected Monday will be picked up Tuesday; all other routes remain on schedule. Residents are asked to place totes curbside Monday night. Emergency services will operate without interruption.

Street Closures for Soap Box Derby: Several streets will close for the annual Soap Box Derby beginning Friday, May 29 at 4 p.m. through Saturday, May 30 at 4:30 p.m.

The affected areas include:

- Keith Lane (Prof Powers Lane to Cedar Springs Road)
- Crestway Drive (McMinn Avenue to Matlock Avenue)
- Gideon Street (Boaz Street to Keith Lane)
- Motorists should watch for derby vehicles, spectators, and traffic control signage.

For more information on any of these notices, contact the Public Works Department at 423-744-2745.

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Monday, May 18, 2026

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 4

Athens, Tennessee

East Tennessee Sweet Stuff joins Athens Chamber



A ribbon cutting was recently held to welcome East Tennessee Sweet Stuff as a new member of the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce. Located in downtown Athens, the business offers a colorful lineup of crowd-favorite treats for events and celebrations. Participating in the ceremony were Chamber representatives, local and state officials, and owners Darren and Jessica Casteel, along with their staff.

Tennessee Unemployment Holds Steady at 3.6% in March

Tennessee's unemployment rate remained unchanged at 3.6% in March, according to new data from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The rate is the same as February's figure and just slightly above the 3.5% recorded this time last year.

Nationally, unemployment stood at 4.3%, keeping Tennessee seven-tenths of a point below the U.S. rate. The national figure dipped slightly from the previous month but is up compared to a year ago.

Statewide, employers added 12,100 nonfarm jobs between February and March. The largest gains came from the health care and social assistance sector, followed by accommodation and food services and administrative, support, and waste services.

Over the past year, Tennessee has added 9,200 jobs, with the strongest growth again in health care and social assistance, state government, and administrative and support services.

Source: TN Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development

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McMinn County Arrest Reports

May 14, 2026

- Mickey Youngblood**, 28 of Englewood, charged with possession of meth, drug paraphernalia, false reports, and violation of probation for possession of paraphernalia, Bond \$20,072.05
- Christian Moody**, 42 of Athens, charged with DUI, and drug paraphernalia, Bond \$5,000.
- Christopher Henley**, 52 of Lawrenceburg, charged with failure to appear for simple possession, drug paraphernalia, and possession and casual exchange of meth, Bond \$8,000.
- Larissa Wilkerson**, 44 of Loudon, charged with DUI fifth offence, violation of implied consent, failure to give immediate notice of an accident, leaving the scene of an accident with property damage, violation of an interlock device, driving without due care, and failure to obey police officers.

May 15, 2026

- Marcia Alston**, 39 of Etowah, charged with domestic assault, simple possession casual exchange of meth, simple possession casual exchange of suboxone, and drug paraphernalia, Bond \$18,000.
- Pedro Balazs TeeQue**, 21 of Worthington, Minnesota, charged with DUI, leaving the scene of an accident, resisting stop, and violation of license restrictions, Bond \$75,000.
- Brett Ferguson**, 47 of Athens, charged with domestic assault, and simple possession casual exchange of Schedule 3, Bond \$5,000.
- Hunter Morrow**, 21 of Riceville, charged with resisting stop.
- Wendy Garcia Lara**, 37 of Athens, charged with state violation of probation.

**Those accused are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.
 Information gathered using public sources.**



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Monday, May 18, 2026

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 6

Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

Ronan Paul Petrillo, 64 of Calhoun passed away on Thursday, May 7 at Starr Regional Medical Center in Etowah. Graveside services were at Cedar Grove Cemetery. There was no formal visitation. Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home in Athens was in charge of the arrangements.

Robert Glenn Huggins, 79, of Knoxville, passed away on Friday, May 8. He was a proud Vietnam War veteran where he served with the US Army 1st Air Cavalry Division from 1969-1970 and was awarded a Bronze Star Medal. He then graduated from Tennessee Wesleyan College with degrees in Finance and Mathematics. A graveside service is planned for Wednesday May 27th at 11am. Guests are asked to arrive by 10:30am to Jerry Smith Funeral Home in Athens, TN for a procession to the grave site. Family and friends are invited to a reception at Fox Den Country Club in Knoxville, TN on Wednesday, May 27, from 4:00 - 6:00pm. Smith Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

Thomas "Tom" F. Joines, 87, of Etowah, passed away on Friday, May 15. Tom proudly served his country with the United States Air Force for 26 years. Following his military service, he applied his determined work ethic to a successful career at CSX Railroad, where he worked diligently for over 25 years. Funeral services were held at 2:00 p.m., on Sunday, May 17 in the chapel of Bordwine Funeral Home. The family received friends from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM prior to the service. Interment followed the service at Green Hill Cemetery. Bordwine Funeral Home of Etowah was in charge of arrangements.

Robin Renee Casteel Zarnehei, 63 of Athens, passed away on Saturday, May 15. She was a former employee of Chattanooga Auto Auction and various other administrative positions. She was very involved with the Sweetwater feeding ministry Jehovah Jireh. The family will receive friends from 5-7 PM Tuesday, May 19, 2026 in the chapel of Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home. Laycock-Hobbs Funeral Home in Athens is in charge of the arrangements.

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