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Wednesday, July 22, 2026

Page 1

Athens, Tennessee

Former McMinn County Sheriff's Office Employee Charged After Late-Night Domestic Altercation



The McMinn County Sheriff's Office has arrested former deputy Caleb Latham following a late-Sunday-night domestic incident at a residence on Highway 39 West near Athens, according to Sheriff Joe Guy.

Deputies were dispatched after receiving reports of a possible domestic situation involving Latham. When officers arrived, they made contact with Latham and his girlfriend, Dixie Bidwell, and observed a heated verbal argument. Sheriff Guy noted that, as in many homes locally, firearms were present, prompting deputies to proceed cautiously. Latham left the residence voluntarily while deputies continued interviewing Bidwell and witnesses.

Sheriff Guy said that after reviewing body-camera footage, consulting with the District Attorney General's Office, and evaluating all statements and evidence, investigators determined the situation was more serious than initially believed. On Monday morning, warrants were issued charging Latham with Aggravated Assault by Domestic Violence. He turned himself in later that afternoon and is being held on a \$15,000 bond, with a court date to be set. The investigation remains active.

Latham worked for the Sheriff's Office from August 2018 until June 2026, serving as a deputy sheriff and Patrol Sergeant before resigning to take a job in local industry.

"Domestic issues are often difficult, especially when it involves a friend or someone we've worked with," Sheriff Guy said. "But we have to consider the safety and welfare of everyone involved."

Source: Joe Guy, Sheriff, McMinn Co.



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Paid for by Mark Cochran for State Representative

Wednesday, July 22, 2026 Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 2 **Athens, Tennessee**

Big Crowd Turns Out for ThompsonGas Customer Appreciation Day



ThompsonGas drew a huge turnout Friday afternoon as customers braved the rain to celebrate the company's Customer Appreciation Day at its Athens location. The event featured free hamburgers and hotdogs, \$10 grill

cylinder refills, and a full slate of giveaways that kept visitors coming back to the registration table.

Guests enjoyed meeting and chatting with Brother Barry and Stephanie from WYXI Radio during the live broadcast, adding to the festive atmosphere.

Regional Manager Dave Bobich (pictured above on left with Brother Barry on the right) said the event exceeded expectations. He described the crowd as "very, very busy" and noted that staff were grateful for the strong community support and turnout.

Good Faith Clinic Open TOMORROW



The Good Faith Clinic will be open **TOMORROW**, Thursday, July 23 at 3 p.m. for re-fills and doctor visits. Test Results will be provided beginning at 3:45 p.m.

The Good Faith Clinic is free primary health care for residents of McMinn and Meigs counties, ages 18-64, who do not have any form of medical insurance, including TennCare. The clinic meets on the campus of Christ Community Church at 18 S Congress Parkway in Athens.

REMINDER: The Good Faith Clinic is open the 2nd, 4th, and 5th, Thursdays of each month.

Source: Norma Barham, Good Faith Clinic

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Wednesday, July 22, 2026

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

Athens, Tennessee

McMinn County Arrest Reports

July 20, 2026

Rasheed Wilkerson, 45 of Athens, charged with vandalism, and restitution, Bond \$1,148.45

Jason Deller, 36 of Athens, charged with failure to appear in Hawkins County.

Denny Camp, 39 of Athens, charged with public intoxication, and disorderly conduct, Bond \$2,000.

Mandy Burgess, 50 of Athens, charged with failure to appear for driving on a suspended license.

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

ACT to Open Season with *Mean Girls* Musical Aug. 21–30

Athens Community Theatre will launch its 2026–27 Mainstage season with the Tony Award-winning musical *Mean Girls*, running August 21–30 under the direction of Michael Webb. The PG-13 production features a mix of returning performers and newcomers, including Nahla Hanks as Regina and Ashley Beaton making her ACT debut as Cady.

The cast includes ACT regulars Emerson McKenzie, Blake Chastain, Charity Lawson, Joshua Bragg, and Kelly Borwick, alongside returning performers Skylar Roush and Paxton Dunn. New faces join the ensemble as well, supported by music directors Joshua Bragg and Matthew Crabtree, and choreographer Ethan León.

Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$15 for students, with Friday–Saturday shows at 7 p.m. and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. on August 23 and 30. ACT encourages early purchases as performances often sell out.

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Wednesday, July 22, 2026

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

Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

Alan Randal Caraway, 75, a native of Dayton and longtime resident of McMinn County, passed away on Tuesday, July 7. He was a member of the McMinn Rescue Squad and the Etowah Rescue Squad. Alan served his country in the United States Army during Vietnam. Services are pending at this time. [Ziegler Funeral Home](#) has been entrusted with serving the family of Alan Randal Caraway.

Joseph F. Barlok, 96, passed away peacefully on Friday, July 17. He served in the US Army during the Korean War. He retired from Bristol Myers. Visitation will be held Friday, July 24 from 3 to 5pm and from 7:10 to 9pm and Saturday from 8:30am until the funeral service at 9:15 at Legacy Growney Funeral Home, 1070 N Broad St, Hillside, NJ. Internment will follow at Hollywood Memorial Park, Union, NJ. [Ziegler Funeral Home](#) in Athens is in charge of local arrangements.

Danny Joe Jones, 65, of Athens, passed away on Sunday, July 19. He was a former employee of Athens Products and a carpenter by trade. Danny also worked with the Englewood Water and Sewer Department as an operator. Visitation will be held on Friday, July 24, from 11:00 AM-1:00 PM at Ziegler Funeral Home. Funeral services will be at 1:00 PM. Entombment will follow at Sunset Memorial Gardens mausoleum in Cleveland. [Ziegler Funeral Home](#) has been entrusted with serving the family of Danny Joe Jones.

Clifford "Marlin" Sharp, 77, a native and lifetime resident of McMinn County, passed away on Monday, July 20, 2026. He was employed many years at Athens Furniture and was of the Baptist faith. Visitation will be held on Thursday, July 23, 2026, from 11:00 AM-1:00 PM at Ziegler Funeral Home. Funeral services will be at 1:00 PM with Brother Mitchell Bradley and Brother Johnny Harris officiating. Interment will follow at McMinn Memory Gardens. [Ziegler Funeral Home](#) has been entrusted with serving the family of Clifford "Marlin" Sharp.

Kevin David Tilley, 66, of Niota, passed away on Thursday, July 16. He was a founding member of both the Union Grove and the North McMinn Fire Departments. He also worked for 35 years at Gemtron as a glass manufacturer. David attended Beulah Chapel Church of the Nazarene in Niota. The family will receive friends on Friday, July 24, 2026, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Beulah Chapel Church of the Nazarene. A Celebration of Life service will follow at 7:00 p.m., officiated by Bill Dawson and Paul Baker. Burial will immediately follow at Beulah Chapel Church Cemetery. [Companion Funeral & Cremation Service of Athens](#), is in charge of the arrangements.

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