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Wednesday, August 26, 2026

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Athens, Tennessee

City of Calhoun Awarded \$490K for Trail Project



The City of Calhoun will receive \$490,000 from the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) to support the Blueway Enhancement and Trail Project, part of a statewide investment announced by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC).

In total, TDEC's Office of Outdoor Recreation awarded \$18.5 million from the Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF) and \$1.76 million from RTP to 19 communities across Tennessee. The Grant Opportunity Fund (GO Fund), available to distressed and at-risk rural communities, provided an additional \$6.8 million in matching dollars to make projects more accessible.

The LPRF supports land purchases, park development, greenways, and capital projects, while RTP funds trail construction, rehabilitation, and support facilities. Together, these programs expand outdoor recreation opportunities while preserving natural resources.

TDEC Commissioner David Salyers called the grants "a smart investment in Tennessee's communities," while Deputy Gov. and TNECD Commissioner Stuart McWhorter emphasized their importance in strengthening rural areas.

Locally, the Calhoun Blueway Trail Project will benefit from this funding, enhancing outdoor access and recreation opportunities for McMinn County residents.

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Athens, Tennessee

McMinn Central Livestock Judging Team Earns Top-Three Finish at State Fair



The McMinn Central Livestock Judging Team placed third out of 90 teams at the Wilson County State Fair Livestock Open Evaluation, earning one of the top spots in this year's statewide competition.

Senior division competitor Jenna Lee delivered an outstanding individual performance, finishing second among 379 participants with a score of 288, just four points shy of the top score.

The team includes Gabe Fulbright, Makenna Tipton, Jenna Lee, and Jacob Jack, coached by agriculture teacher and FFA advisor Katherine Schultz. Livestock judging challenges students to evaluate animals such as cattle, hogs, sheep, and goats, rank them by quality, and defend their decisions before a judge—skills closely tied to Tennessee's agriculture industry. McMinn County Schools congratulates Lee and the entire team on their strong showing at the state fair. *Source Camille Luttrell, MCS*

Community News You Can Use

- Athens Municipal Building, Public Works, Recycle Center, and Animal Shelter will be closed Monday, Sept. 7 for Labor Day and reopen Tuesday, Sept. 8; Monday residential garbage runs Tuesday, all other routes stay normal, commercial/industrial pickup is limited, and McMinn E911 continues 24/7 emergency service; details at 423-744-2745.
- Regional high school students are invited to submit designs **Aug. 28–Sept. 28**; winner's artwork will be featured on MEDIC's spring donor shirt and earns a **\$500 e-gift card**. Details at: medicblood.org/hsshirtcontest.
- The Good Faith Clinic, a United Way agency, will be open **TOMORROW**, Thursday, August 27 at 3 p.m. for refills and doctor visits. Test Results will be provided beginning at 3:45 p.m.



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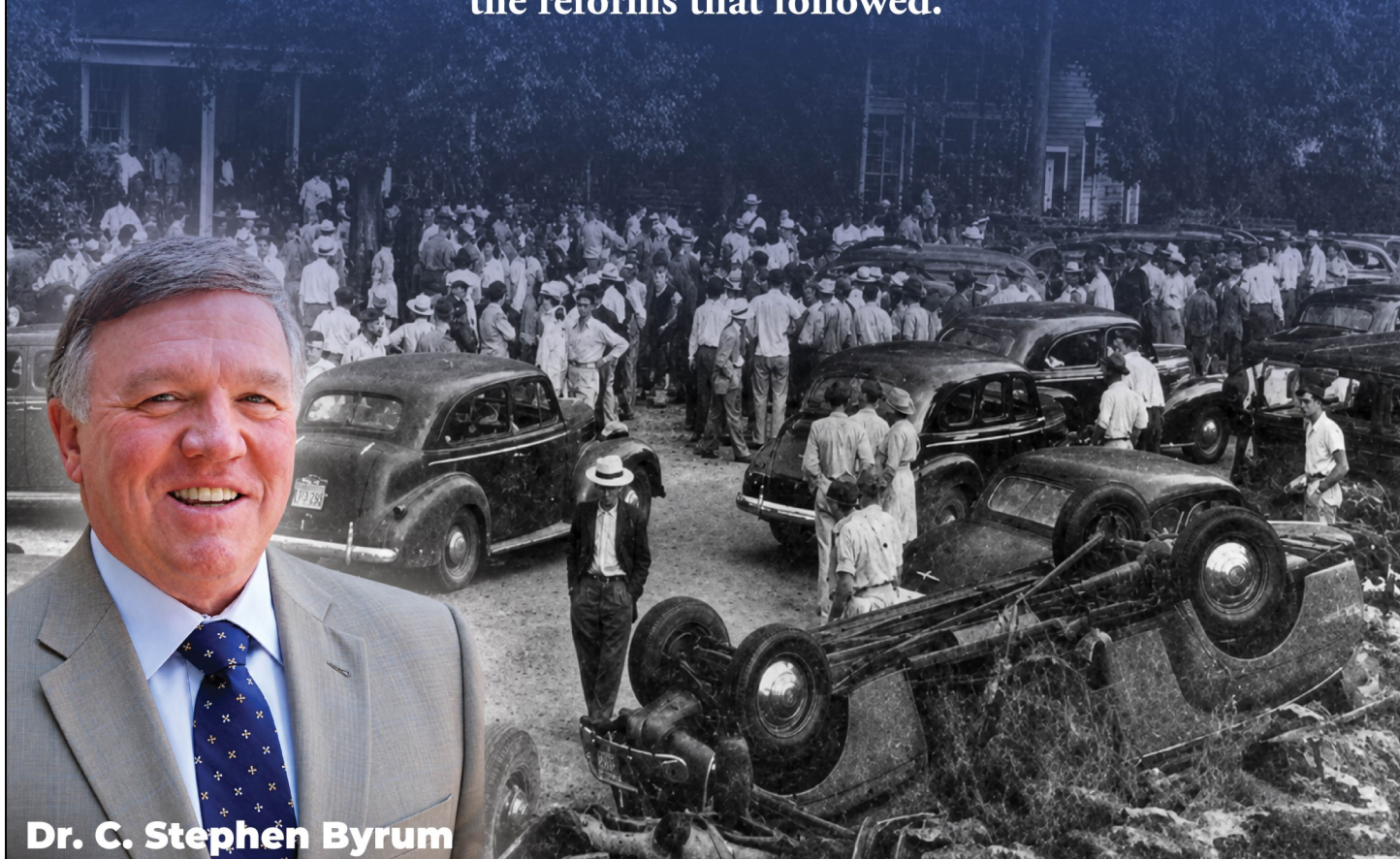
80TH ANNIVERSARY

THE BATTLE OF ATHENS

Join us as we commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Athens with a special presentation by TWU alumnus and author Dr. C. Stephen Byrum. His presentation will explore the events of August 1, 1946, the citizens who stood for change, and the reforms that followed.



Dr. C. Stephen Byrum



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Athens, Tennessee

New Extra-Large Blessing Box Now Serving Athens

A new extra-large Blessing Box has been installed at 300 W. Madison Avenue, offering free access to food, drinks, toiletries, and other essentials for anyone in need. Built by Timber Tech, the expanded box is already seeing heavy daily use, with volunteers restocking it twice a day.

The box includes grab-and-go foods, beverages, and hygiene items for neighbors without stable housing, along with traditional nonperishable pantry staples for families able to prepare meals. Community members are encouraged to take what they need and donate what they can; the project is not affiliated with any church or organization.

A storage area inside Southern Homes now helps organize donations, and individuals, businesses, and civic groups are invited to support the effort by collecting items or dropping off supplies.

Current needs include bottled water, drink mixes, granola bars, peanut butter crackers, cereal, oatmeal, pancake mix, canned meats and vegetables, boxed meals, shelf-stable foods, and both travel-size and full-size hygiene products. For donation coordination or partnership opportunities, call 423-744-3515.

Structure Fire in Riceville Results in Injury and Loss



The Riceville Fire Department responded to a structure fire on County Road 740 around 12:30 p.m. Monday, requesting mutual aid from Claxton Fire, Englewood Rural Fire, Athens Rural Fire,

and Calhoun Fire.

One firefighter was injured during the response, and two cats perished in the blaze. The cause of the fire remains under investigation, but officials confirmed the structure was a total loss.

Captain Gary Ainsworth of Riceville Fire was in command of the scene. Additional assistance came from AMR, the McMinn County Sheriff's Department, and Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC).

Riceville Fire officials continue to assess the incident as crews work to support the affected property owners.

Photo by Lynn Ingram, Englewood Rural FD

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL



THIS WEEK'S GAMES



VS



McMINN CENTRAL VS. EAGLETON

THURSDAY, AUG. 28 @ 7 PM
@ McMinn Central



VS



CLEVELAND VS McMinn COUNTY

FRIDAY, AUG. 28 @ 7 PM
@ CLEVELAND



VS



BRADLEY CENTRAL VS WALKER VALLEY

FRIDAY, AUG. 28 @ 7 PM
@ BRADLEY CENTRAL



VS



MEIGS COUNTY VS EAST HAMILTON

FRIDAY, AUG. 28 @ 7 PM
@ MEIGS COUNTY



VS



TELLICO PLAINS VS SEQUOYAH

FRIDAY, AUG. 28 @ 7:30 PM
@ TELLICO PLAINS



VS



POLK COUNTY VS MARION COUNTY

FRIDAY, AUG. 28 @ 8 PM
@ POLK COUNTY

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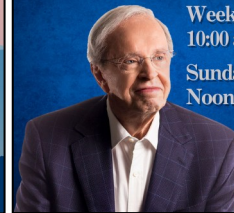
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Wednesday, August 26, 2026

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Athens, Tennessee

McMinn County Arrest Reports

August 24, 2026

Samuel Salisbury, 38, of Etowah, charged with state violation of probation, evading arrest, and resisting stop. Bond \$5,000.

Richard Gaughan, 34, of Riceville, charged with aggravated domestic assault. Bond \$15,000.

Eli Fox, 23, charged with child endangerment, reckless endangerment, and resisting. Bond \$7,000.

Lawrence Taylor, 29, of Riceville, charged with domestic assault, and public intoxication. Bond \$2,500.

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

Obituaries

Stanley Leon Judd, 86, of Decatur, passed away on Monday, August 24. He was a proud member of Local Union 917, working as a Crane Operator for 55 years. He was recently honored with his 55-year pin, a remarkable achievement that reflected his dedication and work ethic. Stanley was also a proud United States Army Veteran. A funeral service will be held at 7 p.m., on Thursday, August 27 in the Chapel of Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services. The family will receive friends from 5 - 7 p.m., prior to the service. Interment will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, August 28 in the Beta Cemetery. [Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services](#) is honored to serve the Judd family.

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