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1811 South Irby Street Suite 109

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Moms for Liberty shows muscle in SC, PAGE A3





Tuesday, October 14, 2025 • Florence, South Carolina

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'RECLAIMING OUR **COMMUNITY**



EMMY RIBERO, STAFF

A ceremonial ribbon-cutting was held for the new \$200,000 amphitheater at the park.

Florence celebrates activist, park projects

EMMY RIBERO

Staff Writer

FLORENCE - Several groups came together Thursday to remember the past and welcome the future at Dr. Iola Jones Park.

Historical markers were unveiled, a ribbon was cut for the amphitheater and plans were discussed for new apartments History and Dr. Iola Jones and other community development projects nearby.

The initiatives are all part of revitalization projects designed to recognize North Florence's rich history. Some of the projects include improving housing and infrastructure.

"Too many of us are sick and tired of being sick and tired," Mayor Lethonia Barnes said. "Tired of hearing gunshots, tired of abandoned, dilapidated houses, tired of lack of pride in our community. But I came to tell somebody tonight, we are reclaiming

Thursday's event brought together the City of Florence, Florence County, Francis Marion University and the Housing Authority of Florence, which are working together on various efforts.

The historical markers share details of the park and the civic leader Dr. Iola Jones, the park's namesake.

Jones was a social worker who very active in the Florence community in a variety of ways, including serving as the president of the Florence branch of the National Council of Negro Women. She played a crucial role in establishing and operating the Florence County Foster Home for Colored Children.

Please see COMMUNITY, Page A4

Woman accused of lying about guns

Officials: Suspect was girlfriend of deputy's killer

MARTHA ROSE BROWN T&D Staff Writer

A Timmonsville woman is accused of buying guns and giving at least one to

a man who later killed a Darlington County deputy. She's also accused of exposing children to drugs.

Kristen Taylor Porter, 29, of 103 Clyde McGee Road is charged federally with making false statements in connec-



tion with the February and March 2025 purchases of four firearms and knowingly giving one of those firearms to Cameron Ray Dennett, 25.

Dennett shot and killed Darlington County Deputy Frank "Devin" Mason on July 1. Dennett also died. Dep. Jacob Heatherly was injured.

Please see ARREST. Page A4

SC death row inmate dies after 42 years

JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press

COLUMBIA - A South Carolina inmate who spent 42 years on death row has

died of natural causes at a prison hospital, according to the state Department of Corrections.

Fred Singleton, 81, was sentenced to die in 1983 for raping and strangling a woman in Newberry County and stealing her jewelry, according to Singleton court records. He was



the state's longest-serving inmate on death row.

Please see INMATE, Page A4

Killer sought 4 years later

STAFF REPORT

The Marion County Sheriff's Office continues to seek the person who killed Cathy Diane Thompkins, John Michael Thompkins and their dog Tipsy four years ago.

They were found shot to death at 3505 Ervin Court, Marion County, on the night of Oct. 3,

The Marion County Sheriff's Office said the case remains unsolved, and authorities are still actively seeking any information that could help bring justice and closure to the surviving

If you know anything - no matter how small - the Marion County Sheriff's Office Is asking you to come forward.

You can call the Marion County 24-hour, non-emergency number at 843-423-8399 or call Crime Stoppers of the Pee Dee at 1-888-CRIME-SC





J. Thompkins

(1-888-274-6372). You can remain anonymous, and you may be eligible for a reward if your tip leads to an arrest.

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Pleasant with plenty of sun High 77 Low

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