



THE LORIS SCENE

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Horry County reaches multimillion dollar settlement with families of women who drowned in transport van



COURTESY

A marker was placed on Highway 76 near Pee Dee Island Road where two women -- Wendy Newton and Nicolette Green drowned in an Horry County Sheriff's Office van that fell in a road washout.

BY CHRISTIAN BOSCHULT
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Horry County has reached a settlement agreement with the estates of Wendy Haywood Newton and Nicolette Tanyja Eugenia Green (also known as Nicolette French), who drowned on Sept. 18, 2018 while locked in

the back of a Horry County Sheriff's Office vehicle that drove through floodwaters during Hurricane Florence.

State Sen. Luke Rankin, one of the attorneys for Green, confirmed they settled for \$6.3 million for each plaintiff to drop claims against Horry County.

"Horry County regrets and acknowledges these tragic

deaths, and changes have been implemented to better protect the safety of mental health patients in Horry County," county officials wrote in a statement. "These changes will help ensure that mental health patients are transported in a more safe and responsible manner. Horry County extends its sincere condolences to the families of Ms.

Newton and Ms. Green. As part of the resolution of all pending claims involving Horry County, Horry County's sincere hope is that the families of Ms. Newton and Ms. Green will experience some sense of closure to their grief."

The county itself did not

LAWSUIT SETTLEMENT, A3

'It's decades in the making'

Multiple groups work together to preserve habitat for sea turtles

BY IAN LIVINGSTON BROOKING
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Each eggshell sifted from the wet sand looked slashed, not cracked, as John McClanahan let them fall into a pile.

Terry Graham peeled each one open making sure the loggerhead hatchlings were out as about a dozen volunteers gathered to watch a nest inventory before sunrise Tuesday in Surfside Beach.

The pair removed egg after egg -- 86 misshapen cradles representing successful hatchlings that had made it out of the nest while 10 whole, unviable eggs were placed to the side.

The Surfside Beach nest marks the first to hatch in Horry County this year, Graham said. But as the sand warms in the coming days more hatchlings will emerge from the nests on the Grand Strand.

Expectations bring warnings.

"Before they get to nesting, they've traveled the north Atlantic," said Ann Wilson, Myrtle Beach State Park ranger. "So, think like a turtle that big has traveled and avoided every single danger and for it to get back to any beach. It's just, man, it's a freakin' miracle."

Wilson rolled her eyes recounting a report of tourists riding a turtle as she attempted to nest. Days later Graham shook her head in disbelief as she talked about drunken beach walkers harassing turtles at night.

"You see a turtle on the beach, you're freakin' excited; I get it," Wilson said. "The best thing you can do is walk away. I get it, I'm not walking away either. If you're going to stick around, you've got to give her space and you need to be behind her."

And pick up the litter, fill in the holes, take tents and beach chairs off the beach, use red lights on flashlights rather than any other color, turn off the porch lights facing the ocean, Graham said.

SEA TURTLES, A2

State lawmaker launches campaign for congressional seat *Republican Fry to challenge incumbent Rice next year*

BY CHARLES D. PERRY
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Russell Fry hadn't considered a run for the 7th Congressional District seat until Tom Rice voted to impeach former President Donald Trump.

Rice's Jan. 13 vote prompted the state representative from the South Strand to begin having serious conversations about a campaign, and that led to the formal announcement of his candidacy this week.

"The Grand Strand and the Pee Dee deserve a



Fry

candidate that they can trust," said Fry, 36, who has served in the S.C.

House since winning a special election in 2015. "I believe with my conservative record in the State House that I am that candidate for the district. ... We're at a crossroads in our country right now. People want their leaders to stand up and fight. I think my record in Columbia shows that I'm willing to take those fights, and we need that same tenacity in Washington D.C. from our leaders."

Formed after the 2010 U.S. Census, the 7th district touches eight counties in northeastern South

Carolina and it's anchored in Horry. Rice has held the post since he won it in 2012. Before that, he was chairman of Horry County Council.

Rice has traditionally enjoyed strong support among Republicans, winning easily last year. But he saw a backlash after his vote to impeach Trump, who faced the charge of incitement of an insurrection. The five-term incumbent was one of 10 Republicans to vote for impeachment.

Rice has defended his decision by pointing to Trump's behavior and lack

of leadership as rioters stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6. Still, he was censured by the South Carolina GOP for his vote and he's seen conservative candidates emerge to challenge him, including Horry County Board of Education Chairman Ken Richardson, former Myrtle Beach Mayor Mark McBride and media personality Graham Allen.

Like those candidates, Fry cited Rice's impeachment vote as his motivation for challenging the congressman. He said he would not have voted to impeach Trump or sup-

ported the committee investigating the Jan. 6 Capitol attack.

"I would have stood up for the district a lot more and weighed in on the issues of the day a lot more than our current leader," he said.

Apart from Rice's treatment of Trump, Fry said he disagrees with the congressman's votes on the debt ceiling -- he said he wants to see more cuts to government spending or spending limits -- and he sees himself as a stronger advocate against the poli-

FRY, A3

OUTSIDE



Weather
High 90, mostly sunny
WEDNESDAY NIGHT
Low 73, mostly clear
THURSDAY
High 91, sunny
FRIDAY
High 91, sunny
SATURDAY
High 91, mostly sunny

Loris First United Methodist Church, 3507 Broad St., has a Blessing Box available each Friday, 4:30 p.m. -- 6:00 p.m. This box contains nonperishable food items and individuals in need are encouraged to come to the box. It is located inside the church.

Dogwood Hill Baptist Church Food Pantry, 1040 Mt. Zion Rd., Loris, has a food pantry the third Saturday of each month from 8 a.m. until 10 a.m. "In accordance with Federal civil rights law and

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opportunity provider.
Salem Baptist Church, 4008 Salem Road in Aynor, has a Food Bank on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month from 9 a.m.-noon. The mission: "We serve Christ when we serve people."

