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Let freedom ring



Photographs by Andrew J. Whitaker/Staff
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Since 2013, the Washington Light Infantry has celebrated July 4th with a reenactment of the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence in the Palmetto State, with a crew of local leaders taking turns reading.

Lee and Rita Montgomery (above) have their photo made by their son Camden after the reading of the document at the Old Exchange Building on July 4 in downtown Charleston.

Tony Youmans (left), director of the Old Exchange and Provost Dungeon Building, takes part along with several others in the reading of the declaration.



EDUCATION LAB
Community-funded Journalism

Partisan issues shaping schools chief race

BY MAURA TURCOTTE
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Partisan issues seem set to dominate South Carolina's superintendent race going into the general election in November.

Ellen Weaver, head of the conservative think tank Palmetto Promise Institute, secured the Republican superintendent nomination in the primary runoff on June 28. Over the past couple weeks, she said she would fight against "woke indoctrination" and rallied against critical race theory in schools. She called Kathy Maness, her opponent in the Republican primary runoff, a "liberal education union leader." Maness is head of the Palmetto State Teachers Association — which isn't a union.

Masking and vaccines, LGBTQ+ issues and school choice have sparked heated debates among Republican candidates across the country. Critical race theory in particular has become a lightning rod in recent elections nationwide. The academic framework analyzes how racism is ingrained in American

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Columbia police add clinicians to squad

Law enforcement shift focus to mental health

BY SKYLAR LAIRD
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COLUMBIA — When Columbia police officers responded to a call about a barricaded suspect in May, they found a man threatening to harm himself.

What previously "could have been a bad altercation," Master Police Officer Chris Bolling said, ended with police escorting the man to the Department of Mental Health for an evaluation.

He has since been engaged in his treatments, Bolling said.

As part of the Columbia Police Department's Pathway Unit, Bolling spends his days working alongside a trained mental health professional.

Together, they respond to calls about people in crisis and the homeless, as well as check on those like the man from that incident who the department has identified as having mental health needs like medication or counseling.

Since last September, Bolling has been the only officer doing this work. But in March, the department announced it would expand the initiative and has since hired

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Local teen heads to motocross nationals

Alec King, of Summerville, to compete against 'cream of the crop' after winning regional championship

BY MADDY QUON
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SUMMERVILLE — Blood, sweat and tears: that's literally what Alec King has sacrificed to succeed in the motocross world over the past five years.

The 19-year-old just won the South Central Regional Championship over the weekend of June 11-12, and will be competing against the top 42 motocross racers in each of his racing classes — 450 C and 250 C Limited — at the Monster En-

ergy AMA Amateur National Motocross Championship at Loretta Lynn Ranch in Hurricane Mills, Tenn., in the first week of August.

It's considered to be the biggest amateur motocross race in the world.

"If you're (at Loretta's), you're the best. This is the cream of the crop. You win here, you'll have sponsors looking at you, you'll have teams looking at you, you'll have the whole industry looking at you,"

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Alec King powers through a motocross track. King will be competing against the top 42 motocross racers in each of his racing classes.

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E-PAPER EXTRAS

To access the E-Paper, go to bit.ly/3fSuvD.

Police find person of interest in July 4 shooting that left 6 dead, 30 injured

Robert E. Crimo III arrested following manhunt

BY MICHAEL TARM,
KATHLEEN FOODY and
ROGER SCHNEIDER
Associated Press

HIGHLAND PARK, ILL. — A 22-year-old man identified as a person of interest in a shooting during an Independence Day parade in suburban Chicago that killed at least six people, wounded at least 30 and sent hundreds of

people fleeing was taken into custody Monday evening following an hourslong manhunt, police said.

Highland Park Police Chief Lou Jorgmen said Monday evening that a police officer briefly chased Robert E. Crimo III as he drove about five miles north of where the shooting occurred before the man pulled over and was taken into custody.

Police declined to immediately identify Crimo as a suspect but said identifying him as a person of interest, sharing his name and other information publicly was a serious step.

The July 4 shooting was just the latest to shatter the rituals of American life. Schools, churches, grocery stores and now community parades have all become killing grounds in recent months.

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