

Proclamation

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MR. JOE IDLETTE, JR.

Whereas, the Board of County Commissioners of Indian River County proudly recognizes the life and legacy of Mr. Joe Idlette, Jr., a true pioneer, civil rights advocate, and lifelong resident of Gifford whose courage and determination helped shape the history of Indian River County; and

Whereas, born the great-grandson of enslaved people and son of a Georgia sharecropper, Mr. Idlette lived a life rooted in faith, family, and the pursuit of justice, inspiring generations through his integrity, humility, and service; and

Whereas, after serving his country in the Korean War, Mr. Idlette returned home and led a courageous fight to end segregation in Indian River County schools, resulting in the peaceful desegregation of public schools in 1969, a defining moment in local history; and

Whereas, his leadership continued as the first African American elected to the Indian River County School Board, where he served twenty years advocating for educational equity, opportunity, and unity within the community; and

Whereas, in recognition of his family's deep roots and enduring contributions, Vero Heritage, Inc. honored the Idlette family as the first African American recipients of the Pioneer Family Award, celebrating their hard work, faith, and community spirit; and

Whereas, Mr. Idlette's steadfast dedication, guided by his faith at Mount Zion A.M.E. Church, and his devotion to his wife Bernice and their family, leaves an enduring legacy of courage, compassion, and progress for future generations.

Now, Therefore, be it Proclaimed by the Board of County Commissioners of Indian River County, Florida, that we do hereby honor and celebrate the life, leadership, and legacy of Mr. Joe Idlette, Jr., whose vision and perseverance continue to inspire a stronger, more unified community.

Adopted this 18th day of November 2025.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA**

Joseph E. Flescher, Chairman

Deryl Loar, Vice Chairman

Joseph H. Earman

Susan Adams

Laura Moss