

2023 **FACES & PLACES**
of Barnwell County

Your Guide to Local Living



A special publication of *The People•Sentinel*



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Williston Family Medicine
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ON THE Cover

Natalie Creech was all smiles on her first day of kindergarten at Barnwell Primary School in August 2022.

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 (803) 939-0041, www.joewilson.house.gov

A Note From the Publisher



A lot has changed since this magazine, formerly titled *Information Please*, was last published in early 2020, but we are proud to bring back this annual magazine about the community we love.

The COVID pandemic created challenges over the past three years, not just locally but all over the world. We lost many good neighbors, friends, and loved ones to the virus.

Thankfully, Barnwell County has experienced growth as well by welcoming new residents, new businesses (and hundreds of jobs), new recreational opportunities, and new resources. As you peruse the following pages, you'll learn more about these changes and how they make Barnwell County a better place to live, work, and play.

Barnwell County exemplifies South Carolina's motto of "Smiling Faces, Beautiful Places".

We have always been a close-knit community filled with people who are friendly and caring. We come together in times of need. Barnwell County is a small community with a big heart.


The community also has many beautiful places to explore, such as the Barnwell State Park and Lake Edgar Brown. Don't forget to take a bottle to Healing Springs so you can bottle up the refreshing, cool water that is said to have healing powers.

Yes, we are a small community, but that doesn't mean there's nothing to do here. There's always something going on, such as a play at Circle Theatre, a festival, church event, school activity, fundraiser, and athletic games. You can also check out the new amenities like the pool at the YMCA, the splash pad and playground at Fuller Park, two disc golf courses, and more.

Barnwell County is also blessed to have many businesses to fulfill your needs for goods and services. You also won't go hungry because there are plenty of good places to eat. Check out the Local Cravings Guide in this magazine.

This newspaper has also gone through a change. We are now locally owned, which allows us to better serve our community by keeping everyone informed.

Sincerely,
 Jonathan Vickery, Publisher/Owner of *The People-Sentinel*



is an annual publication of

The People-Sentinel

For additional copies, call (803) 259-3501 or stop by our office at 222 Main St., Suite B, Barnwell.

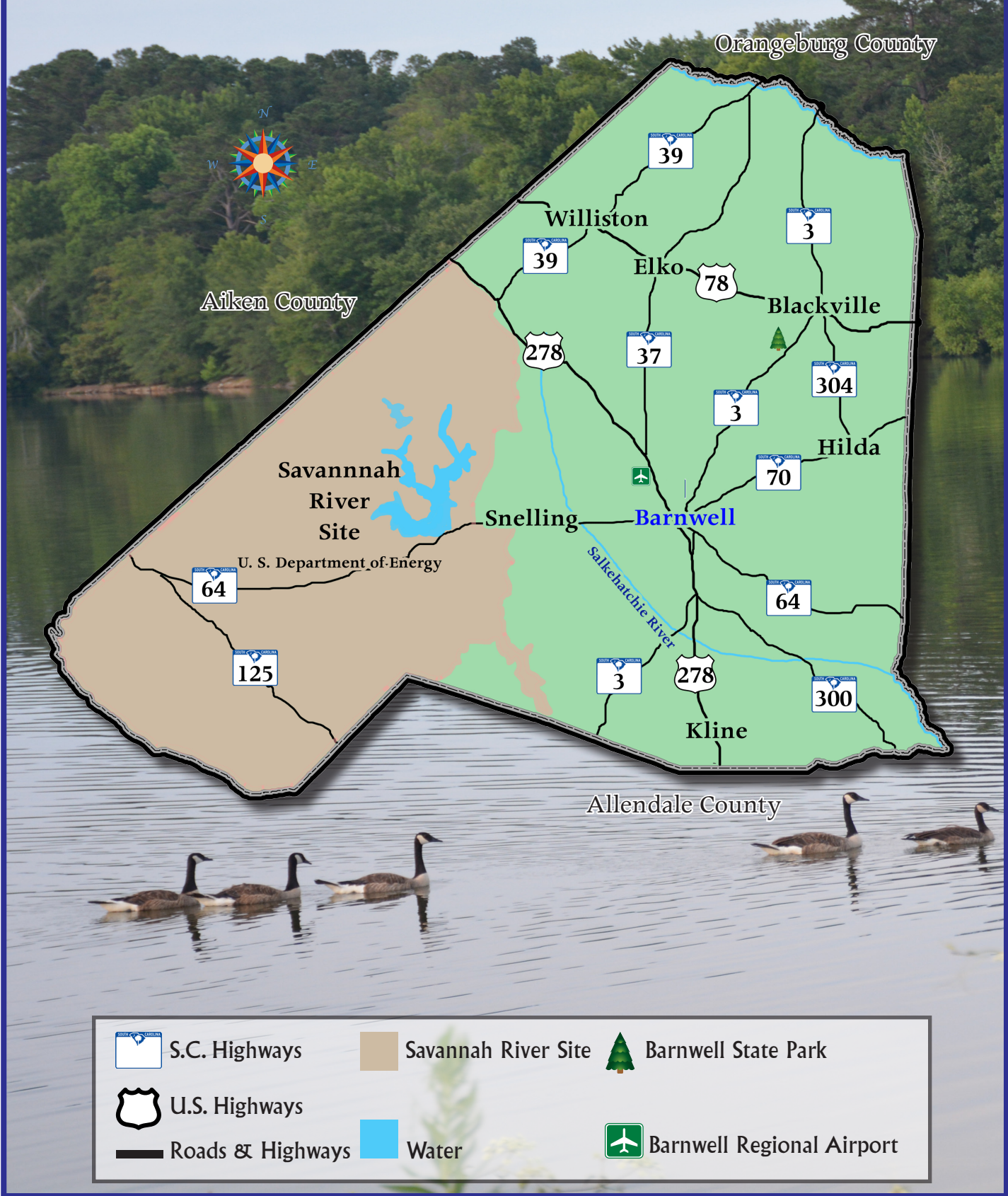
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
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Barnwell County



	S.C. Highways		Savannah River Site		Barnwell State Park
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Surge of Newcomers Discover



(Top) Paul Sullivan, known to many as “Boston Sully”, walks with his dogs along the walking trail at Lake Edgar Brown in Barnwell. He moved to Barnwell from Boston, Massachusetts. (Right) Linda and John Strocky hold the keys to their new home in Barnwell in 2021.



Since 2020, a surge of out-of-staters are now calling Barnwell County home. Lifelong residents already know the ample beauty and growing opportunities this county has to offer, and newcomers are uncovering something new to love every day.

“Barnwell has seen a boom in out-of-state buyers over the last year. Last year (2022), 58 percent of my real estate transactions were from people moving from New York, Arizona, and Florida,” said local realtor Rebekah Grubbs, a native of Barnwell. “These buyers are looking for historic homes, and residential property with some land—mostly two acres or more—and they’re willing to fix up the house if it means they can get the acreage they want.”

In October 2022, Shellie Bumgarner, Neil Khatod, and their daughter Callie Bumgarner made the move from Augusta, Ga. into Blackville’s historic Farrell-O’Gorman House built in 1875. The family is originally from Hickory, N.C. and is retiring from military life after 30 years. They have always wanted a historic home.

“We found one in Blackville online and came to visit the town and see the house,” said Shellie. “Everyone was so nice and welcoming. We fell in love with the small town and the idea of small town life.”

Adrian and Shonda Crawford moved their family from North Carolina to Barnwell to live in their historic home and get back to a small town feel. The couple was determined to thrive in a historic home where their Black ancestors would not have been welcome when it was built, and they have done just that.

Many of Grubbs’ buyers are traveling the entire state trying to determine what small town will suit them best; “Barnwell

has great competition but once they see the actual community, they are sold,” said Grubbs.

Before Paul “Boston Sully” Sullivan moved from Boston, Massachusetts, he searched surrounding communities for a place to spend his retirement. He looked at counties and states before deciding Barnwell was the perfect place for him and his trusty pack of canines to enjoy nature and get back in touch with his faith.

Williston resident Angela Sanders felt a similar connection to Barnwell County when she moved herself and three young children here from Bennettsville, S.C., nine years ago to be with her now-husband.

“We moved down here leaving everyone we knew behind,” said Sanders. “My children and I have become more prosperous since moving here. Since moving here, I married the love of my life, graduated college, became store manager, and most importantly my family has gotten back into church and serving my lord and savior Jesus Christ at White Pond Baptist Church in Williston.”

Barnwell native Amy-Lauren Jones left her hometown for years to pursue an art career in Hawaii. What was supposed to be a brief visit to see her parents in 2021 turned into her unable to leave the wisteria flowers, dogwood trees, and call of the bobwhite quail that make Barnwell County beautiful. Now back for the long haul, Jones forgets why she ever left.

Ronnie Pernell also recently moved back. He grew up in the Town of Blackville but moved away for many years to serve in the military, work as a police officer, be a pastor, and work at the Savannah River Site. After retiring, Pernell and his wife Rita, also a Blackville native, returned to serve their

“As a new resident, what I love most about Barnwell County is seeing magnolia trees bloom in February, feeling the vibrations of a hummingbird buzz by your face, hearing the cheers from a crowded football stadium during the fall, and seeing a different sunset every night. Barnwell County has many remarkable and noteworthy aspects, but my favorite parts are the small and consistent ones.”

Alexandra Whitbeck, reporter for *The People-Sentinel* who moved to Barnwell County from Upstate New York

County's Beauty & Charm

hometown. Shortly after, he was elected mayor in 2022.

"My personal goal is to build new affordable houses for families which will enhance the growth of Blackville," said Mayor Pernell, who owns a construction company.

Many newcomers committed to establishing their lives in Barnwell County before ever seeing what this community has to offer. Linda and John Strocky moved to the City of Barnwell from Rhode Island into a house sight-unseen on the cusp of the COVID-19 pandemic, and are now active community volunteers. Bruce Herrlin moved to Kline from New York to start an animal refuge where he has housed countless misplaced animals.

Dr. Betty Strudwick, an Orangeburg, S.C. native, chose to open Community Funeral Home of Barnwell in early 2023 after serving Allendale County for 17 years. After debating between Barnwell or Hampton County to expand her business, she landed in Barnwell because of the kind and supportive welcome she received from community members.

There are many reasons why people have moved to Barnwell County in recent years; Grubbs finds "one of the key benefits that draws people to Barnwell is its distance from the beach and big cities like Charleston and Savannah."

"While these larger cities are close enough for day trips or weekend excursions, living in Barnwell provides an escape from city life without sacrificing access to activities and amenities. This slower pace of life allows people to relax while still having all their needs met within easy reach," said Grubbs.

Barnwell County is growing with new faces, new places, and a reinvigorated sense of community that has driven many impactful projects over the past three years.



Ronnie Pernell (left) is sworn in as mayor of Blackville in June 2022. He and his wife Rita (right) moved home to Blackville recently.

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City of Barnwell

Population: 4,489 - Area: 7.99 square miles

Who's in charge

Mayor:	Administrator:	City Hall:
Marcus Rivera	Lynn McEwen	130 Main Street
www.cityofbarnwell.com		(803) 259-3266

Barnwell City Council meets the first Monday of the month at 5:30pm.



Excitement was in the air as "snow" fell from machines during the December 2022 Christmas Tree Lighting.

Visitors to the City of Barnwell will quickly see its unique charm and realize it is anything but square. "The Circle" is the centerpiece of downtown and is often decorated for holidays as well as various community events. A trip around The Circle can lead you to City Hall, the courthouse, or a plethora of downtown businesses.

The City of Barnwell is growing to become a hub for recreation with two recently constructed community amenities. Located at Fuller Park, the splash pad has proven to be one of the many places for families to go for summer fun. Another beloved gem of the City of Barnwell is the YMCA and adjoined Aquatic Center, which teaches the essentials of swimming and water safety. The HEALING Partners Coalition has started hosting the Barnwell Farmers Market at Fuller Park where local vendors can sell their produce, handmade products, and baked goods.

The City of Barnwell has a sports complex at Lemon Park, fishing and boating at Lake Edgar Brown, and an entire course to golf at Sweetwater Country Club. If outdoor activities are not your personal preference, the Circle Theatre frequently puts on unique shows and the Barnwell County Museum displays

rotating historic exhibits.

Barnwell School District 45 operates four schools within the city limits – Barnwell High, Guinyard-Butler Middle, Barnwell Elementary, and Barnwell Primary.

With 2022 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding stemming from COVID-19 relief aid, the city plans to build a new fire station. This follows a new police station that was built with capital projects sales tax funds.

The old Sara Lee sock factory was reinhabited by Koch & Company, a Kansas-based cabinet company, which plans to bring 105 jobs to Barnwell County.

The city has numerous locally owned businesses thriving both on and off The Circle to cater to the needs of the community.

The residents of the City of Barnwell are dedicated to seeing their community thrive. They cherish the small town feeling of the area, but work to make it as prosperous as possible.

'Live Well, Barnwell' is the city's slogan for a reason.



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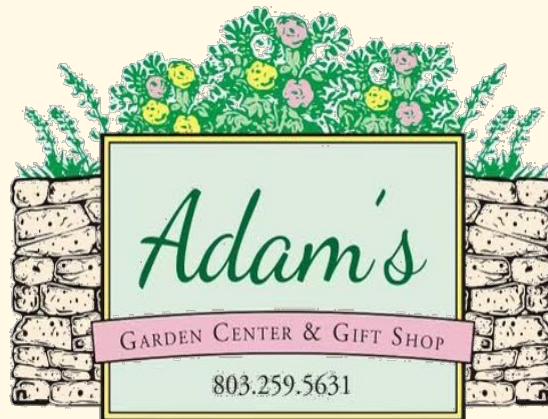
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Town of Blackville

Population: 2,037 • Area: 9.03 square miles



Linda Keyton (right) leads campers at the Freedom Camp in an African-American dance during a performance for families in July 2022 at the Blackville Community Center.

Who's in charge

Mayor: Ronnie Pernel
www.townofblackville.com

Town Hall:
5983 Lartigue St.
(803) 284-2444

Blackville Town Council meets the third Monday of the month at 6:30pm.

At the merging of Highway 3 and Highway 78 sits the Town of Blackville and its many hidden gems.

One of which is the Healing Springs Country Store, which reopened under new ownership in 2022. The Healing Springs Country Store can be found near its namesake – God's Acre Healing Springs, which attracts visitors both local and from states away to drink healing spring water, remember historical connections, and to step on land 'deeded to God.'

Heading back toward downtown, travelers are met with locally owned restaurants along Main Street such as Russell's Pizza, Duke's BBQ, and Miller's Bread Basket. All eateries have become staples in the community and are continually supporting town-wide events.

Activities and events in the community began growing in 2022 with the introduction of an activities coordinator and a recreation director, who both brought in innovative ideas for residents of all ages.

Aside from growth recreationally, there are efforts to revitalize downtown. The Shamrock Hotel, which stood as a testament to changing times, was located on Main Street for over a century until its demolition in October 2022. Other dilapidated or vacant buildings are being bought by the town to be torn down and replaced, or renovated and sold. In early 2023, the old theater on Solomon Blatt Avenue was demolished and the town purchased the former China Kitchen building that sat vacant on Main Street in February 2023.

TIVA Building Products, a Canada-based decking company, 10 • Faces & Places of Barnwell County 2023 • The People-Sentinel

invested \$8.3 million to open a Blackville location in 2022 and welcomed 122 job openings to the county.

The Blackville Community Center, which serves as a hub for events, social gatherings, and town council meetings is also undergoing renovations. From April to June 2023, the community center will be replacing floors, repainting the exterior, and renovating the bathrooms.

The town has received \$2 million from the state to fund a new town hall building, which is hoped to come to fruition in the next two years.

Amidst the revitalization, the Blackville Police Department is heightening their presence through traffic stops and increased surveillance. This is partly due to business owners in the area requesting more police presence around their storefronts.

Blackville-Hilda schools are home to the Hawks and a part of the Barnwell County Consolidated School District. Town officials are making strides to reinvigorate the pride residents have in their community, just like the pride they have in the Hawks.

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Town of Williston

Population: 2,950 - Area: 9 square miles

Who's in charge

Mayor:	Administrator:	Town Hall:
Brett Williams	Michael Beasley	310 W. Main St.
www.williston-sc.com		(803) 266-7015

Williston Town Council meets the second Monday of the month at 6:30pm.



Williston-Elko High School students and staff celebrated Grandparents Day 2022 by welcoming the town's elders to a drive-thru breakfast at the high school.

When the stadium lights click on to illuminate the home field of the Blue Devils, you can be sure to find a supportive community in the stands.

The Town of Williston rallies around the Williston-Elko High School Blue Devils, and the teams support the community right back. You can often find Blue Devils players lending a hand in collaborative food drives, smoke detector installation blitzes, and many other community endeavors.

The Ivy Garden Club is an active part of many of these events and masterminds the scarecrow contest displayed along Main Street and the Winter Wonderland Contest each year.

Williston is also the center for disc golf in the county with a tournament sanctioned 18-hole course at the town park established in 2021. Disc golfers from across the region come

to Williston to compete in what are becoming annual events.

The Town of Williston has been working to grow their recreation program and offer more athletic opportunities for the youth. The Williston Recreation & Activities Committee was established in early 2022 to do just that, and have played a major role in amping up athletics.

Aside from an active town park, country club, dog park, and library, many unique eateries call the Town of Williston home such as Meeting on Main, Mamma Diane's, The Sandwich Shop, and Almost There Cafe, which opened its doors in 2022.

In May 2022, 65 new jobs were brought to the town when Monmouth Rubber & Plastic Corp. invested \$5.6 million into establishing operations at the former Dayco facility in Williston.

A trip down the former Charleston and Hamburg railroad line reborn into a walking trail pays homage to the town's extensive locomotive history.



The Williston Police Department and Williston Fire Department's (WFD) Back to School event in August 2022 brought the community together. Chloe Evans, Laylah Evans, Piper Griffin, and Bailey Hunt-Dyches check out the WFD's fire truck.



Career Specialist Cathy Smith stands proudly with WEHS '22 graduate, Jamarion Lee Byars.

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Councilwoman Annie Smalls Tyler
Councilman Eric Moody
Councilman Scott Valentine
Councilman Kurt Odermatt
Councilwoman Adadra Neville
Councilwoman Alyson Collins
Town Administrator Michael L. Beasley

Country Living in South Carolina

Elko

Population: 242 • Area: 1 square mile

Who's in charge

Mayor:	Clerk/Treasurer:	Town Hall:
Toby E. Singletary	Nancy Sanders Jackson	10067 U.S. Hwy. 78 (803) 266-7996

Elko Town Council meets the third Tuesday of the month.



Local choirs joined together to sing at the inaugural Town of Elko Tree Lighting in December 2022.

A trip down Highway 78 will keep a traveler's eye on the miles of fields growing fruits and vegetables. Once they reach the Town of Elko, a quick stop along the roadside will bring all they've pondered on the drive to fruition on the back of a farmer's truck. Crates of watermelons, squash, and a variety of produce dependent on the season are readily available for the community. This informal produce stand is reminiscent of the former farmers market that once was a staple in the area.

Elko is also the home of an active blessing box constructed and maintained by a local teen and her family. The community is welcome to donate and take food as needed.

Aside from agricultural endeavors, the Town of Elko held their inaugural Christmas Tree Lighting in December 2022 to bring the community together around the holiday season.

Although a trip through Elko is only one square mile wide, it holds a palpable history in the architectural style of its buildings and signage memorializing a brand's old style.

One thing that has not waned with time is the dedication of the Elko Fire Department. The volunteer members continue to ensure the safety of the town and surrounding communities. Another long-standing aspect of the town is its leadership. Mayor Toby Singletary was elected in 2018 after the late and former mayor Marty Schumpert who served for 42 years. Schumpert was recognized for being one of South Carolina's longest-serving mayors before his death in 2018. After serving as a council member and mayor pro tem for the town, Mayor Singletary took the position with the support and guidance of Schumpert before his passing.

Hilda

Population: 425 • Area: 3.1 square miles

Who's in charge

Mayor:	Town Hall:
John Moody	35 Railroad Avenue (803) 793-3818

Hilda Town Council meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7 pm.



Sheriff's deputies Josh and Jessica Orth attended Hilda's Christmas tree lighting with their son.

Since its establishment in 1897, The Town of Hilda has celebrated many momentous occasions. In 2022, the entire county gathered to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Town of Hilda. This quasiquintennial year was rung in with performances from country music singer and songwriter Cody Webb, a parade filled with unique rides and festive floats, and wrapped up the night with a street dance.

Halloween 2022 was celebrated thoroughly as well with hundreds of costumed kids collecting candy at the town's depot.

Each year, the Town of Hilda celebrates the holidays. For the 2022 festivities, a parade of firetrucks followed by a tree lighting enamored those in attendance and brought in the holiday spirit.

Not only is the depot historically rich as it dates back to the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, but this focal point still serves as a town center and hub for events and

gatherings.

New leadership in recent years has allowed for new ideas and growth in the town. In November 2021, an entirely new town council was elected to serve after all five seats were left vacant due to resignations.

In January 2022, the Hilda Fire Department purchased a new fire truck through a FEMA grant that was later dedicated to "The Glory of God." The Hilda Fire Department has been serving the town and county since 1973, and continues to be a staple of volunteerism and community.

Hilda is also home to beloved eatery Hilda Fryebaby's, serving burgers, fries, and hand-dipped ice cream, and the Hilda Auction that offers a variety of items at a lesser price on riveting auction nights.

The Town of Hilda may not be bustling on any average day, but on special occasions the town rallies together to celebrate and rejoice in living in a place where everyone knows your name.

Country Living in South Carolina

Kline

Population: 148 • Area: 3.1 square miles

Who's in charge

Mayor:	Clerk/Treasurer:	55 Railroad Avenue, Barnwell, SC 29812 (803) 300-1916
William H. Cave	Shekinah S. Williams	

Kline Town Council meets the second Tuesday of every month at 6:30pm.



All ages joined together in song to welcome holiday cheer at the Town of Kline's Christmas festivities.

The Town of Kline is located on the southern side of Barnwell County, and like many other towns in the region, Kline was first established after 1897 around the growth of the Carolina Midland Railway Railroad.

According to the SC Picture Project, railroad officer Mike Brown named the town after his wife, Jennie Kline. The depot remains in the town as a reminder of its history, and has become a staple as other businesses begin to thrive. Chappell Farms has been picking peaches to sell at their roadside stand in Kline since 1952. Now, they have grown to handling hundreds of acres of peaches and shipping them throughout the U.S. and Canada under the brand "Pat's Pride" named after the farm's founder, the late H. Pat Chappell. The Carolina Hills Farm Animal Refuge was established in 2020 during the pandemic, and has taken in numerous unwanted or displaced farm

animals since its creation.

Just like the businesses that reside here, Kline is a caring town. For over a decade the town has hosted a backpack and school supply giveaway for the benefit of students and parents.

To better meet with the community, share ideas, and hold events like this, Kline built a new town hall building with funds from the Capital Project Sales Tax. It now serves as the hub for all things happening in Kline. Every year around the holidays, a tree lighting ceremony is held to offer another opportunity for the community to come together.



Snelling

Population: 250 • Area: 4.085 square miles

Who's in charge

Mayor:	Clerk/Treasurer:	30 Morris St., Barnwell, SC 29812 (803) 259-4980
Paul Moore	Lisa Still	

Snelling Town Council meets the second Monday of every month at 6pm.



Graydon Moore (center), the grandson of Tim Moore (right), cuts the ribbon alongside Mayor Paul Moore (left), honoring the memorial of his great-grandfather and former Snelling mayor, E.T. Moore.

The Town of Snelling may not be big in size, but it is big in character and history.

Residents coined the town with the slogan, "A Great Place to Call Home," because of its small town feel.

Officials in Snelling often spend most of their careers serving the town, such as Robert "Bobby" Morris who served for over 43 years on town council and former mayor Elbert Timothy Moore Sr. who served for 40 years.

At the July 4, 2022 celebration, a monument was erected in the town park to honor the service of former mayor Elbert Timothy Moore Sr., who served from 1969 until his death in October 2009 at age 84. In addition to cutting the ribbon on the monument, the community enjoyed food and fun catered by the town and partners.

In 2019, a pavilion was built in the town park to allow for these types of events to take



The Town of Snelling holds an annual Christmas Tree Lighting.

place. This pavilion was funded by the voter approved 1% Capital Sales Tax years prior to its construction.

Snelling "blends small town charm with big industry" by being home to the east entrance of the Savannah River Site, a federal nuclear plant where many county residents are employed.

Snelling is also home to Miss Alda's Inn owned by Scottie and Tim Moore. This bed and breakfast welcomes numerous travelers from across the country through its doors and makes them feel at home in Barnwell County.

Hard Work, Dirty Hands, and Community Pride: This is Keep Barnwell County Beautiful



(Above) KBCB Board Member and local business owner Margo Huggins and a group of volunteers getting ready to do a clean up in Williston. (Below) Community citizens showing how much roadside litter they collected from one clean up.



(Above) Barnwell County Councilman Daniel Alexander's two daughters participating in a clean up that was held in honor of the 2022 Great American Cleanup. (Below) SCA's Graci Hiers, Barnwell Town Councilwoman Peggy Kinlaw, and KBCB's Margo Huggins distributed free seedlings and educational information about KBCB at the Barnwell County Farmer's Market.



RECYCLING CENTERS

Barnwell County operates nine recycling centers on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.:

- **Longbranch Center**, 1320 Orchard Rd., Barnwell
- **6640 Hwy. 3**, Barnwell
- **Snelling**, 1359 Seven Pines Rd., Barnwell
- **Healing Springs**, 3287 Healing Springs Rd., Blackville
- **Landfill Center**, 155 Landfill Rd., Barnwell (also accepts farmer oil up to 55 gallons and oil/gas mixture)
- **Reedy Branch Center**, 870 Reedy Branch Rd., Hilda
- **Rosemary Center**, 963 Thorn Dr., Williston
- **Fire Tower Center**, 7633 Hwy. 64E, Barnwell
- **Spurbranch Center**, 8360 Springfield Hwy., Williston

Without a doubt, 2022 was a banner year for Keep Barnwell County Beautiful (KBCB). In March 2022, Southern Carolina Alliance (SCA) began assisting Barnwell County in forming a committee of dedicated, hard working citizens that would soon join a state and national network of people who shared the same goals they did: to take responsibility for improving their communities through efforts in beautification, litter prevention, and waste management.

To help make Barnwell County more marketable as a great place to live, work, and invest, SCA began leading a regional pilot program funded by Palmetto Pride and Keep South Carolina Beautiful to beautify the roadways, industrial parks, downtowns, neighborhoods, and waterways in the area. The SCA Regional Beautification Marketing Program assists member counties through education, enforcement, and engagement. In its first year of operation, the program continues to exceed all goals.

KBCB focuses their mission on encouraging citizens to take responsibility for improving the community of Barnwell County through efforts in beautification, litter prevention, and waste management. KBCB has worked hard this year and will be receiving their official affiliation with the national Keep America Beautiful organization on April 11th, 2023. By receiving this affiliation, KBCB will become equipped with the tools, resources, and funding needed to support their hard working efforts, and to continue implementing new efforts and programs.

2022 saw through many achievements with KBCB. A total

of ten board members have committed to serve on the first ever KBCB board, and the majority of members have already received training from state and national leaders. This year, KBCB dove right in to educating the community through small bodies, with big hearts for their communities: our youth. From hosting "Litter Free Story Time" sessions at the Barnwell County Library to visits from the Columbia Marionette Theatre with showings of "Litter Trashes Everyone" at Barnwell Primary School and Barnwell Elementary School, KBCB made sure the lead generation of the county is educated on beautification efforts.

KBCB held several litter cleanups throughout the year, engaging around 700 volunteers total. Students that participate in litter cleanups are able to receive volunteer/community service hours and also college recommendation letters. Members of KBCB also attended a regional workshop last fall, that allowed for two of their members to become certified representatives in the statewide program, "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design," which educates on beautifying communities.

KBCB looks forward to receiving their national affiliation this year, and has plans to continue educating citizens of all ages on how they can make a difference in their communities. KBCB is always looking for new volunteers and board members, so if interested, please message Keep Barnwell County Beautiful on Facebook or contact Barnwell County Councilman Ben Kinlaw at: bccd5kinlaw@gmail.com.



Jessica Bradshaw (left, standing) leads a social media marketing workshop at the Palmetto Innovation Center for business leaders looking to grow their skills and business. The Center opened in 2022 to help entrepreneurs and businesses.

Barnwell County Goes to Work

LOOKING FOR A JOB?
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Barnwell County’s business and economic future looks bright.

Three new industries were announced in 2022, bringing millions in investment and nearly 300 new jobs. Koch & Company opened a new cabinet manufacturing plant in Barnwell while Monmouth Rubber & Plastics opened a plant in Williston, and TIVA Building Products has located in Blackville.

“The state of economic development in this county is strong, as strong as I’ve ever seen it,” said Tommy Boyleston, executive director of the Barnwell County Economic Development Commission (EDC).

The EDC works in conjunction with Southern Carolina Alliance (SCA), a seven-county regional economic development organization, to attract industries to the community.

“SCA is a tremendous asset. They have knocked down barriers that a small EDC couldn’t do alone, which has made us stronger,” said Will Kearsse, Barnwell County EDC chairman.

This partnership has led to new jobs through new industries and the expansion of existing ones. When Boyleston started seven years ago, he said, “There were empty buildings all over the place in this county; they were old and many not in condition to use anymore. Today we have almost no empty buildings. That’s a tremendous step forward.”

Aiding in the effort to build the business sector is the Southern Palmetto Regional Chamber of Commerce & Foundation. They operate the Palmetto Innovation Center in Barnwell.

“The ultimate goal for the work we’re doing here is to build a thriving economic ecosystem in the area,” said Bob Snead, president/CEO.

Snead is reinventing the Chamber so it can better serve local businesses, entrepreneurs, and the community. This includes more events to promote tourism and local resources, as well as the Propel Business Lab to help entrepreneurs develop new

businesses or grow existing ones.

Many other partners, including organizations and municipalities, play roles in helping spur economic growth. It also takes individuals doing their part by serving their community.

“Service to your county is what makes it grow,” said Kearsse.

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Barnwell County is Always Growing

Cotton, peanuts, soybeans, corn for grain, and haylage are some of the top crops produced by over 300 farmers in Barnwell County.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates that in 2022 Barnwell County produced 471,000 bushels of corn and 158,000 bushels of soybeans.

The Barnwell chapter of Future Farmers of America (FFA) is very active in the community and holds an annual flower sale. The FFA also plays a big part in ensuring the upcoming generation is aware of the many career paths in the agriculture industry and promotes interest in self-sustainment.

Community gardens have popped up around the county in recent years to aid in this effort. The Veggie Cupboard Community Garden & Greenhouse in Barnwell frequently holds activities where kids are encouraged to get their hands dirty and ask questions about where their food comes from. Located on the corner of Burr Street and Hagood Avenue, this garden allows the community to eat fresh by growing vegetables of all kinds.

The Blackville Community Garden is also open to the public and serves all of the community's fresh produce needs.

All of the vegetables in the gardens are open to the public, organizers only ask you show respect to others and the garden.

Clemson University's Edisto Research & Education Center outside of Blackville serves as a hub of agriculture information from backyard to commercial operations. In summer 2022, Watermelon Field Day brought together farmers from across the region to learn about advancements made with things like gummy stem blight and the varieties of pesticides. This Clemson extension is also home to acres of fields where produce is grown and researched, as well as classes for farmers to obtain certifications.



(Above) Children learn about root vegetables like carrots with Dawn Snead, program coordinator at the Veggie Cupboard Community Garden & Greenhouse. (Below) Vivian Alston smiles in front of okra growing in the Blackville Community Garden.



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Barnwell Airport Helps Economy Soar

Barnwell Regional Airport was constructed by the U.S. Army Air Force as a B-25 Mitchell bomber training base. It still draws a variety of military aircraft on a regular basis that are on training exercises, according to airport manager Brandon Chavis.

Barnwell Regional has two runways. The primary runway is 5,119 feet long, the secondary is 4,526 feet. While these runways can handle larger aircraft, the majority of planes landing there are small to mid-sized corporate-style aircraft.

The airport draws 2,072 visitors annually to South Carolina. That is particularly true during the week of the Masters Tournament in April as Barnwell is only an hour's drive from the world-renowned golf course.

"We'll get over a hundred planes here," said Chavis. "It's a busy time."

Since Covid, flights coming into Barnwell's airport have "skyrocketed," said Chavis. "We get a lot of private jets here."

Because of its location between northern states and Florida, Barnwell is a logical choice for pilots needing fuel and a rest stop.

"We sell 100LL and Jet A fuel. We're also the only airport in South Carolina that sells 93 Ethanol-free fuel," said Chavis.

With regards to economic impact, he said they have sold over 8,500 gallons of just 100LL fuel in February, March and

April of 2022, not including jet fuel.

While technically owned by the county, Barnwell Regional Airport receives no local government funding and operates self-sufficiently, said Chavis.

In addition to selling fuel, the airport offers tie-downs, 30 T-hangar slots, 7 spots in a box hangar, a 2-bay open hangar and a 3-bay maintenance hangar.

Its terminal offers pilots and passengers a lounge, flight planning room, pilot room with a shower, vending and kitchenette, and Wi-Fi. "We keep a courtesy car for pilots and visitors to use to go into Barnwell, grab a meal or shop," said Chavis.

The proximity of Veteran's Park has also been a plus as "some folks want to stretch their legs" and take a lap or two around the park on its paved and lighted walking path.

Chavis said Covid definitely changed things for area airports. "We used to just get business class visitors but now the pilots are flying families."



Barnwell Regional Airport terminal offers pilots and passengers a lounge, flight planning room, pilot room with a shower, vending and kitchenette, and Wi-Fi. The terminal is located just minutes away from downtown Barnwell.

He said Barnwell's airport is special because it is "safe and accessible" as well as "the courtesy and convenience you get when you come here."

Barnwell Regional Airport is also home to the "Corvair College" which draws pilots and mechanics from destinations nationally (and a few internationally) for a week to learn about and work on Corvair engines which power home-built aircraft. COVID-19 put the workshop on hold for a couple of years but plans are underway to schedule a new event, said Chavis.

Learn more at www.barnwellregionalairport.com.

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Barnwell Emergency Services



Sheriff Steve Griffith (right) smiles with Austin Hook at the Barnwell County Sheriff's Office Law Enforcement Expo.



Firefighters Fred Bordelon and Kaleb Wilson talk to the Johnson family about fire trucks and equipment during the October 2022 Fire Safety event hosted by the Barnwell and Long Branch fire departments.

In an emergency, always dial 911.

**Barnwell County
Emergency Management**
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COUNTY FIRE SERVICE

Barnwell County Fire Coordinator:
Wesley Gatlin
www.barnwellcounty.sc.gov



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- Blackville (District 2) - Chief Earthel Walker
- Elko (District 3) - Chief Michael Schumpert
- Hilda (District 4) - Chief Thomas Sharpe
- Kline (District 5) - Chief Patrick Felder
- Snelling (District 6) - Chief Bobby Morris
- Williston (District 7) - Chief John Melton
- Red Oak (District 8) - Chief Henry Smith
- Friendship (District 9) - Chief Wayne Ray
- Rural (District 11) - Chief Jessie Elmore
- Long Branch (District 12) - Chief Andy Hogg

S.C. Forestry Commission

To be eligible to burn yard debris outside the city limits, residents must call the S.C. Forestry Commission to report where they will be burning.
For Barnwell County, call (800) 895-7061.



Firefighters work to extinguish a fire at the Barnwell County Landfill in May 2022.

• **Barnwell County Sheriff's Office**
Sheriff Steven "Grits" Griffith
599 Joey Zorn Blvd., Barnwell, S.C. 29812
(803) 541-1052, www.barnwellcounty.sc.gov

• **Barnwell Police Department**
Chief Lamaz Robinson
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• **Blackville Police Department**
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Keeping Barnwell County Residents Healthy

Healthcare is an important component of any community. Though Barnwell County no longer has a hospital, there are two facilities in neighboring counties. The Allendale County Hospital and Bamberg-Barnwell Emergency Medical Center (in Bamberg County) are only 15 to 20 minutes from most Barnwell County residents.

A variety of medical offices are located in Barnwell County, including physicians, optometrists, physical therapists, pediatricians, dentists, and mental health. In recent years, many providers have invested money in new facilities, equipment, and training so they can better serve the community.

Sara O'Neal, the county's first nurse practitioner, is one example of the many dedicated healthcare providers. She celebrated her 30th anniversary with Barnwell Pediatrics in November 2022.

"I am on my third generation of seeing some families. I try to treat my patients like they were my own children," said O'Neal.

Dr. Abe Moskow, who started Barnwell Pediatrics, has been a doctor since

1982. "I was told that you can't do pediatrics in a small town, but we gave it a shot," said Moskow. "Healthcare without having to go far is a huge benefit to a community."

The ever-growing medical field always needs highly-trained individuals. That's why educational programs are vital.

The University of South Carolina Salkehatchie partnered with the S.C. Area Health Education Consortium (AHEC) to expand learning opportunities for nurse practitioner, physician assistant, pharmacy and nursing students who are committed to underserved and rural communities.

"The partnership allows our nursing students to experience simulated scenarios that replicate what they will encounter as registered nurses," said April Wolfe, Salk's nursing academic program manager.

The Barnwell County Career Center



A health science student at the Barnwell County Career Center prepares for clinical studies.

also trains the next generation of healthcare professionals.

Health science students can earn certifications as a certified nursing assistant, certified pharmacy technician, and patient care technician/assistant by the time they graduate from high school. Certifications "enhance the marketability of these students who desire to continue their education in health care, as well as increase their starting pay in the entry level workforce," said instructor Debra Dicks.

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(Left) PruittHealth resident Gladys Boyles and Barnwell Montessori student Henry Logan prove trick-or-treating on Halloween is fun for all ages. (Right) Alberta Williams calls out numbers during a game of bingo at the Golden Retreat Activity Center's 8th Anniversary celebration.

Barnwell County thrives through the hardwork and perseverance of its 'seasoned citizens.' As they embark on the years spent over the age of 60, they can spend time at one of the two senior centers in the county.

The Gail Reyes Senior Center in Barnwell and the Golden Retreat Activity Center in Blackville are both operated by the county's council on aging, Generations Unlimited (GU). Ethel Faust took the position of GU director in late 2022 and began using the term 'seasoned citizens' to describe the population of seniors these centers are designed to serve.

"Seniors today are not the seniors of yesterday," said Faust at a Blackville Town Council meeting of how she aims to resculpt the opportunities seniors are given to engage with the community.

At either location, seniors can depend on a morning of activities and fellowship alongside a hot meal. GU and each center hopes to be a hub for the community to turn to when in need and can connect individuals of all ages with resources.

Seniors can partake in social and recreational programs, arts and crafts, musical activities, wellness seminars, nutrition training, health screenings, and fitness classes focused on things like arthritis, tai chi, or balance.

There are also computers and Wi-Fi available.

In addition to meals at each center, GU delivers daily meals to homebound seniors five days a week with the exception of certain holidays. Alongside meal delivery, GU staff and volunteers perform wellness checks and interact with seniors who otherwise may have little to no contact.

Faust hopes to cement the connection between all generations of citizens in Barnwell County as the name GU suggests. While you must be 60 or older to become a member at either center, one of GU's services available to all is Local Motion – a county-wide public transportation service.

Local Motion buses can commonly be seen transporting citizens around the county, making stops at grocery stores, for medical appointments, social outings, and special events for affordable rates.

Vehicles are equipped to accommodate wheelchairs and other assistive devices and drivers are all trained in First Aid and CPR.


In March 2023, the Gail Reyes Senior Center celebrated 23 years of serving the community and in January 2023 the Golden Retreat Activity Center celebrated its eighth anniversary.

Throughout all of this time, both centers and GU would not thrive without volunteers. Faust encourages both the seasoned citizens of Barnwell County and those on their way to joining the group to get involved.

SENIOR CENTERS


Gail Reyes Senior Center

Manager: Mary Stroman
10913 Ellenton St., Barnwell
(803) 259-4592

 Gail Reyes Senior Center
Hours of operation:
Mon.-Fri. 8:30am-1pm

Golden Retreat Activity Center

Manager: Mary Stroman
59 Callahan Drive, Blackville
(803) 219-7056

 Blackville Senior Center
Hours of operation:
Mon.-Fri. 8:30am-12:30pm

Generations Unlimited

Manager: Ethel Faust
10913 Ellenton St., Barnwell
(803) 541-1240

<https://generationsunlimited.org/>

NURSING HOMES

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(803) 284-4313
1612 Jones Bridge Rd., Blackville
<https://blackvillehealthcare.com/>

Williston Healthcare and Rehabilitation

(803) 266-3229
5721 Springfield Rd., Williston
<https://willistonhealthcare.com/>

PruittHealth of Barnwell

(803) 259-5547
31 Wren St., Barnwell
<https://www.pruithhealth.com/>

Always Something Fun to Do



The community gathered together at Fuller Park to participate in events and activities at the National Night Out and Back to School Rally hosted by local law enforcement in August 2022.



Don Alexander from Anovotek hands out stress balls to children at the April 2022 Child Abuse Awareness Walk & Family Game Night in Barnwell. The event included a walk, games, food, music, and lots of family fun.

Many residents look forward to the events held annually that allow the community to gather at large. The Blackville Music & Arts Festival, Literacy & Arts in the Park, and A Taste of Blackville welcome the entire county every year to celebrate the culinary, musical, and artistic talent of Blackville residents.

The Dreams, Imagination, and Gift (DIG) Development Program based in Williston holds an annual STEM Festival to promote the youth's involvement in science, technology, engineering, and math. Every February, the African-American

Heritage Parade travels down Williston's Main Street honoring Black history and culture.

The Sundial Festival is a beloved annual event held at The Circle in downtown Barnwell that brings together local vendors, artisans, and business owners. BBQ, Blues, & Boos hosted by the Southern Palmetto Chamber of Commerce showcases the best barbecue in the region. The inaugural event in October 2022 was a resounding success with attendees flying in from other states.

Each municipality has an active recreation department that creates opportunities for children in athletics. Once they have outgrown recreational sports, they can then play for their school's team and be cheered on by the entire community on any given game night.

For 17 years, the 10-mile yard sale has attracted buyers and sellers to Highway 64 to partake in miles of rummaging for a good deal.

Many community organizations take the initiative to bring events to the community. Each year around back-to-school time, law enforcement and emergency service agencies in the county host giveaways of backpacks, books, pencils, and other supplies.

While this is only a few of the many events held each year, Barnwell County residents are constantly coming up with innovative activities and events to bring to the public. A Community Calendar is published in each week's edition of *The People-Sentinel* newspaper to include details on upcoming events.



The inaugural BBQ, Blues & Boos festival brought barbecue cooks from across the region to let the community determine whose food is the best while listening to music from local artists and chatting with vendors. Pictured is Ed Lemon and the Get Rights, which includes Barnwell natives Ed Lemon Jr. (third from left) and Sean Bing (right).

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A cast of locals brought *Clown Car* to life on the stage of Circle Theatre in Barnwell in February 2023.

Arts & Entertainment

From artisans and creators to musicians and actors, Barnwell County is full of creative people—if you cannot tell by the many murals seen throughout the community.

Circle Theatre located on Academy Street in Barnwell has been a staple for local entertainment since 1974.

In the 2022-2023 season, Circle Theatre brought the murder-mystery comedy show “Clown Car,” the historically witty “Tea for Three,” the heartfelt “Almost, Maine,” and will be putting on “My Fair Lady” in late 2023.

While these plays commonly have an adult cast, Circle Theatre gives kids the opportunity to get on stage at their summer camp. The summer of 2022 brought the highly-anticipated production of

“Dear Edwina Jr.” showcasing 24 future stars.

The theater is run by a volunteer board and relies on volunteers to help onstage and behind the scenes. Circle Theatre is always looking for more hands to bring these productions to fruition.

Outside of the theatre, the Barnwell County Consolidated School District has an active drama club at both Williston-Elko schools and Blackville-Hilda schools. In 2019, Williston-Elko Middle School put on their first production of “Frozen Jr.”

The summertime Barnwell Farmer’s Market, the monthly Wall Street Market, and the Little Red Barn gallery are only some of the places where the work of local artists and creators can be viewed.



Seniors at the Blackville Senior Center made three-tiered cloth crowns representing the National Museum of African-American History and Culture Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C. Pictured left to right: (front row) Lassie Tobin, Shirley Nix, Mae Williams, Carrie Carter; (back row) Wallace Taylor, Vickie Dowling, Mamie Matthews, Sandra Holman, Trudy Joyner and Alberta Williams.

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Visitors explore the Blackville Heritage Museum, which opened in 2016, during an open house in 2017.

An Historical Place to Call Home

Barnwell County, once called Winton County, was named after Revolutionary War figure John Barnwell.

Like many small Southern areas, Barnwell County grew with the introduction of the railroad. At the time, the railroad linked Charleston to the old town of Hamburg, on the Savannah River. Alongside the railroad, small towns, including Williston and Blackville, sprung up creating stops along the railroad.

On Christmas Day, 1830, the locomotive "Best Friend" made the first trip along the 136 mile route, averaging 12 mile per hour. At the time it was the longest railroad in the world. By the 1840s, over 100,000 bales of cotton a year were being shipped along it to Charleston.

By the 1990s, the railroad tracks had been removed from the area. A highway now runs along the same route.

The greatest impact to the county came in the 1950's with the creation of the Savannah River Site by the federal government. Owned by the Department of Energy, the site encompasses nearly a third of Barnwell County's land mass.

Four museums preserve Barnwell County's history and heritage.

The Barnwell County Museum opened its doors on June 22, 1978 and currently collaborates with the Barnwell District Genealogical and Historical Chapter to preserve and record the history of Barnwell District (which includes Barnwell, Bamberg and Allendale counties). The museum manager's office, genealogy research center and collection of William Bartram prints are located in the Anne Hagood Gallery of the Effie Mae Fuller Community Center.

Besides a large collection of exhibits, the museum is working to repair the old German Prisoner of War guard shack, commonly known as the Old Police Station that sits on the Circle in downtown Barnwell. The single-room structure was con-



The Blackville Heritage Museum, located at 655 Main Street, Blackville, is Barnwell County's newest museum.

structed in 1944 and used as the town's police station after World War II.

The Effie Mae Fuller Community Center is frequently used for traveling exhibits, special events and is available for rental.

The Blackville Heritage Museum opened in 2016 and houses artifacts from the old Shamrock Hotel, a mail carrier's bicycle, as well as home goods.

A special contribution to the museum is a pair of antique cars donated by the Frank J. and Lucy C. Hartzog Foundation. The cars are a 1926 Ford Model T and a 1931 Ford Model A. Both were completely restored by the late W. S. "Buck" Guess Jr. of Blackville.

Williston's museum was opened in 1989 and founded by the late Billie Jean Martin Sprawls. She and others gathered items to be placed in an early Williston school house and it now shares the building with Williston's Public Library.

On display are mementoes of Williston's agricultural history as "Asparagus Capital", a country store, dentist office, and items from notable former residents. There are also items from Wonderful Williston Weekend festivals and Blue Devil memorabilia.

Preserving the region's agricultural history is the task of the Agricultural Heritage Museum, located 3 miles west of Blackville.

The museum displays agricultural

equipment and items from the 18th and 19th centuries.

Located at the Edisto Research & Education Center, visitors can learn about past agricultural efforts while also viewing cutting-edge research and technology at the REC center.

LOCAL MUSEUMS

Barnwell County Museum & Effie Mae Fuller Community Center

(617 Hagood Avenue, Barnwell)

Open Tuesday through Thursday 3 to 5:30 p.m. or by appointment by calling (803) 259-1916.

Email: barnwellmuseum@gmail.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/BarnwellCountyMuseum

Admission is free. To rent the Community Center, call (803) 259-1916.

Blackville Heritage Museum

(655 Main Street, Blackville)

Open Tuesdays from 2 to 4 p.m. and by appointment by calling (803) 284-3267, (803) 284-2525 or (803) 300-1578.

Admission is free.

Williston Museum

(5121 Springfield Road, Williston)

Open Tuesday and Thursday from 2 to 4 p.m. or to schedule an appointment or book an event, call Williston Town Hall at (803) 266-7015. Admission is free.

Agricultural Heritage Museum

(Located at the Clemson University Edisto Research & Education Center on Hwy. 78, Blackville)

Open by appointment, Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. To set up a tour, contact Don Still at (803) 266-3925 or Jennings Owens at (803) 260-2534.

Admission is free for students K-12; \$2 per person for groups of 10 or more. Custom school field trips available.

Libraries Offer More Than Books

A step inside one of Barnwell County's three public libraries is a step toward complete immersion in lands of fairy tales, inquiries into scientific methods, tips for learning new cooking techniques, falling captive to a new TV show, or discovering what your niche may be.

Since 2020, three new librarians have started their careers at each of the branches; Amanda Daff in Barnwell, Lil Stoltzfus in Blackville, and Stayce Inabinet Kleinholz in Williston.

Each has brought innovative ideas and captivating events to their branch through programs coordinated by the Aiken-Bamberg-Barnwell-Edgefield (ABBE) Regional Library System which operates the branches.

"The public libraries in Barnwell County offer safe spaces for all community members to gather and pursue lifelong learning as they choose, whether it's checking out a good book or DVD, researching their family history online, and attending a book club meeting with friends," said Mary Jo Dawson, Director, Aiken-Bamberg-Barnwell-Edgefield Regional Library System.

During the summer months, the summer reading program is offered to prevent the 'summer slide' in student academic retainment. It not only offers weekly activities and events, but equips parents with a correlated activity to do at home as well.

Storywalks are paths of literature found across the county and rotate the books they highlight. In Blackville, the storywalk can be found outside the library near the playground. In Barnwell, following the trail at Fuller Park will tell an intriguing tale. Williston's is along the Rail Trail and a new one was added to the Snelling Town Park in 2023.

Storytime and crafts are offered at all the branches. During the COVID pandemic, the Barnwell Branch went digital with their storytimes and began utilizing Facebook Live to share stories. Although the pandemic has lessened, the branch has continued to reach out to the community online.

At the Barnwell Branch Library's 2022 Ocean of Possibilities summer program,



The Barnwell County Public Library brought the Savannah River Ecology Laboratory and their crew of creepy-crawlies to teach roughly 20 kids about amphibians, reptiles, and birds they might find in their own backyard. Pictured is Kayden Hadden handling a corn snake.

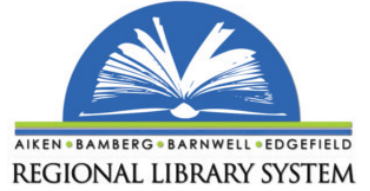
children were face to face with a bunch of South Carolina's native creepy-crawlies in an ecology lab with the Savannah River Site. On special occasions, Porkchop Productions based in Aiken performs an original play such as 'The Fisherman and His Needy Greedy Wife.'

At Williston, Kleinholz has brought unique crafts for both children and adults such as a bird themed story time where children listened to a story and created pine cone treats to keep the birds full in the winter.

The Blackville Branch recently underwent some renovations and now has a fresh look with a brand new porch. What is now the library was once the Blackville Train Depot which was built in the early 1900s and then renovated in 2005. Stoltzfus was a driving force behind these renovations and has created a hub at the library for various events like the Blackville Music and Arts Festival.

The Friends of the Libraries of Barnwell County is a non-profit group that raises money in addition to that received from local government for the three Barnwell County branches to keep bringing these sort of events to life.

Visit www.abbe-lib.org/ for more information.



LOCAL BRANCHES

Barnwell Branch

Manager: Amanda Daff
40 Burr St., Barnwell
(803) 259-3612

- Mon.-Wed., Fri.: 10am-6pm
- Thurs.: 10am-7pm
- Sat.: 10am-2pm
- Sun.: closed

Blackville Branch

Manager: Lil Stoltzfus
19420 Solomon Blatt Ave.,
Blackville
(803) 284-2295

- Mon., Tue., Thurs.: 10am-6pm
- Wed., Fri.-Sun.: closed

Williston Branch

Manager: Stayce Inabinet Kleinholz
5121 Springfield Rd., Williston
(803) 266-3027

- Mon.-Thurs.: 10am-6pm
- Fri.-Sun.: closed

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A Beautiful Place to Live



Clouds reflect off of the tranquil water of Lake Edgar Brown in Barnwell. It's a popular spot to fish, boat, and enjoy nature.

Whether you're a hunter, fisherman, athletic enthusiast, boater or just a nature buff, Barnwell County may be just the place for you.

The county features prevalent rural settings brimming with deer, ducks, turkeys and many other species, each with their own hunting season.

Fishing is as close as a short walk for most residents. Fishermen have many choices of local waters from which to wet their hooks.

From the popular Lake Edgar Brown and many small creeks, to the expansive and beautiful Savannah River, those who love the water will find many options in Barnwell County.

Barnwell State Park is a favorite among locals and guests alike. Situated off Highway 3 near Blackville, the park offers nature trails, picnic areas, swimming area, fishing spots, boat rentals, a playground, and cabins and campgrounds to rent. The community building is a popular spot for parties, weddings and other events. The park is open from 9 a.m. to dark daily.

A few miles away from the park on Springs Court in Blackville is God's Acre Healing Springs. It's a great spot to enjoy a cold, refreshing glass of water. Native Americans who lived near this site believed the waters were sacred and had healing properties. People flock to the springs from all over the state to fill up jugs and bottles with the water.



Water flows from the spigots at Healing Springs at God's Acre in Blackville. People have thought the natural springs have supernatural healing powers ever since four gravely wounded British soldiers recovered after drinking from them in 1781.

PUBLIC PARKS BARNWELL

- Collins Park • Darnell Park
 - Lemon Park • Fuller Park
 - Jack Phillips Park • Lake Edgar Brown
 - Veterans Memorial Park • Kilkenny Park
- To reserve a park in Barnwell, call (803) 259-3317.

BLACKVILLE

- Barnwell State Park
- For reservations, call (803) 284-2212.
- Healing Springs

SNELLING

- Snelling Town Park
- For reservations, call 259-1464.

WILLISTON

- Williston Town Park
- For reservations, Town Hall at (803) 266-7015.
- Library Park

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Recreational Opportunities Expand

Barnwell County has been growing its recreational opportunities in recent years with some exciting additions.

A splash pad was installed at Fuller Park in August 2021 and quickly became a summer favorite for children and parents looking to escape the heat. Fuller Park is also home to the Barnwell County Farmers Market which gathers the community under the gazebo a few times a week.

Summer 2022 brought an aquatic center to The Barnwell County Family YMCA through a joint public-private partnership that fundraised for the \$1 million project. It includes a large pool with a slide, a kiddie pool with water features, and a large deck area for picnics and shade. Day passes for the aquatic center are available if an individual does not have a membership to the YMCA.

If water activities are not your thing, Williston is home to a professionally sanctioned 18-hole disc golf course located at the Williston Town Park. The Williston Disc Golf Club frequently holds tournaments that draw players

from across the region.

The fastest growing sport in America has already taken hold in Barnwell County. Pickleball courts are being built on the grounds of the YMCA and conversations are being held to bring them to Blackville and Williston as well.

Recreation committees and dedicated leaders have stepped into official roles as well. In Barnwell, Kevin Roberts started in June 2022 as the city's parks, recreation and tourism director and has brought innovative ideas to the community's indoor and outdoor opportunities – one of which being the Butterfly Kisses Daddy-Daughter Dance held around Valentine's Day.

In Blackville, Tykesha Jenkins was appointed as the recreation director and led successful seasons of youth sports by bringing together various community facets.

In Williston, a newly formed Recreation & Activities Committee has worked to bring more opportunities to the youth, funded many uniform updates, and continues to bring innovative events to the community.



Hal Mundy, co-founder of the Williston Disc Golf Club, teaches an aspiring disc golfer how to throw at a daycamp held by the club for kids.

Recreation is not just being physically active but an activity done for enjoyment, and Barnwell County is full of plenty of things to enjoy.



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Chris Morris and daughter Navi cool off at the new aquatics center at the Barnwell County Family YMCA during the grand opening celebration in June 2022.

Student-athletes Thrive on Court and Field



(Top) The Blackville-Hilda Hawks played against the Barnwell Warhorses in a Thursday night showdown during the 2022-23 season. (Middle Left to Right) Barnwell and Blackville-Hilda high school started wrestling programs in 2022. Barnwell's LaKota Scott received the third place medal in the 195-pound class at the State Wrestling Championship in Feb. 2022. The Williston-Elko Middle School Lady Blue Devils hold a 'hoop we did it again' sign to celebrate their undefeated streak during the 2022-23 season. (Bottom Left to Right) The Jefferson Davis Academy Shotgun Raiders competed at the SCDNR State Skeet and Trap Championships. The Blackville-Hilda High School cheerleaders cheer on the Hawks in September 2022.



Adopt a Furry Friend

The overpopulation of animals is a big problem in small towns in the rural south. These forgotten or abandoned animals in Barnwell County are advocated for by organizations determined to make a difference for those without a voice.

Barnwell County Animal Shelter (BCAS) staff work diligently alongside groups like The Animal Advocates and the Barnwell Animal County Shelter Foundation.

The Animal Advocates work to get as many dogs and cats into their care at the no-kill Friends for Life Center (F4LC) and also operate the Pick of the Litter Shoppe located on The Circle in Barnwell— a consignment shop where all the proceeds go toward the center's operation and care of the animals residing there.

At the end of 2022, The Animal Advocates secured a partnership with Big Dog Ranch – a national rescue with an Alabama facility, to bring thousands of dogs out of the Barnwell County and Allendale County shelters and to a chance at finding a home outside of the LowCountry.

While adoption is the sweeter story, spaying and neutering pets is the only solution to truly reducing the population of unwanted animals.

This has been the message of the Barnwell County Animal Shelter (BCAS), the

Barnwell County Animal Shelter Foundation, The Animal Advocates, the TNVR Committee, and Dr. Shannan Miller, owner of Dogwood Animal Hospital, for many years. All work together to bring a safer, happier, and healthier life to any animal in need.

Throughout 2022, Barnwell County Council worked to amend the ordinance outlining animal control. It was amended to include further consequences for violators and added a section regarding community cats cared for through the TNVR program.

Trap, neuter, vaccinate, return (TNVR) is a humane, non-lethal way to control the populations of community or feral cats. This program lessens the obligation of law enforcement to handle feral cat complaints as it is now the responsibility of TNVR volunteers. TNVR also keeps feral cats out of the county shelter – which ultimately saves taxpayer's dollars.

Dr. Miller has performed thousands of low cost/no cost spay and neuter surgeries on behalf of BCAS, the Barnwell County Animal Shelter Foundation and the TNVR program since she got involved and continues to see the overpopulation problem first hand.

Adoptions are made through The BCAS' partnership with Petco Love, the Animal Advocate's F4LC, or at adoption events held by the BCAS.



Barnwell County Animal Shelter

Director: Marlena Ray
55 Diamond Rd., Barnwell, S.C. 29812
(803) 259-1656
Hours of operation: Mon.-Thurs., 11am- 4pm
Facebook: 'Barnwell County Animal Shelter'

The Animal Advocates

Director: Vikki Scott
F4LC: 10975 Marlboro Ave., Barnwell, S.C. 29812
POTL: 28 McDonough St., Barnwell, S.C. 29812
(803) 259-5483
Hours of operation: Mon.-Fri., 10am-6pm, Sat. 10am-3pm
Facebook: 'Animal Advocates of Barnwell County'
<https://www.theanimaladvocates.org/>

These groups and individuals are fierce advocates who work relentlessly to bring a better life to the animals of Barnwell County whether it be through adoption, advocating, or educating.

“TOGETHER, we CAN make a difference”

The Animal Advocates believe in going above and beyond to give every dog and cat the care and kindness they deserve. Until a forever home is found, we provide a haven and second chance for homeless, abandoned, abused and neglected canines and felines at our Friends for Life Center.

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Faith, Family & Fellowship

Barnwell County is home to many churches, including the oldest original Catholic church in South Carolina. Saint Andrew's Catholic Church, located on Madison Street in Barnwell, was built in 1831. It is the oldest religious structure in Barnwell as well as the oldest original Catholic Church in the state. While much of Barnwell was burned by Sherman's army in the Civil War, Saint Andrew's was spared.

There are more than 30 churches in and near the city of Barnwell, more than 15 churches around the towns of Blackville and Williston, and at least one church near each of the smaller towns of Elko, Hilda, Kline and Snelling.

The vast majority of the churches are Christian including Methodist, Presbyterian, Anglican, Baptist, Episcopal, Catholic, Mennonite, as well as services at non-denominational congregations.

Church events are listed weekly in *The People-Sentinel*.



Rev. Al Rivett and Rev. Bobby Dukes praise the Lord during a song at one of the 2023 Barnwell County Lenten services.



Shepherds and wise men bow before baby Jesus (portrayed by Lexi Mae Smith) during a depiction of the nativity at Hagood Avenue Baptist Church in Barnwell. Lexi Mae's parents, Cierra and Corey Smith, portray Mary and Joseph while the angel is portrayed by Madelyn Hutson.

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Education: An Important



A member of Williston-Elko High School's Class of 2022 hugs her mother after the graduation ceremony.



School resource officer Lisa Carrigg and some 5K students at Jefferson Davis Academy celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday in March 2023 by wearing their favorite hats.



Students at Winfield Heights Christian Kindergarten in Williston dressed as 100-year-olds on the 100th day of school.

Barnwell County educators work hard to equip thousands of students with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful, productive members of society.

A majority of students go to one of the county's two public school districts – Barnwell District 45 or the Barnwell County Consolidated School District (BCCSD). BCCSD was formed by the consolidation of the former Blackville and Williston districts in 2022.

Many gains have been made when it comes to academic achievement, including on state standardized test scores. The S.C. State Department of Education regularly releases new data concerning public schools. Both districts saw positive results on the 2022 S.C. School Report Card. Data can be found online at ed.sc.gov.

Parents looking for an alternative to public schools have several private schools to choose from, as well as the homeschooling option.

Jefferson Davis Academy is the largest private school in the county. It is located in Blackville and serves students of all grade levels. There are also several other private schools run by churches.

When students earn their high school diploma, they don't have to go very far to further their education and gain the skills needed for a career. Denmark Technical College has a facility in Barnwell, though several colleges, universities and technical colleges are within an hour of Barnwell County, including the University of South Carolina's Salkehatchie campus in Allendale.

Career Center

The Barnwell County Career Center is a shared educational resource for the community.

The career center, which includes students from all local high schools, offers 12 programs, from agriculture and drafting to cosmetology and criminal justice.

The school, located on a 160-acre site at 5214 Reynolds Road, Blackville, celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2019.

Learn more at www.bccc80.com.



Students were excited to return to Macedonia Elementary-Middle School in Blackville for the first day of the 2022-23 school year.

Lesson in Barnwell County

Adult Education

Bamberg/Barnwell Adult Education serves hundreds of students in Barnwell and Bamberg counties through a variety of courses and programs, including GED preparation, high school diploma, adult reading/writing/math, WorkKeys preparation and testing, and much more.

"It's all about showing people that they can believe in themselves and that there's something else out there," said executive director Joye Hallman.

Their ultimate goal is to connect students to post secondary

education/training and/or employment.

Registration is always ongoing for anyone seeking the services of Bamberg/ Barnwell Adult Education, which is headquartered at 10370 Ellenton Street, Barnwell. They also have offices at 3788 Faust Street in Bamberg and 19 Maple Avenue in Denmark.

Free transportation and childcare vouchers are available.

For more information, call the Barnwell office at (803) 541-6021. You can visit www.bbaed.org or follow them on Facebook or Instagram.

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- ♦ **Early Intervention** is a family-focused, in-home service for children age 3 to 6 with developmental delays. An Early Interventionist helps families understand their child's development and gives specific training to address areas of delay.
- ♦ **Respite Services** provide temporary care to individuals, which allows families or caregivers to handle emergencies, personal situations, or take a break.
- ♦ **Supervised Living** provides support for independent living, such as access to the community, pay bills, shop for groceries, access medical care, and other personal assistance as needed.
- ♦ **Job Coach** provides assistance to obtain and sustain employment. This service enables people to earn wages and opportunities to interact with non-disabled workers. Employment services include job coaching, work enclaves, and mobile work crew opportunities.
- ♦ **Adult Day Services** provide a safe and healthy environment for people to develop social and personal care skills for more independent and productive lives.

Residential services support individuals based on their unique needs, which include:

- ♦ **Supported and Supervised Living Program Models** provide adults with needed support to live in apartments or other (single family) housing. Supervision and support services are tailored to the person's needs.
- ♦ **Community Training Home (CTH) Models** offer people the opportunity to live in a homelike environment under the supervision of qualified and trained staff. Caregivers are either trained private citizens who provide care in their own homes (CTH-I) or service provider employees caring for individuals in a home operated by the provider agency (CTH-II). A variation of CTH-IIs (up to four individuals) are Community Residential Care Facilities, which normally serve about eight individuals.
- ♦ **Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF) Models** are residences for individuals needing maximum support for their high levels of need. 24-hour care, supervision, training, recreation and other activities are provided in this structured environment.

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 Dr. Rhett Richardson, Member
 Mrs. Becky Huggins, Member

Barnwell High School
 474 Jackson Street
 Barnwell, SC 29812
 Principal: Mr. Franklin McCormack



Guinyard-Butler Middle School
 779 Allen Street
 Barnwell, SC 29812
 Principal: Ms. Henrietta Williams



Barnwell Elementary School
 10524 Marlboro Avenue
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 Principal: Ms. Kay Gooding



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- Blackville-Hilda High School**
 440 Country Club Road
 Blackville, SC 29817
(803) 284-5700

- Kelly Edwards Elementary**
 1071 Elko Street
 Williston, SC 29853
(803) 266-3737

- Williston-Elko Middle**
 12333 Main Street
 Williston, SC 29853
(803) 266-3430

- Williston-Elko High**
 12233 Main Street
 Williston, SC 29853
(803) 266-3110

12255 E. Main Street, Williston, SC | Dr. Marcella Shaw, Interim Superintendent
 803-266-7878



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Barnwell School District 45



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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

For employment opportunities in Barnwell School District 45, please visit www.bsd45.net.

Getting Children Ready For School



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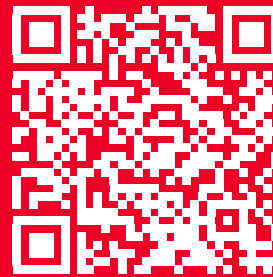


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