

# LAKE SIDE

Fall 2023

## Long and Winding Road

Dream of a unified greenway from Lake Murray to Cayce coming into focus

## Holding Serve

Pickleball popularity takes over the Midlands

THE GOOD LIFE IN LEXINGTON, NEWBERRY AND SALUDA



# on the cover

If plans hold, the Saluda Riverwalk will eventually be extended out to Lake Murray and connected across the Broad River to Columbia by a walking bridge. The projects are part of an effort to create a 27-mile unified greenway along the Midlands' three rivers.

Photo by Kailee Kokes



# from the lake

It's all connected.

Lake Murray is formed by the Saluda River, which is stoppered by the Dreher Shoals Dam to form a reservoir that contains more than 750 billion gallons of water.

So — in a way — the “side” of the lake extends all the way to the heart of Columbia, where the Saluda meets up with the Broad River to form the mighty Congaree.

Key to the spirit of the Lexington County Chronicle's Lakeside magazine is embracing this interconnectivity between the area's cultural and tourism assets and amenities.

That unbroken chain of water from Lake Murray extends under the bridge that connects Riverbanks' Zoo and Garden, past popular riverwalks and parks, multiple museums, an amphitheater, the University of South Carolina's baseball stadium and more.

Our cover story for this issue focuses on an effort to physically manifest this connectivity, as long-standing ambitions to form a unified greenway spanning 27 miles from Lake Murray to downtown Columbia and on to West Columbia and Cayce are increasingly taking shape.

The rest of the issue spreads out to showcase some of the diverse things there are to see and do around the lake and

extending out into the surrounding area.

From a couple that has turned taking their goats out on their boat to a push for internet vitality to the two fully functioning wineries that call the Midlands home. From a floating music festival that rocks the lake each summer to a previously niche sport that is taking over the Midlands. From a group that explores the expansive countryside near the lake with ambitious bike rides to a guide to local trails that is also useful for people who just want to get out for a short ride or walk.

There's a whole lot of fun and interesting possibilities at the fingertips of anyone who calls this area home, and with the summer heat soon set to fade into autumn, we're arriving at a time of year when it's comfortable to get out and take full advantage.

We hope this magazine continues to stimulate your imagination for how you might enjoy the area.

We'll see you “lakeside” on the riverwalk.

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Member of the South Carolina Press Association,  
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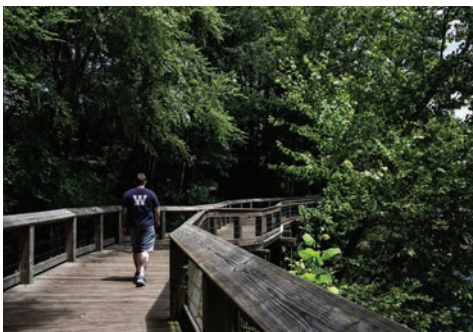
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# Stay here, play here

Lexington County events for Aug.-Nov.

## August



### ICEHOUSE LIVE

The Town of Lexington's weekly free concert series continues on Thursdays Aug. 31-Oct. 5. Icehouse Amphitheater. 107 W Main St., Lexington. [icehouseamphitheater.com](http://icehouseamphitheater.com).

### CHAPIN LABOR DAY WEEK

Aug. 26-Sept. 4. Chapin's Labor Day festivities included the Taste of Chapin restaurant week, the Justin Pepper 5K, the Boots on Beaufort block party/concert, a Labor Day Parade and a classic car show. [chapininc.gov](http://chapininc.gov).

## September

### JAZZ ON THE RIVER

ColaJazz's free outdoor concert series hadn't announced dates as of Lakeside's August press deadline, but typically runs weekly throughout most of the fall. West Columbia Riverwalk Amphitheater. 109 Alexander Rd. [facebook.com/jazzontheriversc](https://facebook.com/jazzontheriversc).

### PADDLE AND PINT

Sept. 1. Paddle the Lower Saluda River followed by a craft beer tasting where you will sample eight different craft beers. Weather and river levels permitting. Boats and equipment are provided. \$47. Saluda Shoals Park. 5605 Bush River Rd., Columbia. [icrc.net](http://icrc.net).



### CHAMBER CRAWL: HAZELWOOD BREWING COMPANY

Oct. 13. The S.C. Philharmonic's series of small-ensemble performances at local watering holes touches down in Lexington. Hazelwood Brewing Company. 711 E Main St., Lexington. [scphilharmonic.com](http://scphilharmonic.com).

### KT TUNSTALL (CONCERT)

Sept. 7. Singer performs in Newberry. \$55-\$65. Newberry Opera House. 1201 McKibben St., Newberry. [newberryoperahouse.com](http://newberryoperahouse.com).

### SALUDA SHOALS FALL MUSIC SERIES

Sept. 8, 15, 22. Bands play Saluda Shoals Park accompanied by food trucks and beer and wine for purchase. \$12-\$15. Saluda Shoals Park. 5605 Bush River Rd., Columbia. [icrc.net](http://icrc.net).

### NEWBERRY SHOP AND DINE

Sept. 8 and Oct. 6. Held six times between March and October, the event encompasses a two-block area and includes live music and food trucks to enhance the shopping. Downtown Newberry. [cityofnewberry.com](http://cityofnewberry.com).

### MID CAROLINA CLUB FALL GOLF CLASSIC

Sept. 14. A day filled with fun, networking, and friendly competition. Mid Carolina Club. 3593 Kibler Bridge Rd., Prosperity. [business.chapinchamber.com](http://business.chapinchamber.com).

### THE OAK RIDGE BOYS (CONCERT)

Sept. 15. Country and gospel band performs in Newberry. \$80-\$100. Newberry Opera House. 1201 McKibben St., Newberry. [newberryoperahouse.com](http://newberryoperahouse.com).



### RICKY SKAGGS & KENTUCKY THUNDER (CONCERT)

Sept. 16. Bluegrass stalwart performs in Newberry. \$80-\$100. Newberry Opera House. 1201 McKibben St., Newberry. [newberryoperahouse.com](http://newberryoperahouse.com).

### MIDLANDS FALL ARTS & CRAFTS MARKET

Sept. 16-17. Over 100 vendors will be at this annual market. S.C. Farmers Market. 3483 Charleston Hwy., West Columbia. [midlandscrafters.wixsite.com](http://midlandscrafters.wixsite.com).

### "ANNE OF GREEN GABLES" (PLAY)

Sept. 15-24. Lexington's Village Square Theatre puts on a stage adaptation of the classic novel. \$15-\$19. Village Square Theatre. 105 Caughman Rd., Lexington. [villagesquaretheatre.com](http://villagesquaretheatre.com).

### RIVERBANKS ZOO FARI

Sept. 29. The zoo's premier fundraiser promises cocktails, cuisine and conversation amid the animals as you support wildlife conservation. \$80-\$100. Riverbanks Zoo, 500 Wildlife Pkwy. [riverbanks.org](http://riverbanks.org).

### IRMO OKRA STRUT

Sept. 29-30. Irmo's annual signature festival features rides, amusements, national musical performers and, of course, okra. Irmo Community Park. 7507 Eastview Dr. [okrastrut.com](http://okrastrut.com).



### LAKE MURRAY GRILLING ON THE LAKE

Sept. 29-30. Food competition event includes a "Cook What You Catch" showdown, a steak cook-off and a peach cobbler showdown. Lake Murray Dam Recreation Area, 2101 N Lake Dr., Columbia. [steakcookoffs.com](http://steakcookoffs.com).

### SOGGY DOGGY DAY

Sept. 30. Bring your canine friends out to enjoy a fenced in version of Saluda Splash after it closes for the season. \$4. Saluda Shoals Park. 5605 Bush River Rd., Columbia. [icrc.net](http://icrc.net).

## October



### RHYTHM ON THE RIVER

The Greater Cayce West Columbia Chamber of Commerce's free concert series hadn't announced fall dates as of Lakeside's August press deadline, but typically runs weekly throughout October. West Columbia Riverwalk Amphitheater. 109 Alexander Rd. [facebook.com/rhythmtheriversc](https://facebook.com/rhythmtheriversc).

### "STILT GIRL"

Oct. 6-8, 12-15, 19-22. Chapin Theatre Company's October production follows an actor trying to make it in New York. Chapin Theatre Company, 830 Columbia Ave. [chapintheatre.org](http://chapintheatre.org).

### THE DAM TRI

Oct. 7. Annual triathlon on Lake Murray moves into its 13th season. \$60-\$155. Lake Murray Dam Recreation Area, 2101 N Lake Dr., Columbia. [trisignup.com](http://trisignup.com).



### NEWBERRY OKTOBERFEST

Oct. 7. Newberry's annual Oktoberfest celebration

(its largest annual event) takes over downtown with beer, vendors, entertainment and kids activities. [newberryoktoberfest.com](http://newberryoktoberfest.com).

### GASTON COLLARD AND BBQ FESTIVAL

Oct. 7. Gaston's annual celebration of collards and 'cue features a parade, free rides, games, antique cars, live entertainment, and a barbecue cook-off. [gastonsc.org](http://gastonsc.org).

### CAYCE FALL FEST

Oct 7. Featuring performances by live local bands along with food and drinks, vendors and a kids area. Granby Gardens Park. 1800 12th St. [caycesc.gov](http://caycesc.gov).



### GERVAIS STREET BRIDGE DINNER

Oct. 8. The annual dinner on the bridge that connects West Columbia to downtown Columbia returns for another evening of cocktails, cuisine and Congaree River vistas. \$135. [gervaisstreetbridgedinner.com](http://gervaisstreetbridgedinner.com).

### NICK CARTER

Oct. 9. The singer of Backstreet Boys fame performs in Irmo. \$75-\$100. The rest of the Harbison Theatre's fall calendar hadn't been announced as of Lakeside's August press deadline. Harbison Theatre. 7300 College St., Irmo. [harbisontheatre.org](http://harbisontheatre.org).

### HIP HOP ORCHESTRA EXPERIENCE (CONCERT)

Oct. 18. Classical-meets-hop-hop project performs in Newberry. \$5-\$10. Newberry Opera House. 1201 McKibben St., Newberry. [newberryoperahouse.com](http://newberryoperahouse.com).

### GARRISON KEILLOR

Oct. 20. Former "Prairie Home Companion" host performs in Newberry. \$55-\$65. Newberry Opera House. 1201 McKibben St., Newberry. [newberryoperahouse.com](http://newberryoperahouse.com).

### BOO AT THE ZOO

Oct. 20-30. Gather your little ghosts and goblins and head to Riverbanks' annual family-friendly spook-tacular. Riverbanks Zoo. 500 Wildlife Pkwy., Columbia. [riverbanks.org](http://riverbanks.org).

### "THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW – THE MOVIE WITH SHADOWCAST"

Oct. 27-28. The Newberry Community Players put on a production of the classic with a twist. The Ritz. 1513 Main St., Newberry. [newberry-community-players.square.site](http://newberry-community-players.square.site).

## November

### "THE ADDAMS FAMILY" (MUSICAL)

Nov. 3-19. Lexington's Village Square Theatre puts on a musical based on the famous spooky family. \$18-\$22. Village Square Theatre. 105 Caughman Rd., Lexington. [Villagesquaretheatre.com](http://Villagesquaretheatre.com).

### "BEDTIME STORIES (AS TOLD BY OUR DAD) (WHO MESSED THEM UP)"

Nov. 10-12. The Newberry Community Players put on their November production. The Ritz. 1513 Main St., Newberry. [newberry-community-players.square.site](http://newberry-community-players.square.site).



### PELION PEANUT PARTY

Nov. 3-4. The Town of Pelion's annual celebration of the peanut focuses on the boiled variety and features a host of other festivities. [facebook.com/pelionpeanutparty](https://facebook.com/pelionpeanutparty).

### MIDLANDS CHRISTMAS ARTS & CRAFTS MARKET

Nov. 4-5. Like the Fall Arts & Crafts Market at the state Farmers Market but more Christmas-y. S.C. Farmers Market. 3483 Charleston Hwy., West Columbia. [midlandscrafters.wixsite.com](http://midlandscrafters.wixsite.com).

### RHONDA VINCENT AND THE RAGE (CONCERT)

Nov. 10. Country singer performs in Newberry. \$60-\$70. Newberry Opera House. 1201 McKibben St., Newberry. [newberryoperahouse.com](http://newberryoperahouse.com).





**GOAT BOAT**





Words and Photos by Kailee Kokes

# THE STORY BEHIND LAKE MURRAY'S GOAT BOAT





Keep an eye open on Lake Murray and you might spot the 'Goat Boat.'

Two Gilbert residents, Tim and Doris Kirby, have turned one of their boats into the perfect vessel for transporting their three goats – Elvis, Eli and Elwood – to different islands on Lake Murray, allowing them to roam and graze.

The pontoon boat is equipped with a front corral that holds the goats along with the family's five dogs. The blue outside of the boat is adorned with the goats' faces and the business' straightforward, attention-grabbing name.

According to Tim, the goats get a weekly excursion to these islands and will typically stay for 30-45 minutes, something they've been doing since they were kids.

"It's just an outing for them, like taking the kids to the park," Tim said "They are so spoiled."

The owner shared that he would love for the Goat Boat to go viral, and he posts images and videos to his personal Facebook account to stoke excitement.

Tim stressed that the goats are not harming the island and don't eat much of the vegetation. He added that the goats don't make a dent in the growth the islands experience, saying that he has to cut the grass in their pen on a regular basis.

"I always thought somebody's gonna go like, 'You're destroying the islands,' and that's just not the case," Tim said. "If we were destroying an island, that one would be a little more bare than it is. They can't even put a dent in it."

"I kind of look at it as if they're pruning." He added.

The island the goats are normally taken out to is what the family calls Bird Island, with Tim telling the Chronicle not to confuse it with the lake's Bomb Island where lake's purple martins often gather.

Tim said that the island grows persimmons, a small orange-colored fruit that the goats just love.

The Kirbys told the Chronicle that the three Nigerian Dwarf goats are half-brothers, with Elwood being the only one without a beard, the reason being unknown. Tim told the Chronicle that they originally started off with Elvis, their black-white-and-brown goat.

"We learned real quick we can't have one goat. They don't do well by themselves, they're herd animals," Tim said. "So I talked to my mentor at the time of needing another one. She said, 'Well, you could have the next born,' which was Eli."

"So we're gonna go get him and she sent me a text that evening or the next morning, and he [Elwood] was born, he was such a good looking guy. I didn't want to go up there and be like the guy that goes, 'Okay, well I'm gonna take him instead of him,' because I'm already committed to him. That's why we have three."

When not out on the boat, the goats have their own pen at home with a bridge, swing and a little house that Tim built for them. He told the Chronicle that Eli loves to walk along the beam holding the swing up while Elvis loves to sit on the swing.

Tim said that each of the goats come inside the house when night comes around, with each having a separate kennel.

"They have completely different personalities," he said.





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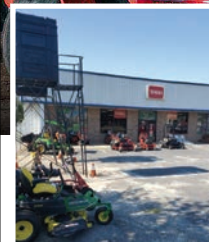
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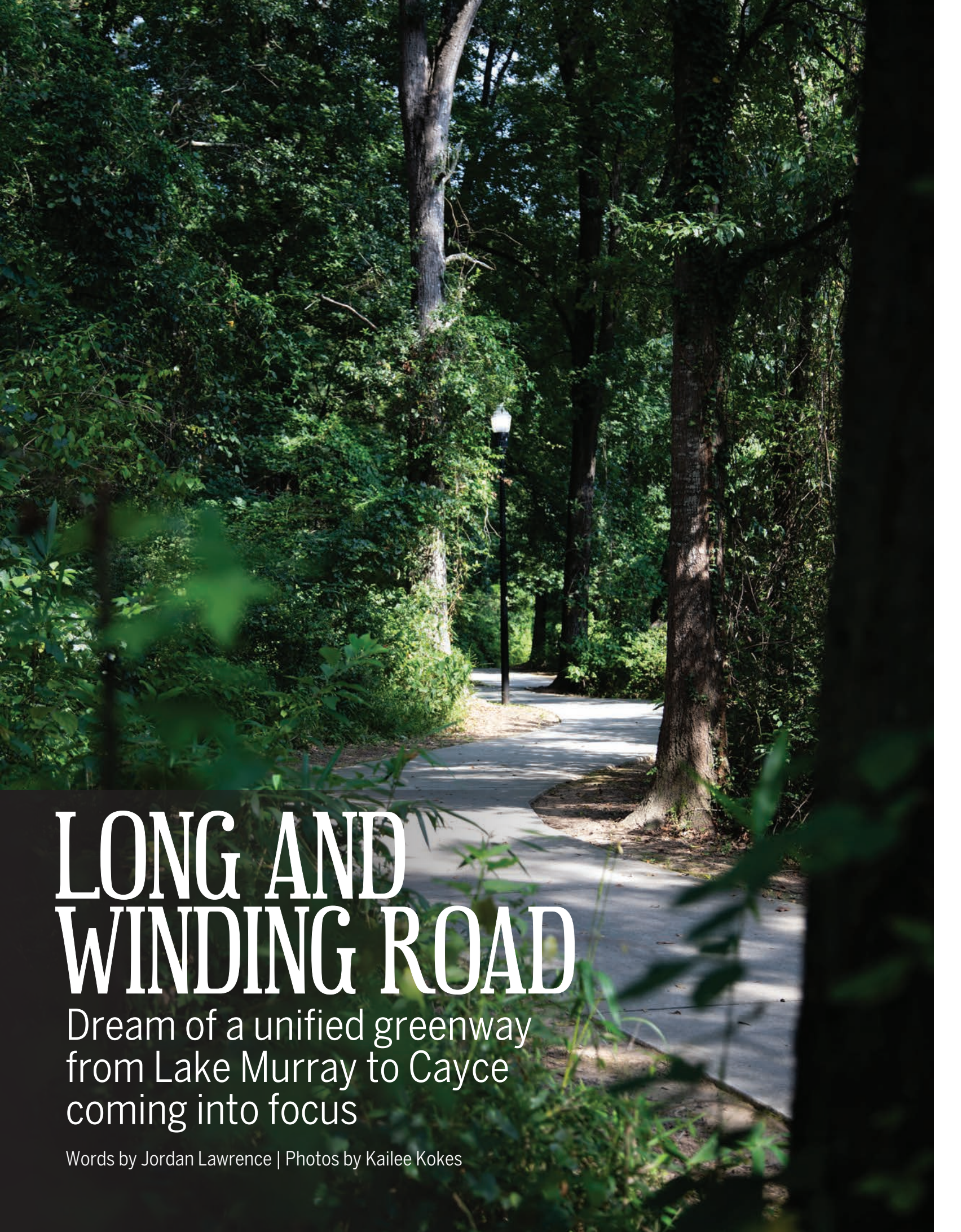
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# LONG AND WINDING ROAD

Dream of a unified greenway  
from Lake Murray to Cayce  
coming into focus

Words by Jordan Lawrence | Photos by Kailee Kokes



27 uninterrupted miles of walking path stretching from Lake Murray across the Broad River into Columbia and back across the river to West Columbia and Cayce.

That's the dream many people in the Midlands, but especially River Alliance CEO Mike Dawson, have been chasing for a while now.

Dawson has led the alliance since its creation in 1994. The group works on behalf of Columbia, West Columbia, Cayce and the counties of Lexington and Richland to create better access to and make better use of the Broad, Saluda and Congaree rivers that run through these counties and municipalities.

The three key connections that remain to make the dream of a unified Midlands greenway a reality still face various hurdles.

The exact route for the 10.5-mile stretch of riverside trail that would connect the existing Saluda Riverwalk to the Lake Murray Dam is still being mapped out, and there's still the matter of securing approval from the state Department of Transportation to cross Interstates 20 and 26.

Permits have to be secured to install a 450-foot walking bridge across the Broad River connecting the Saluda Riverwalk and The Sanctuary at Boyd Island to Riverfront Park and its Columbia Canal riverwalk.

The riverwalk connecting Riverfront Park down to the Gervais Street Bridge — which would carry foot traffic across to the Congaree River to the West Columbia and Cayce riverwalks — was severed when the Columbia Canal ruptured during the "Thousand Year Flood" of 2015. The exact details on how and when this smallest piece of the puzzle will get filled in remain up in the air.

On paper, the list of boxes left to check is daunting. But Dawson describes them with giddy enthusiasm.

He's as close to the dream as he's ever been.

"I think we're there," he said when asked about how close they are to making the 27-mile pedestrian amenity a reality, his excitement gaining steam as he explained why completing this project is so important to him.

"The key to this is to engage as many people as possible regardless of their fitness level, their age level or ethnicity or any other damn thing and get them out on the water," Dawson enthused. "They'll feel better, and it didn't cost them anything because it's a free public access. And you shouldn't have to have a boat, you shouldn't have to have a bicycle, you shouldn't have to have anything besides your feet and maybe a walker or a wheelchair or whatever."

## 10 MILES ALONG THE SALUDA

The Lexington Chamber got an update on progress for the biggest piece left to complete the unified greenway at its July 11 Business Over Breakfast meeting.

The project to extend the Saluda Riverwalk out to Lake Murray was announced last year. The current trail stretches from the Sanctuary

at Boyd Island in Columbia (near the Interstate 126 bridge across the Congaree River) to just shy of where I-26 crosses the Saluda River.

Mark Smyers — executive director of the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission, which has taken charge of the greenway project — told those in attendance that the Saluda Greenway is progressing through the design phase.

The greenway is being planned in three phases, progressing in order from the Lake Murray Dam. Smyers explained that they are currently flagging the center line in the third phase to determine where exactly the trail will go along that stretch. This final aspect of the design process should wrap within six months, he said.

"Probably a two-year construction timeline is what I'm told," he said of how long it will take to complete once they get started with the work. "It's not super complicated of a construction, but it is a long way to go."

When construction will begin remains up in the air, making it hard to say when the project will be complete.

"I would love to be able to confidently say, you know, give us three years, five years or something like that," Smyers said. "I don't know that I have that answer today because a lot of that is not in our control."

The closest point of the greenway to Lake Murray will exit on to Bush River Road just shy of the road's intersection with North Lake Drive. There will also be a parking lot at this trailhead, with an entrance off Bush River Road at the intersection with Old Selwood Terrace. The lot will have room for 100-plus vehicles.

"We could add more spots if we want to, but we don't want to," Smyers said. "We want to keep the trees, we want to keep some of that natural space."

The greenway will continue along Bush River Road past Dominion Energy's hydroelectric operation and then proceed down to banks of the

Saluda, where it will continue until it links up with the existing greenway running through Saluda Shoals Park.

In addition to finishing its design process, the third phase will bring with it two crucial challenges: crossing I-20 and I-26. Smyers said he and his team are working closely with DOT to figure out how the riverwalk and the existing bridges carrying the interstates over the Saluda will coexist.

All of this work is moving forward with the comfort of knowing the project is fully funded.

"The total scope of this is \$22 million, and we've been able to generate it all in a year," Smyers said of gathering the combination of local, state and federal funding that are making the greenway possible. "It speaks to the specialness of what's going on. And the heightened awareness and desire for more connection to nature, more opportunities for outdoor recreation. It was the right conversation at the right time, and the stars aligned and everybody saw it. It was the easiest process to walk through."



Kailee Kokes | Chronicle  
Saluda Riverwalk



## COLUMBIA CONNECTIONS

A good amount of progress has also been made on the other two connections to complete the unified greenway.

Like the extension of the Saluda Riverwalk, the bridge project to cross the Broad River is already funded. The effort is set to cost about \$5.8 million, with \$2.2 million going to install a series of paved walkways and boardwalks to extend up from the end of the Saluda Riverwalk to the point where the bridge is set to be installed. The remaining \$3.6 million will pay for the bridge.

The money is coming from Richland County and the Darnall W. and Susan F. Boyd Foundation, which paid to create a wildlife sanctuary with a winding trail and various other amenities on its namesake island at the Congaree end of the Saluda Riverwalk.

"What we're doing right now is we're permitting those structures to go into the federal waterway, over some wetlands, through cultural resources," Dawson with the River Alliance explained. "With luck, Lord willing and the creek don't rise, we'll be finished with that probably by late fall."

Federal approval is needed to build and install the bridge across the river, while the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has to sign off on installing the path through the wetlands. Dawson added that archaeologists will be brought in to assess, work around and possibly incorporate any cultural artifacts that are unearthed as they plan and construct the trail extension.

Completing the permitting process will give a better idea of how long construction of the bridge and connecting walkway will take to complete, as work will only be allowable and doable during certain times of the year, based on a variety of factors, from wildlife cycles to water levels. Once those parameters are determined, the project can be bid out.

The next steps to reconnect the Columbia Canal riverwalk down to the Gervais Street Bridge are more nebulous.

The City of Columbia is making headway on its fix to the canal riverwalk, where a wooden boardwalk, overlook and access ramp need to be repaired, said Assistant City Manager Clint Shealy with Columbia Water.

"The design for the repairs is complete, and the methodology for repairs is currently under review by FEMA," he said, adding that the anticipated cost of \$250,000 is anticipated to be funded through agency's Public Assistance Program.

"Currently, the area is closed for public access due to the flood damaged sections, but also to limit access to the Dominion Coal Tar Removal Project."

That project is cleaning up the toxic substance discovered on the bottom of the Congaree River near downtown Columbia, which was left behind by a manufactured gas plant that operated along the river through the first half of the 20th century.

"We anticipate the Coal Tar project to last through October of 2024, and then repairs to the damaged sections will commence and will take from four to six months to complete. Of course, this schedule is subject to change."

Dawson and the River Alliance aren't necessarily waiting on the City of Columbia's fix to reconnect the riverwalk.

They're pursuing a separate plan to build a walkway connecting the complex near the Gervais Street Bridge that includes the S.C. State Museum, EdVenture Children's Museum, and the S.C. Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum to Canalside, an apartment complex that attaches to Riverfront Park, on the downtown side of the canal.

As with the Saluda Riverwalk extension, DOT permissions would be required for this project, as the path would need to cross Klapman Boulevard/S.C. Highway 12, most likely by going under the bridge that carries the road across the Congaree River. There would also need to be additional sidewalks installed around Canalside to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as the apartments' current connection to the park consists of a large staircase.

But while there are hurdles, Dawson sees big upsides for the connection from the museums to the apartments. He said it would tie in the museums better to the pedestrian traffic along the riverwalk and added that if both Columbia Canal connections are completed, they would compliment each other well, with one being a natural fit for people walking between downtown Columbia river amenities and the other suiting the needs of bikers and hikers looking to take advantage of the full greenway.

## BIG IMPACT

Excitement around what the Midlands would have if all three connections are completed abounds.

At the Lexington Chamber meeting, Smyers dreamed beyond the greenway to a potential walking bridge over N Lake Drive/S.C. Highway 6 to make it easier for people to walk between the greenway and the walking path across the Lake Murray Dam.

"We've got a tremendous opportunity for a pedestrian bridge here that could be just special, a great, beautiful area for our community to kind of experience something very, very unique," he said. "A pedestrian bridge ... right at the lake. It could be iconic."

Miriam Atria, president and CEO of the Capital City/Lake Murray Regional Tourism Board, said there will be a need for such a safe connection across the busy road, but that didn't tamper her excitement.

"There's no question that [it will] generate a lot of activity," she said, mentioning that in its efforts to promote Midlands tourism, it frequently finds itself competing against the Greenville area, with its downtown Falls Park along the Reedy River and popular Swamp Rabbit Trail, a 22-mile pedestrian route that connects the city to nearby Traveler's Rest.

"We've been selling this region for 40-some years, and we are a waterway region," Atria continued. "With all the miles of shoreline on the rivers, and then add to that Lake Murray, it's a great connection. So we're excited about it. We're going to support it and do anything we can to assist."

Elise Partin is the mayor of Cayce, which would see its riverwalk and Timmerman Trail connected at the other end of the 27-mile walkway.

She's enthusiastic about the area's greenways, having invited the Chronicle to take a bike ride along Cayce's trails last fall.

During that trip, she emphasized that the city isn't dependent on the trail being fully connected to draw visitors, but they're excited about how it could emphasize what the city already has to offer.

West Columbia and Cayce have seen arts and nightlife districts grow in recent years near connections to their interconnected riverwalk.

West Columbia now has a robust assembly of restaurants, bars and other businesses neighboring the city's Riverwalk Amphitheater, where the Gervais Street Bridge would connect the Columbia side of the trail to the other side of the river.

In Cayce, the River Arts District the city has been fostering along State Street already features Dialed Bicycles Repair & Service (which rents bikes and lent the Chronicle its ride for last fall's excursion) along with a coffee shop, multiple restaurants and galleries, and a distillery, among other businesses.

As with West Columbia, a trailhead for Cayce's stretch of riverwalk connects directly into the heart of the arts district.

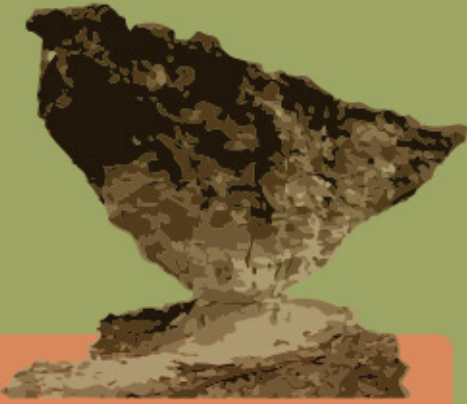
"We just really focus on what we have here and shining a light on that," Partin said, using the Swamp Rabbit Trail as an example. "And so as we do that, then it makes it a great connection to that trail and a great place to end up. My family and I have rented bikes in Greenville, done the bike up to Travelers Rest. There's this creperie up there that's like a cake — 'If we keep going, we're gonna make it to the creperie.'"

"You wouldn't think you could do that normally," she continued. "I would not go, 'Oh, I can go ride 20 miles.' And yet, if you kind of have a fun stop along the way, a fun destination to get to, then it kind of pulls you in. You're like, 'Look how much I can move and I feel good and I had a great day.' The tourism aspect of it is absolutely fun and amazing."



# TAKE A HIKE!

## HIKING AND WALKING TRAILS NEAR AND AROUND LAKE MURRAY



### PEACHTREE ROCK H.P.

Length: Roughly 7.5  
Type: Network  
Difficulty: Easy

### FOURTEEN MILE CREEK TRAIL

Length: 1.7 miles  
Type: Round Trip  
Difficulty: Easy



### SHEALY'S POND H.P.

Length: 1.4 Miles  
Type: Round Trip  
Difficulty: Easy

### CONGAREE CREEK H.P.

Length: 2.7 Miles  
Type: Loop  
Difficulty: Moderate

### CAYCE/WECO RIVERWALK

Length: 8 Miles  
Type: One Way/ Round Trip  
Difficulty: Easy

### GIBSON POND PARK

Length: 0.4 miles  
Type: Loop  
Difficulty: Easy

### BILLY DREHER NATURE TRAIL

Length: 0.3 Miles  
Type: Loop  
Difficulty: Easy



### LITTLE GAP TRAIL

Length: 2.1 Miles  
Type: Round Trip  
Difficulty: Moderate



### HARBISON STATE FOREST

Length: 0.5-5 miles  
Type: Network  
Difficulty: Easy to Difficult

### PALMETTO TRAIL

#### NEWBERRY PASSAGE

Length: 10.7  
Type: Oneway  
Difficulty: Easy



#### PEAK TO PROSPERITY

Length: 10.8 Miles  
Type: Normal  
Difficulty: Easy

#### LYNCH'S WOODS PASSAGE

Length: 4.9 Miles  
Type: Network  
Difficulty: Easy

#### SALUDA SHOALS PARK

Length: 10 Miles  
Type: Network  
Difficulty: Moderate

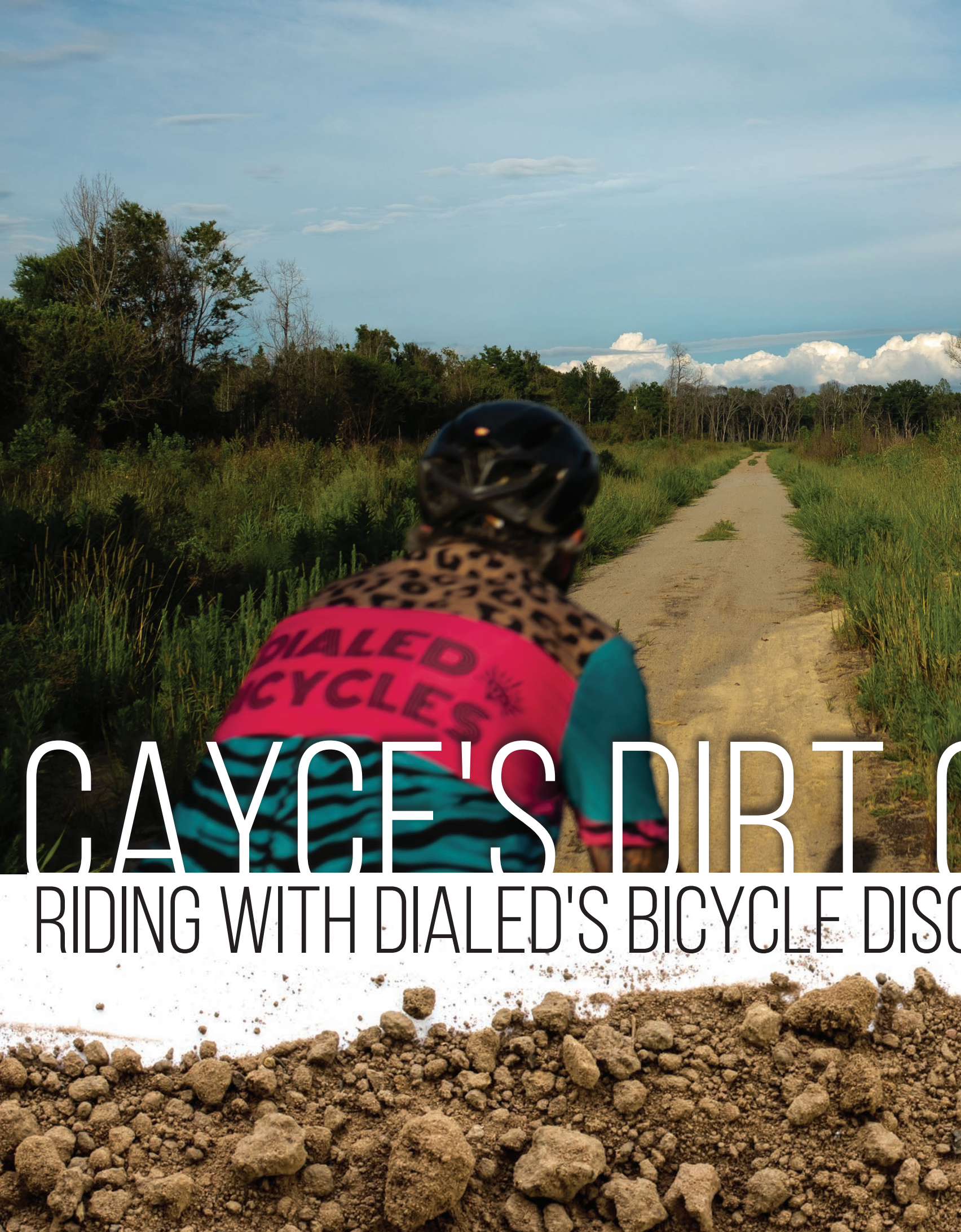


#### GILBERT COMMUNITY PARK

Length: 0.8 Miles  
Type: Network  
Difficulty: Easy

★ H.P. (Heritage Preserve)





# CAYCE'S DIRT

RIDING WITH DIALED'S BICYCLE DISC





# CHURCH

# SCIPLES

Words and Photos by Thomas Hammond

At the corner of State and Lexington in the City of Cayce, a group of fanatics gather most Saturday evenings.

They follow the call of human-powered freedom to Dialed Bicycles where Jayson Busbee sells and repairs bikes. In a world filled with comfort and convenience, not to mention motorized transportation, it may seem heretical to eschew the easy life after a full week of work. I came to Cayce to figure out what's up.

I got a text from Ryan Voyles, the shop foreman for a local auto dealer and friend of mine since middle school: "Riding tonight?"

I quickly responded, "Yessir!"

Much like the daily storms that brew on a typical July day in the south, the group text began to gain more energy the deeper into the afternoon we got. Folks started filtering into Busbee's workshop once the ride was confirmed.

Voyles was posted up by the front counter. He naturally fits the role of Dialed's official unofficial mascot and team cheerleader, encouraging anyone he possibly can to get on a bike and ride with him. He is a bit of a social anarchist. Living completely in the moment, he thrives on group activities. He's constantly pushing himself and everyone else around him to do their best and have a great time doing it.

We rolled out around 6 p.m., just in time for the seasonal parade of summer thunderheads bathed in Southern sunset fire. The next few hours flew by like a joyful blur of sweat and emotion.

The icing on the cake was a stop at Samer's Burrito Express off U.S. Highway 321, a gas station/taqueria that caters to Mexican tastes. It may be the best burrito I've had outside of Mexico. Perched on a sandy high point in the county, the snack oasis offers stunning views of downtown Columbia and the surrounding region.

As physically spent as I am riding back into downtown Cayce that night, the idea of getting back in my car to go home is a bit deflating. I should have just rode my bike the whole way.

"It's addictive," Busbee said, chatting with Lakeside in his workshop on a weekday afternoon.

Dialed Bicycle Company opened its doors in the summer 2020 after a few years operating as a mobile bike clinic. Growing up in Florida, Busbee first got attracted to cycling by way of BMX. He spent a few years on the BMX circuit before following family connections to Columbia. The high pandemic proved to be a good time to start a full-service bicycle shop, as demand for living life outside was on the rise.

Busbee said it was David King, Cola Town Bike Collective





board president, who first coined the term "Dirt Church." King can't remember if that's true or not, but said the analogy is appropriate. The rides are communal, ritualistic and empowering – much like religious worship.

The Saturday rides started simply as an excuse to get together with friends and tool around the streets and trails of the Cayce/West Columbia river district. But as robust as the bike/pedestrian infrastructure is west of the Congaree river, it quickly proved inadequate for this crowd. Dirt Church is the inevitable evolution of the restless soul on two wheels, driven to better oneself and bring everyone else along with them.

The crew began venturing further outside of Cayce, developing a series of routes throughout the southeast portion of Lexington County that challenge and inspire. A typical ride covers around 30 miles of paved and unpaved paths. It traverses an intriguing juxtaposition of dispersed working class settlements, gated estates, and industry. Regular routes are christened with names like "Nana's Loop," "Raptor Grass" and "Swamp Church".

One afternoon, Voyles brought a new recruit to Dialed for an impromptu after work ride.

"This is the bike boss," he said, pointing to Busbee.

Whatever authority he commands was never chosen but earned through years of obsessive experience. He carries himself more as a focal point for fun than an authority.

"It's the communities, it's the camaraderie, it's all of that" Busbee said, reflecting on his experience in the cycling world before Voyles arrives adding to that community.

Riding bikes is the first form of freedom most kids experience. The mechanical advantage of the bicycle allows the formerly bi-pedal humanoid to cover more ground than they could on foot, but not so fast that they lose connection to the world around them.

"There's things in Columbia I don't think I would have seen if I hadn't been on a bike," Busbee reflected, wrenching on a customer's rig.

Dirt Church is for everyone. It's a big tent for the revival of all souls regardless of identity. All sizes, shapes, and creeds are welcome so long as you can ride a bike. Even if you can't quite keep pace the whole time, the peloton never leaves anyone behind. We start and end mostly together.







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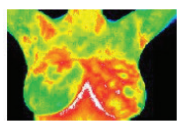
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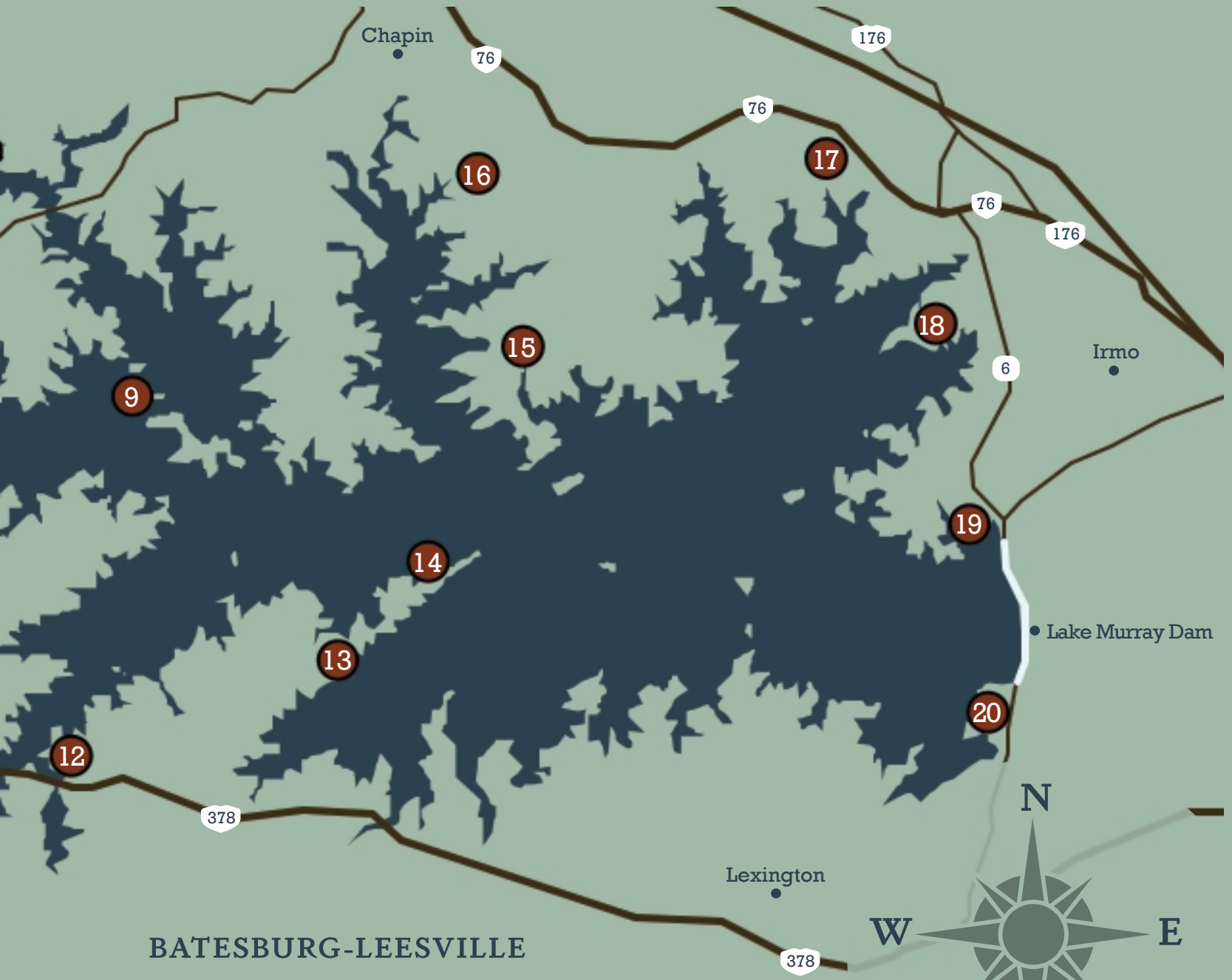
## PROSPERITY

- 2** Black's Bridge  
3660 Prosperity Hwy
- 8** Buffalo Creek Marina  
849 Marina Way
- 9** Billy Dreher Island Ramp  
224 Sassafras Lane
- 10** Crayne's Landing  
26 Crayne's Loop

## LEESVILLE

- 4** Big Mans Marina  
125 Big Mans Road
- 5** River Bend Boat Ramp  
734 Riverbend Point
- 6** Lake Murray Shores Boat Ramp  
1 Robbins Street
- 7** Acapulco USA  
960 Rock North Creek Road
- 11** Hollow Creek Marina  
3340 Hwy 378
- 12** Southshore Marina  
3072 Hwy 378





### BATESBURG-LEESVILLE

- 3** Lake Murray Estates Boat Ramp  
394 Ruby Riser Road

### CHAPIN

- 15** Hilton Recreation Area Cove Launch Court
- 16** Eptings Landing  
433 Eptings Camp Road

### IRMO

- 17** Shealy's Landing  
320 Shadowood Drive

### LEXINGTON

- 20** Jake's Landing  
220 Jakes Landing Road

### COLUMBIA

- 18** Rocky Point Boat Ramp  
411 Rocky Point Drive
- 19** Lake Murray Dam Ramp  
6 SC-6

### GILBERT

- 14** Larry Koon Landing  
1523 Shull Avenue
- 13** Public Boat Ramp  
1523 Shull Avenue





# Open Fields

**A pair of Midlands wineries seek to make the culture accessible**

Words and Photos By Emily Okon



When you think of a winery, the chances you think of a winery in South Carolina are slim to none. But just off Interstate 26 in Newberry, there's a spot hidden behind cow pastures and lengths of farmland.

There sits Enoree River Winery, a place that's spent its entire existence building a community of friends and family while teaching about the culture of wine.

Enoree opened its doors in 2005 when it planted nearly 800 vines that would grow into muscadine and black Spanish grapes.

"We've pounded every post and we've done everything," said Laura LeBarre, co-owner of the winery. "It was a cow pasture when it first started and we spent hours and hours just cutting through the underbrush, clearing it out. We've just done a lot of work to make this place what it is."

Laura owns the winery with her husband Richard LeBarre. When talking about their roles in the winery Richard jokingly commented that his wife was the brains of the operation.

"I'm actually not a wine person funny enough," Richard said. "I let her do the tasting, it's her thing."

The LeBarre family took "building from the ground up" quite literally. The structure that stands on the 18 acres of land didn't appear there until 2010.

While the wine-making process at Enoree is entirely underground, at one point that was all that existed.

"We did everything from scratch little by little," Laura said. "Everything that you see is from scratch."

When seeking the perfect place to build their business and home, their love for the countryside came up in conversations frequently.

"It's so peaceful when you sit out here this time of year," Laura said. "Especially when all the leaves turn green and everything's growing. Sitting outside in a rocking chair with birds flying by and the wind whipping through the vines, it's just so peaceful."

And peaceful it is. The vineyard takes up nearly eight acres of land with hundreds of vines planted. The fruits and flowers are treats for the bumblebees that find their homes on the vineyard floor.

From weddings to bachelorette parties to concerts on Sundays, the vineyard has become a permanent structure in the entertainment culture in Newberry.

Enoree isn't the only vineyard in the Midlands, though. About 40 miles away is Mercer House Winery, the only other winery with a vineyard to sit near the lakeside of Lake Murray.

Mercer opened its doors in 2013 when owner Shannon Mercer retired from the Navy.

Before the winery, there was music and photography to help him pass the time, but when his hearing got bad and he tired of photography, he set his sights on making wine.

"I guess there's an artist in me," Mercer said. "I wanted to create, but I also wanted to be technical with it, you know? I did a lot of chemistry and analysis and stuff like that when I was in the photo business and well wine is really the same thing as photochemistry. It's different components when blended give you a certain result whether it's an image or a unique taste with alcohol."

## MAKING THE WINE

The process of making wine hasn't changed since the beverage first became popular in ancient times. It's simply been perfected and made easier to do.

Wine can be made at home in your kitchen without the process changing too much.

The process begins with a single grape that is harvested and then destemmed. From there the grapes are crushed and put into a fermentation tank.

The fermenting process is the act of converting sugar into alcohol which will then create a dry wine. If a winemaker chooses to add sugar to





the batch it's called chaptalization.

The wine then goes through another fermentation process that lowers the acidity and makes it more pleasant to the palette. The next step is clarification, which removes any solids or large particles and then the wine is ready to be bottled or aged.

Despite what may be known about wine, it does not need to be aged for decades. A bottle can be ready to drink in nearly a year.

"The myth about how wine gets better over time ... that's just marketing," Mercer commented. "It's not a truth, you know? We'll make no wine before it's time. There should be no suggestion that, you know if you hold onto it for five years that it'll be better."

Most of the wines at both Enoree and Mercer House are aged for about a year and a half.

At Enoree, Laura takes the role of head winemaker, while her husband handles the business side of things.

"Many years ago, I did a lot of traveling in the Southeast, and I found that the interstate goes from one winery to another winery," said LeBarre. "I got interested in the business aspect of it, you can go to wineries off the beaten path and there are people. So I thought, okay, there's something to this business."

Richard first discovered the culture of wineries when traveling for work. He found it was easy to travel from winery to winery all the while staying on the same interstate. Laura was on board when her husband approached her with the idea of opening one of their own.

Now, as a retired teacher, she tastes and makes wine for a living.

## TEARING DOWN THE BARRIER TO ENTRY

There's no doubt in anyone's mind that there's a barrier to entry into the wine world. Whether you're drinking for flavor or for the culture, the world of wine can seem intense to the uninitiated.

Historians believe wine first appeared in what is now modern China in approximately 7000 B.C. The idea of fermenting grapes and fruits traveled through time, appearing in religious literature and ancient mythology.

And while winery culture is still growing in the Carolinas, it's a drink with a rich and deep history that's being embraced by the Mercers and LeBarres alike.

"We want to make people feel comfortable coming in here and enjoying it and educating them a little bit about what our wines are," Laura said. "We're not pretentious or anything. We try to make sure everybody has a good time. We're not snobby we're just down to Earth people."

Both Enoree and Mercer make it a mission to connect everyone to the adventures of trying different types of wines.

Each winery offers wine tastings that go through a catalog of wines being made by each location. Tastes such as jalapeno blueberry, pineapple riesling and key lime pie can be enjoyed on the same visit.

Tastings are offered in a space where bartenders can describe each smell and tasting note to guests, allowing for a much more personalized experience than what can be found in larger locations.

"When we started, we wanted to make sure people felt comfortable because a lot of times you go to wineries and there's no place to sit," Richard said. "You've got to stand at the bar to drink and we decided that we wanted people to enjoy it and, you know, be able to relax and have a good time."

Mercer is on the same page. The moment someone steps foot onto the property, they can feel the homey environment that creates a sense of belonging.

"I shut down the first half of the year, did some improvements, like building these decks, patios and gardens and whatnot," Mercer said. I tried to make the place look and feel a little more friendly."

His winery is snuggled away near Highway 378 in Lexington County. The property evokes a Southern charm that encourages guests to sit and stay awhile.

And the wine isn't your typical chardonnay or cabernet, instead, Mercer has chosen to create unique products that are only available once in a lifetime.

His vineyard staple is an apple pie wine. The idea came from experimenting with his favorite tasting notes – sweet, sweet and sweeter. "The idea is to create blends, and that opens up the diversity greatly," Mercer said.

One of his notable wines was a bloody mary wine, inspired by people walking around an early morning farmers market but having nothing to quench their thirst.

"I'd go to Soda City Market and I'm ready to pour at eight o'clock. People would come up going, 'It's a little early for wine' and I'm like, well what would people drink?" Mercer said. "I figured... if you wanted a morning drink, you thought Bloody Mary."

And he did just that, he set about fermenting tomatoes and creating a flavor so unique that a bloody mary cocktail could be enjoyed in a glass of wine.

"I make wine for people that don't know they like wine," Mercer said.

Education has played a major part in what both Enoree River and Mercer do. Each tasting is accommodated by a lesson in not just wine history, but also the history that each winemaker has in the craft.

"I put my own twist on the wine. I want the wine to be my version of the story," Mercer said.





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# EVERS SERVE COURTS DURING HOLIDAY

## Pickleball popularity takes over the Midlands

Words and Photos by Elijah Campbell

It's one of the world's fastest growing sports, and it's quickly taken over the Midlands. It's a sport that's been described by some as a combination of tennis, ping-pong and badminton.

It's called pickleball and according to pickleheads.com, it's played by over 36.5 million people nationwide. Since the pandemic, the sport has become a popular hobby across the country, and the Midlands is the perfect example of the game's growth, with an increasing wealth of opportunities to play and take part in the craze.

The local demand is so high that new courts have popped up all over, with pickleball dedicated facilities being built and more public spaces starting to accommodate to make space for the game.

So what exactly makes this seemingly obscure sport become such a popular local activity?

For someone like Edwin Gerace, who has become an ambassador for the sport in Lexington County, Pickleball was the perfect substitute for

another similar sport he played his entire life.

"So I've always played tennis," Gerace said. "My parents played, my brother played at Appalachian State competitively so we've always been a tennis family and I think it was right around COVID time, somebody said I should play pickleball so I went on Amazon and bought a wooden paddle out of China or something. They said 'If you want to play this game, you'll need a better paddle than that.' I mean, it was like plywood with duct tape or something. But I enjoyed it. You know, once you get over 50, your knees start to hurt so it's less running ... I fell in love with it."

Fellow Lexington County pickleball ambassador Carlos Anrrich, who now provides free individual pickleball lessons for those wanting to learn the game, fell in love with the sport – and sees others doing the same – because of its natural inclusiveness and social elements.

"There's all kinds of motivations but I think one of the main common themes I see is socialization," Anrrich said. "It's a sport where a 10-year-old can play with a 70-year-old and still be fun. It's not super hard in terms of playing. It's kind of like backyard badminton. Not a lot of movement but then you also get these younger people getting into it like at USC. There's a lot of USC students I see on the courts and they play hard. At first people thought it was a slow sport. I tell people it's a good sport for



people to play and pick up easily but it's a hard sport to master."

Anrrich has experienced this social element extending to families and introducing them to the sport which has helped the game grow to the levels of popularity we have seen in recent years.

"I have several people that had grandma starting to play and now she got her children and she got her grandchildren to play," Anrrich said.

The sport has been used not only to bring these families together but to bring larger communities together. There have recently been special olympics tournaments played, as well as adult and kids tournaments and charity events like the adaptive pickleball event hosted by Angela Rodriguez from the SC Spinal Cord Injury Association.

The sport's rising popularity has created a higher demand for courts in the area. The Lexington SC Pickleball facebook page alone has grown from 700 to 1,200 members in the last few months, while the group Pickleball Group of the Midlands, SC is up to 1,500 members.

As of now, the Cayce Tennis Center has four permanent courts and four temporary courts with lights, while the Lexington Tennis Center has eight permanent courts with lights and there are multiple pending additions to these facilities as well.

One of those pending additions is in Cayce. The city got approved for a grant that would open 16 new public courts, which would make it one of the largest public pickleball facilities in South Carolina.

The options don't end there. Newberry has a court at the city's Recreation Center, with the city trumpeting it on social media recently on Aug. 8 (National Pickleball Day), and the pickleball website Pickleheads lists 16 popular places to play the sport in the Columbia area.

One of the more anticipated pickleball-specific facilities coming to the area in the near future is 24 Hour Pickleball. The company has several locations throughout North and South Carolina and expects their Lexington location to be ready in the fall of 2023.

On the surface, a pickleball facility that is open 24 hours a day might seem excessive, but with there being overflow at most public facilities and with many other public facility extensions still pending, 24 Hour Pickleball

looks to cash in on the increasingly high demand for courts and keep people from having to wait until a court is open to play.

"We decided to put one here in Lexington because going to the local courts, the government courts, and they'll have right now at LCTC eight dedicated courts just for pickleball and you go on the open play days on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays and every one of the courts will be full with four people on it plus there will be 20 to 30 people waiting to get on the courts," 24 Hour Pickleball Managing Partner Dan Handford said. "I think what's happening right now is people are getting frustrated with how busy those courts are and they're losing interest in wanting to go play because most of the time they're sitting there waiting for a court."

Handford said the facility will have eight courts that will be well separated so that people aren't chasing balls into other courts and disrupting other games, an occurrence he says happens frequently at some other public facilities. Another interesting angle that Handford and 24 Hour Pickleball are looking to introduce is the enhancement of the social element that pickleball presents.

"We're also putting a place in there for the social space but also a place in there for locker rooms, showers and bathrooms and things like that and make it be more of a kind of country club style because it's a members only facility," Handford added. "But we'll open it up to some non-members when we do tournaments and things like that."

"The goal for us is to create this facility as a proof of concept and then also make it more of a hub and spoke model," he added. "We have some other outdoor courts across the city but then you have the main hub here which will have the indoor courts and as the demand increases, we can build out more indoor courts."

The facility was originally scheduled to open in June, but due to some supply chain issues regarding the air conditioning unit, construction was delayed, Handford explained.

He said there are no more delays anticipated and the hop is to be open in October or November.

Handford said that 24 Hour Pickleball already has more than 1,000 people on the waiting list for club membership.

Elijah Campbell | Chronicle  
Pickleball courts at Cayce  
Tennis Center





# Reggae





# Reggaetronic

Lake Murray Music Festival hopes to expand to other markets

Words by Jordan Lawrence | Photos by Kailee Kokes

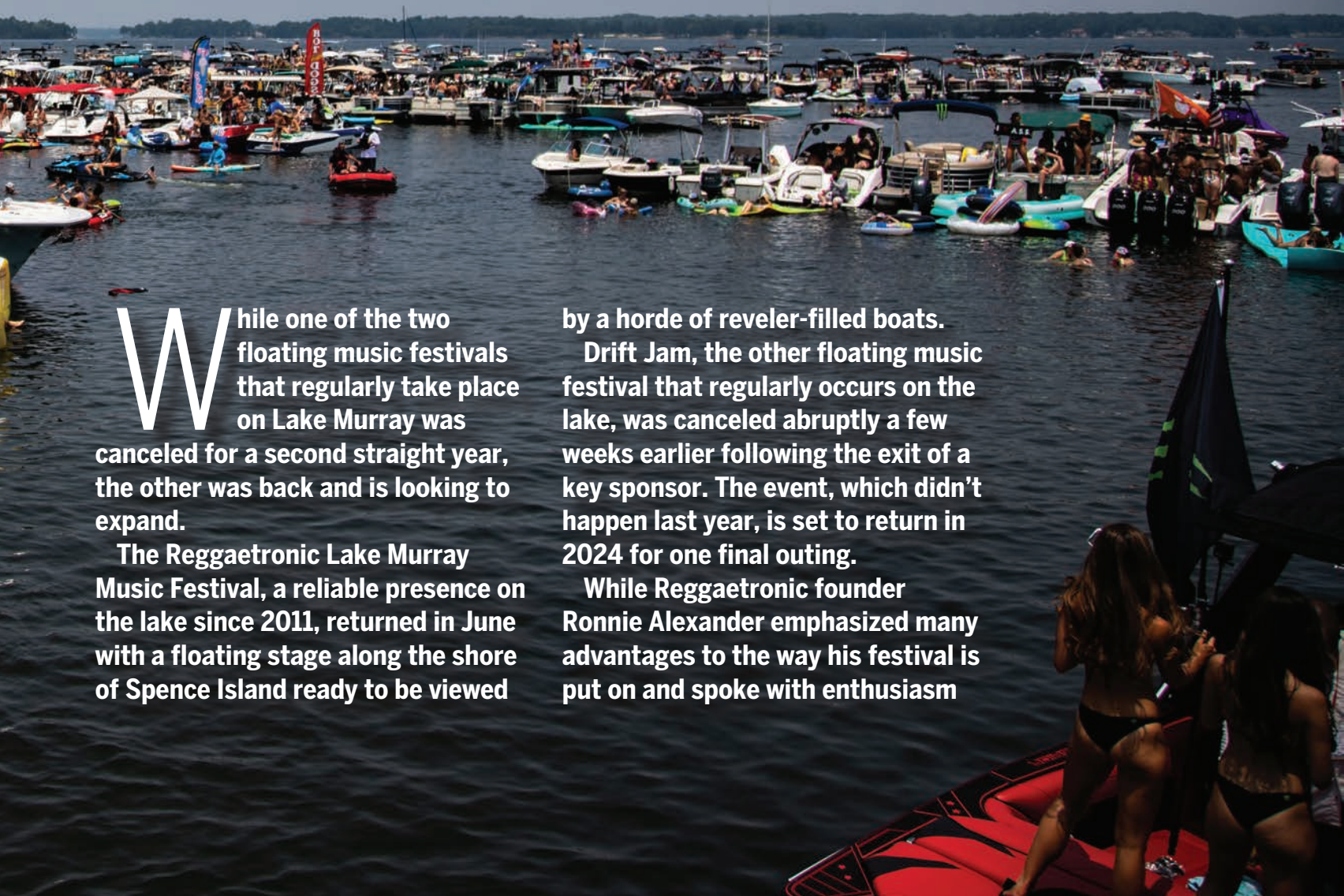
**W**hile one of the two floating music festivals that regularly take place on Lake Murray was canceled for a second straight year, the other was back and is looking to expand.

The Reggaetronic Lake Murray Music Festival, a reliable presence on the lake since 2011, returned in June with a floating stage along the shore of Spence Island ready to be viewed

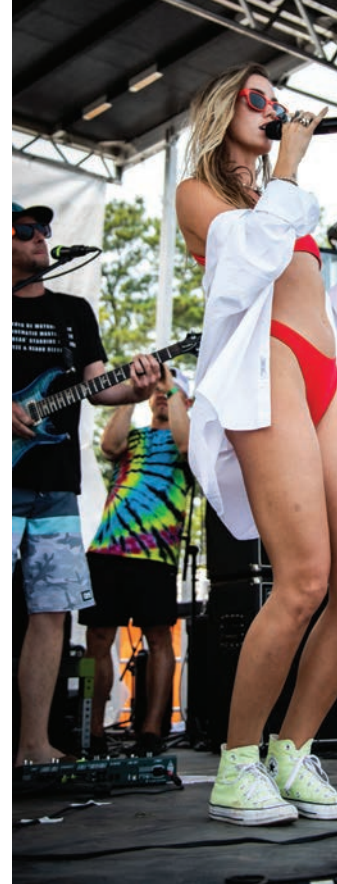
by a horde of reveler-filled boats.

Drift Jam, the other floating music festival that regularly occurs on the lake, was canceled abruptly a few weeks earlier following the exit of a key sponsor. The event, which didn't happen last year, is set to return in 2024 for one final outing.

While Reggaetronic founder Ronnie Alexander emphasized many advantages to the way his festival is put on and spoke with enthusiasm







about future plans, he acknowledged that putting on a music festival on a lake isn't without challenges.

"It's a logistical nightmare," he said, explaining that without the festival's bigger sponsors getting on board, it likely would have fizzled some time ago. "We have been searching for land and water around the lake area, but being in the middle of, I guess more of a conservative bible belt area, you know, no one really wants to let us use their land."

Relegated strictly to the water, Reggaetronic can't access many of the typical sources of revenue available to festivals — namely, ticket, food and beverage sales.

The organizers compensate by finding sponsors and selling a limited

number of VIP spots for people to park their boats in comfort closer to the stage, but it's still a difficult equation to balance.

Despite these challenges, they keep making it work. The festival donates its surplus revenue to the Shriners Hospitals for Children, with Alexander reporting that the festival averages about a \$13,000 donation each year.

And now they're looking to expand, with the founder giving early details about plans to start sister festivals in Myrtle Beach and Charleston. The Myrtle Beach event would take the form of a music festival out on the sandy beach. Meanwhile, the Charleston event would hopefully (finally) provide the sort of land/water hybrid Reggaetronic has sought on the lake, with organizers setting up in Riverfront Park so that attendees could watch from







Kailee Kokes | Chronicle  
Reggaetronic Lake Murray Music Festival 2023

the lawn or the river.

These future plans don't represent a push to get away from Lake Murray. Alexander said the festival is increasingly able to get routing dates from national acts (shows where artists add a date in the middle of an already planned tour at a significantly lower price point for the promoter than if they were traveling out specifically for their event). The festival founder reasoned that this has to do with Reggaetronic's own name growing and the Midlands continuing to draw bigger names to Columbia rooms like Colonial Life Arena and The Senate.

This year's lineup included Artikal Sound System, MADDS, Of Good Nature, Lefty at the Washout, and Mystic Vibrations.

And while mounting the festival on water presents many of Reggaetronic's biggest challenges — such as having to find a new barge while the one the festival typically uses sits in the Saluda River helping with interstate construction efforts to rework "Malfunction Junction" — taking place on the lake makes the event stand out.

Being out on the water allows organizers to throw a midday outdoor event at a time on the Midlands calendar that is mostly too hot to put on such a festival otherwise.

"College kids really aren't our target markets," Alexander said. "They probably don't have boats. Our demographic really ranges from young professionals to retirees. It does give them something to do over the







# GROOVES ON THE MOVE!

## LEXINGTON RECORD STORE SPINS TOWARD A NEW CHAPTER

Words and Photos by Jordan Lawrence

**D**owntown Lexington's only record store will soon be an online-only business, but the owner hopes to find another location in town in the near future.

Kingsley Waring — better known as DJ Kingpin (AKA The Villain of Vinyl), a longtime steward of the Midlands hip-hop scene — opened Turntable City at 202 A W Main St. in 2017, moving into a building just down the street from the Icehouse Amphitheater and the town's recently resurgent dining and nightlife district that also houses M Gallery Interiors.

But the time has come to close up the cramped shop with crates of vinyl records taking up a large amount of the available floor space, with Waring temporarily giving up having a brick-and-mortar at the end of July to seek a more conducive space.

Turntable City's hours for the remainder of the month are 4-8 p.m. Wednesday-Friday and 12-6 p.m. on Saturday. Online sales will continue at [turntable-city.com](http://turntable-city.com).

The Chronicle caught up with Waring to chat about Turntable City's future. The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

**The Chronicle: You say in your announcement that you've outgrown your current space. How much bigger do you feel like you need? What are you looking to add to the store that you can't do currently?**

**Kingsley Waring:** Our current place is STUFFED. Our space is definitely a fantastic, cozy and inviting spot, but we definitely feel the walls closing in. We have records, CDs and cassettes everywhere. We stock all genres of music, but we have only been able to supply ample space for our rock, soul and hip-hop Sections. Our other sections (country, gospel, classical, reggae, and more) are all available, but depending on how many people are in the shop, this can definitely become a task to accommodate our space. We have records/CDs/tapes under tables, posters and merchandise in plastic bins. A newer place about double (or even triple our size) will definitely open up our collection to the record buying mass, but would also allow ample space for customers to shop and not feel like they have to play musical chairs just to check out a section. We would also love to have a dedicated space to take in, clean, price, and photograph all the exciting items our customers bring in and give to us.

Having more space will not only allow us to spread our wings, but also would allow us to have way more in-store music performances. Since day one, we have prided ourselves on supporting the music of artists here in the Midlands. We would ultimately love to have a soundstage and floor space to be able to accommodate bands and artists of all sizes.

**With the new location, are you looking at keeping it in Lexington? What are your priorities for the space as far as where you want it located?**

Yeah, Lexington is our home and we are definitely keeping it in town. We definitely need our new space in a well-traveled, well-maintained area. There are a few sweet spots located in Lexington that would serve us very well. We are not letting that cat out of the bag just yet. Ample parking is a must. Currently, we share parking with a slew of other businesses, and parking has definitely been an issue at times. Not to mention the lack of parking near and around the Icehouse Amphitheater. A dedicated parking lot for Turntable City customers is a great reason to expand.

**You're keeping up the online sales. How big a part of the business happens online? What are you able to do with the online side of the operation that you can't do within the store?**

Online sales have been fantastic for us. We have had customers all across



the U.S. and have even accommodated international orders as far as Japan, the U.K., South Africa and more. Especially since the pandemic, our online sales have remained consistent and have kept us afloat. Of course, face to face is always the best way to run a record store, but as Amazon continues to prove, people want what they want from the comfort of their homes, even if their home is 300 miles away, and we just want to make sure we keep a foot in that race.

**You've made it five years as a record store on Main Street in Lexington. How hard has that been to pull off? It doesn't seem like it would be an automatically booming market for a local independent record shop.**

It's definitely been a blessing. I will say that Main Street in Lexington is definitely picking up. It has a long way to go. More parking, family restaurants and adult hangouts are definite musts in the near future to really make a difference. We definitely don't need any more lawyer offices or mattress stores. I truly hate that this move has to happen, but as we both know, business is business. I still get customers weekly coming in saying that they had no idea that we have been here. I'm definitely gonna miss that surprise on their faces as they walk in.

Main Street needs a lot more flavor in terms of the shops that it supports, but we are thankful just to be here at the ground floor of that growth. In the heart of Lexington, on Main Street to be exact, a record store, not to mention a Black-owned record store existed. That's one thing that can never be diminished, excluded or forgotten.



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