

# People

## Giving Back With Music

### Dick Barnes Becoming Popular Overseas

By Mike Barnhardt  
Davie County Enterprise Record

ADVANCE - Dick Barnes remembers well the day that Minnie Pearl picked him up and sat him on a stool.

He was 6, and too small to reach the microphone.

That was some 58 years ago, and Barnes is still singing.

One of 12 children from a gospel singing family, Barnes and wife Carol moved to Davie County from Winston-Salem 15 years ago, after a career in the credit business and as a state legislator.

His current release, "North Carolina ... The Place To Be," has maintained spots in the Top 20 independent international charts for months. Another song, "Booze It & Lost It," also received a good bit of publicity.

Although retired from work, other than a little consulting here and there, Barnes is spending more time with his lifelong hobby - music.

The songs he sings are mostly original, ones that describe life experiences. He's played rock and roll, country, bluegrass and more. He's played with Jerry Lee Lewis, and as a backup harmonist with The Kingsmen. He had a "Sha Na Na" impersonation band, and has been active with the Shriners.

Even while a legislator, he played music, forming a rock band that received national publicity.

"Every song I start to write, I think it's going to be the best ... and when I get it written ... I have another idea ... and this next one is going to be better than the last one.

"It's a great hobby and I enjoy sharing it. I write about true experiences in life, some humorous, some serious, sort of like Tom T. Hall. Most are experiences I've encountered or my friends have encountered.

"I have a tremendous desire to share my music, and in this case, with the rest of the world."

Barnes checks daily on the international charts, where he keeps climbing toward the top. The North Carolina song is "red hot," he said.

"This is one of my dreams. I've had a very full and rewarding life. I've tried to give back. I want people to remember that one guy took time to give something back. My music is one of the ways I can do that."

While checking those international charts, he was surprised to see one website featuring him as "artist of the week."

"I was just thrilled to death. They made me artist of the week." He receives 60-70 emails a week about his music.

His CDs are available through [www.DickBarnes.net](http://www.DickBarnes.net).

Barnes says moving to Davie County is one of the best things he has done. He loves playing music at the chicken stews and barbecues here, and learns from every musician he shares a microphone with.

"I hope we can continue this tradition in Davie County," Barnes said. "This area is known for great musicians.

"I love Davie County. I love our traditions and I hope we don't forget from which we came. We can be progressive and still maintain the integrity of the traditions."



Dick Barnes goes through papers showing the rise on the international Indie charts of his song, "North Carolina ... The Place To Be."



That's Dick Barnes on the right with the "Baby Barnes," which also includes sisters Charlotte, Colleen and Patricia, and brother Danny with Rev. Buff.



Dick Barnes pours his heart into one of his original songs. - Photos by Robin Snow



Barnes: "When I started singing, my family had two gospel quartets."



Barnes practices in the basement of his home in Advance