

Retireze Life e-Magazine

The Road To A Comfortable Retirement Needs A Roadmap – You Need A Plan

How Should America's Best Cities Be Calculated?

We constantly look at how others rate places to live. The editors of *Money Magazine* came up with an interesting wrinkle in their December 2002 issue, entitled "The Popularity Contest." Although *Money's* rankings were based on only two factors -- median household income and average home price - - the resultant rankings are intriguing.



We also like the formula they use -- computing the ratio of average home price to median HH income. For instance: at the top of the range, Honolulu has a ratio of "9" (an average home price of \$531,150 vs. median HH income of only \$58,441). At the bottom of the range comes Fort Worth with a ratio of only "2" (an average home price of only \$81,456 vs. median HH income of \$43,110). What we don't like is that they restricted their study to only the 57 biggest cities in the U.S. Why only the

biggest cities when surveys have indicated that 55% of baby boomers in their 50s favor small towns or rural areas?

For Prosperity: Think Small

When the editors of *Business Week* recently surveyed U.S. cities of all sizes for indications of local prosperity, all of the 12 best were cities with populations of 250,000 or smaller! Wow, talk about a trend.



Do yourself a favor and check out these cities. Here they are from east-to-west: Bangor, ME; Portland, ME; Charlottesville, VA; Madison, WI; Iowa City, IA; Des Moines, IA; Fayetteville, AR; Bryan-College Station, TX; Fargo, ND; Bismarck, ND; Sioux Falls, SD; and Rapid City, SD. Are you as surprised as we are?

"Vacation Home" Is Not a Dirty Word!

If you are a baby boomer who is already 55 or older, chances are you plan to retire in five years or less. But did you know that there are nearly 14 million other boomers in your age group?



And did you know that several million of your fellow boomers have already purchased a vacation home or acreage that they plan to retire on? Even more importantly, what have the negative impacts of this *stampede to pasture* been and what might the further negative impacts be? According to an article by James Schembari, entitled "Heading Out to Pasture? Better Buy One Fast!" in the 11-24-2002 issue of the