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FamilyCircle

EXCLUSIVE SURVEY: FAMILY CIRCLE REVEALS THE 10 BEST TOWNS

Data Driven Survey Reveals the Best Communities across the Country

July 6, 2011, NEW YORK, NY—*Family Circle* today announced the results of its exclusive survey to identify the best TOWNS AND CITIES across the country FOR FAMILIES. The communities featured in the magazine’s annual roundup of perfect places to call home combine affordable housing, good neighbors, green spaces, strong public school systems and giving spirits. The results of the comprehensive survey appear in *Family Circle’s* August 2011 issue, on newsstands today.

According to *Family Circle’s* survey, the 10 Best Towns are:

1. St. Charles, Illinois
2. Peachtree City, Georgia
3. Liberty, Missouri
4. Fairhope, Alabama
5. Friendswood, Texas
6. Novi, Michigan
7. Trumbull, Connecticut
8. Germantown, Wisconsin
9. Oviedo, Florida
10. Maple Valley, Washington

Friendly neighborhoods, innovative schools and beautiful parks have earned St. Charles, Illinois, its reputation as the Pride of the Fox River. With a variety of cultural amenities, unique architecture and a rich heritage, St. Charles has so much to offer residents and visitors. Located 35 miles west of downtown Chicago, St. Charles has a population of approximately 33,000. More than 2,100 businesses, consisting of a balanced mix of retailers, restaurants and manufacturing facilities, employ more than 34,200 people.

“We are thrilled to be included in *Family Circle’s* “Best Towns and Cities” Survey and be ranked number one in the country!” said St. Charles Mayor Donald DeWitte. “Now everyone will know what we have known all along—that St. Charles is a gem among cities and a wonderful place to live. It is a great city, with many opportunities to work or have fun. We pride ourselves on maintaining a safe, affordable community and a high quality of life.”

“Our success as a school district begins with community members who know the importance of education to the future success of our kids and provides us with the resources we need,” said Dr. Donald

Schlomann, Superintendent of Schools for St. Charles Community Unit School District 303. “The next step to success is the parents in our community who send their kids to school prepared to learn. Then you add quality staff such as ours in St. Charles District 303 and you have what it takes for success in the classroom.”

Dr. Schlomann also points out the strong working relationship among public bodies in St. Charles. “We are in constant communication with the City of St. Charles, the St. Charles Park District, the St. Charles Public Library, Kane County government and other agencies to make sure we work together whenever possible for the benefit of the community members that we all serve.”

“Quality parks and recreation are critical factors in creating a healthy community. Residents of the St. Charles Park District can testify to that,” said Ray Ochromowicz, Director of Parks and Recreation. “The diversity and uniqueness of our nationally recognized parks and recreational opportunities are qualities that draw people to this community. With its vast amount of open space and recreational offerings, St. Charles is a most desirable place to live, work and play.”

“St. Charles is a wonderful place to call home, work for a business located here or open your own business, and raise a family,” said St. Charles Chamber of Commerce President & CEO Lori Hewitt. “We are a large enough community where we have all of the amenities such as great schools, wonderful parks and recreation, hotels, riverside restaurants and live theatre – but a small enough community where we really care about each other and give back. I consider running the Chamber of Commerce here a privilege and a great way to help businesses grow and prosper to make a better community for everyone who lives here.”

“St. Charles is one of Illinois’ most appealing tourism destinations,” said Amy Egolf, Executive Director of the Greater St. Charles Convention & Visitors Bureau. “Sixty-four percent of folks who contact our bureau for information convert into visitors, and 83% of those visitors return within three years. *Family Circle’s* recognition supports what economic development professionals recognize as one of tourism’s significant benefits: residents and business owners who choose a particular community often do so after first experiencing that destination as a visitor.”

For more information on St. Charles, please contact:

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Survey Methodology

With the help of Onboard Informatics, a New York City research firm that provides real estate, demographic and other data, Family Circle initially assembled a list of 2,500 cities and towns with populations between 15,000 and 150,000. We narrowed that down to nearly 1,000 localities, all of which had a high concentration of households with median incomes between \$55,000 and \$95,000. We then assessed which places best meet our family-friendly criteria—including affordable homes, quality schools, access to health care, green space, low crime rate and financial stability— and ranked them from top to bottom. Family Circle selected the 10 winners from among the highest-rated towns.

About Family Circle

Published 15 times a year by Meredith Corporation, with a circulation of 3.8 million and 20 million readers, *Family Circle* is one of the most widely read monthly magazines in the world. *Family Circle* provides smart relevant advice, sensible solutions, and inspiration in a voice that encourages and celebrates success in its pages and online at www.familycircle.com. *Family Circle* has always been committed to women's issues and in 1973 became the first women's magazine to fully underwrite a professional women's sporting event, the Family Circle Cup, an annual women's tennis tournament held in April in Charleston, S.C., at Family Circle Magazine Stadium.