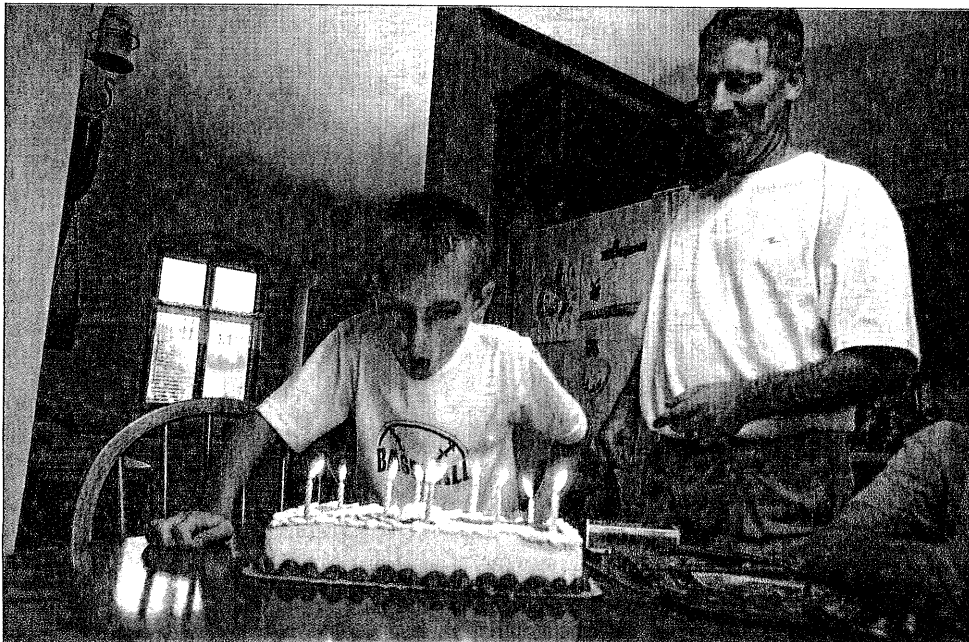


## FAMILY CIRCLE MAGAZINE'S '10 BEST TOWNS'

# Derby ranks tops for families



Photos by Kelly Glasscock/Correspondent

Shawn Springer watches as his son Josh blows out candles on the 10-year-old's birthday cake. The Springer family moved to Derby to be closer to Derby Hills Elementary School and happily found themselves surrounded by other families with kids.

### Now you know WHY DERBY?

Family Circle magazine joined with On Board, a New York City research firm, to assemble a list of 1,850 American cities with populations between 15,000 and 150,000, and a high concentration of households with an average income of \$65,000.

From that, 800 towns were selected based on "family-friendly criteria," including cost of living, jobs, schools, health care, air quality, green space and crime rate. The magazine then assessed which towns best met those standards. The "Ten Best Towns" aren't ranked, but are listed alphabetically by state.

Source: Family Circle magazine

NEWS 2 USE

## Ranking cites cost of living, jobs, health care, crime

BY SUZANNE PEREZ TOBIAS  
The Wichita Eagle

**W**hen it was time to settle down and raise a family, the Schifs chose Derby.

"We love it here," said Jean Schif, a school librarian and mother of four. "It's just a very nice, very 'family' place."

Such a nice family place, in fact, that Family Circle magazine has named Derby one of America's "10 Best Towns for Families." The honor will be revealed in the magazine's August issue, which goes on sale July 10.

"We were looking for the kinds of places families love, where they want to live," said Linda Fears, Family Circle's editor-in-chief. "And Derby definitely... has a lot going for it."

### Family-friendly perks

Wichita's small but thriving south-



Jim and Lisa Pappas watch as their 3-year-old daughter, Emerson, plays in a puddle of water in front of their home in Derby.

ern suburb, known for its proximity to Spirit AeroSystems and McConnell Air Force Base, scored

high on all seven criteria the magazine considered, Fears said — cost of living, jobs, schools, health care,

air quality, green space and crime rate.

The magazine limited its search to cities with populations between 15,000 and 150,000 and an average household income of about \$65,000.

"There are lots of 'Top 10' lists out there, but most of them focus on big cities," Fears said. "Our readers tell us that families are often looking for something else — smaller, quality towns or suburbs — where they can get away from the rat race."

She pointed to Derby's median home value — about \$147,000 — and the 16-to-1 student-teacher ratio in Derby public schools as factors that appeal to families with children. Other "family-friendly perks" include expansive parks, nice playgrounds and Rock River Rapids water park.

Derby "popped out to us as an appealing, family-friendly type of place," she said.

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# DERBY

From Page 1B

## 'Small-town feel'

That was no surprise to many Derby families — although the national recognition seemed very much a surprise.

"I'm kind of shocked," said Andrea Weir, a stay-at-home mother of four. "Our little podunk Derby?"

Weir and her husband, Tom, moved to the Wichita area from Oklahoma City about seven years ago and were drawn to Derby for its reasonable home prices.

"We could get so much more here than we could anywhere else," she said.

The family has since grown to love Derby's recreation center and free library programs, as well as the soccer fields and walking paths at High Park.

And when 10-year-old Eleanor Weir had to do a report on government in third grade, she was welcomed into the mayor's office for a lengthy interview and tour of the council chambers.

"That wouldn't happen in a lot of places," Weir said. "Derby definitely has that small-town feel."

Schif, the librarian, said she and her husband, Bob, got the same feeling when their twins, Jacob and Baylee, were born eight years ago.

"I had twins and I was in shock, and people brought us food and took care of us," she said.

Shawn Springer and his wife, Shawn (yup, same name), moved to Derby to be closer to Derby Hills Elementary School, where Mrs. Springer teaches first grade.

Now she walks to work, the

## Now you know

### FAMILY CIRCLE'S TOP 10

In its August issue, Family Circle magazine will announce the results of its first study to find the "10 Best Towns for Families." Most are suburbs of cities, which are listed in parentheses.

- **Castle Rock, Colo.** (between Denver and Colorado Springs)
- **Cedar Park, Texas** (Austin)
- **Chanhausen, Minn.** (Minneapolis-St. Paul)
- **Cooper City, Fla.** (Fort Lauderdale)
- **Derby, Kan.** (Wichita)
- **Diamond Bar, Calif.** (Los Angeles)
- **Franklin, Mass.** (Boston)
- **Kennesaw, Ga.** (Atlanta)
- **Madison, Miss.** (Jackson)
- **Morton Grove, Ill.** (Chicago)

For more information about each of these, click on the link attached to this story at [Kansas.com](http://Kansas.com).

### NEWS 2 USE

couple's two children — Josh and Molly — walk to school, and the family is surrounded by other families with kids.

"Anywhere you go in town, there's someone you know," said Mr. Springer, an elementary school principal in Wichita.

"When Josh has a baseball game, people from church who don't even have kids will come to cheer him on. It's just that kind of place."

## Secrets to be copied

But could the Family Circle



Kelly Glasscock/Correspondent

## Derby's growth includes the planned opening of a new Kohl's department store on 63rd Street South.

recognition attract thousands more families to Derby, making it a different kind of place?

Fears, the magazine editor, thinks not.

"Are people all over the country going to pack up everything and move to Derby? Probably not," she said.

"What we hope this (list) does is show people the kinds of things that make a place a great community for families. And then maybe they can look at the towns where they live and say, 'Hey, maybe we should have more parks,' or 'Maybe we can do this thing to be more family-friendly.'"

"We see these as best-kept secrets that could be replicated."

Allison Moeding, Derby's director of economic development, said the city will welcome and celebrate its ranking. And very soon, expect to see the Family Circle "10 Best Towns for Families" logo on Derby's Web site and correspondence.

"Oh yes, we plan to use it," Moeding said. "We're very excited about this honor."

Lisa Pappas, a Derby parent who is expecting her third child in November, joked about the

city's newfound fame and its potential effect.

"We want people to know about it — but we also don't want anyone to know about it," she said.

Pappas loves her house, yard and picket fence, she said, as well as the small playgroups and library storytimes she attends with her two children.

"You can do a lot of stuff here, but you're not in the city," she said. "Of all the places we've lived, this has been the best."

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# BILL

From Page 1B

under the jurisdiction of the Jefferson County sheriff's office, which doesn't have its own technical rescue team.

The Fire Department in Golden — about 14 miles west of Denver in the foothills — and other agencies have agreements with the sheriff's office to handle rescues.

Eurich Garcia, the friend who was hiking with Seals and his brother, is helping Seals dispute the charges. Garcia said other res-

Seals has to pay the bill within 30 days or a 15 percent administrative fee will be added. An additional 8 percent charge will be added after 90 days if the bill still hasn't been paid.

Seals sprained his ankle when he jumped off some granite. After walking for a while with the injury, he realized he couldn't go any farther.

Garcia and Seals' brother, Robert, left Seals with water and other supplies and climbed out of the canyon to go get help.

They found an emergency phone and called rescuers. The Colorado State Patrol received

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