

4 Chicago suburbs top 'best places to live'

BEST PLACES TO LIVE | City surrounded by greatness, mag says

July 14, 2009

BY SANDRA GUY sguy@suntimes.com

Four Chicago suburban areas top "best places to live" lists published today by Money Magazine. Among the top 100 "best places to live" are Batavia at No. 56 and Buffalo Grove at No. 65, selected for "great schools, affordable homes, low crime" and family appeal, according to Money Magazine's description.






Batavia, with a population of 27,300, is described as having "an old-town feel despite its location 35 miles west of downtown Chicago" and "easy access to commuter trains," the magazine said. Batavia also is noteworthy because "nearly 200 manufacturing, research and warehousing firms, as well as the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory" call it home, Money Magazine said.

Buffalo Grove, 35 miles northwest of Chicago, won its ranking for its "quiet, tree-lined community" feel despite having grown to a population of 43,100, and its yearly fine-art festival.

Among counties nationwide ranked as the best places to find jobs in this recession-wracked economy are Kendall County at No. 3 and Will County at No. 20. Money Magazine cites Kendall County for its job growth of 83.4 percent from the year 2000 to 2008, with work opportunities in construction, truck driving and heavy equipment operations.

Will County won recognition for a 51.4 percent increase in job growth from 2000 to 2008, with plants run by Caterpillar, Exxon, BP and Dow Chemical, as well as one of the nation's largest intermodal transportation centers and a 2,500-acre distribution center for employers such as Wal-Mart and Georgia Pacific, according to the report. Two casinos employ 3,000.

Illinois spots on CNN's "Best Places" to live list

<p>Batavia</p> 	<p>Top 100 rank: 56</p> <p>Population: 27,300</p>	<p>What they said: Lined with 19th-century limestone buildings, Batavia has an old-town feel despite its location 35 miles west of downtown Chicago and easy access to commuter trains.</p> <p>Photos: The people and places of Batavia</p>
<p>Buffalo Grove</p> 	<p>Top 100 rank: 65</p> <p>Population: 43,100</p>	<p>What they said: Despite the boom, Buffalo Grove is still a quiet, tree-lined community with 400 acres of parks and an annual fine art festival.</p> <p>Photos: The people and places of Buffalo Grove</p>
<p>Glen Carbon</p> 	<p>Top 100 rank: 91</p> <p>Population: 12,500</p>	<p>What they said: There's a wide selection of affordable housing here, plus strong community spirit that's especially evident during the town's annual Homecoming festival.</p>
<p>Kendall County</p> 	<p>Top 100 rank: 3 (for job growth)</p> <p>Job growth (2000-2008): 83.4%</p>	<p>What they said: Kendall County's population spike has brought more restaurants, retailers and big-box stores to the quiet Chicago suburb.</p> <p>Photos: The people and places of Kendall County</p>
<p>Will County</p> 	<p>Top 100 rank: 20 (for job growth)</p> <p>Job growth (2000-2008): 51.4%</p>	<p>What they said: Will County, Illinois, is an old steel center some 30 miles southeast of Chicago. After dealing with 26% unemployment in the 1980s, the area diversified.</p> <p>Photos: The people and places of Will County</p>