

Ten best places to raise a family

As often happens in Cheyenne, polls that portray Cheyenne in a positive light are ballyhooed and those that cast some doubt that Cheyenne is quite perfect are always ignored.

Obscure western magazines may link Cheyenne to the Old West, as they should, and rank us right at the top of the list of similar communities.

Without being told the criteria used for the ranking, each list is like an opinion - everyone has one.

Without a doubt, Cheyenne is a good place to raise a family, compared to many others. But, to say it's one of the Top 10 in the country needs amplification. And often it seems the ranking agency does not visit a city to determine its relative worth, it accepts an application that may or may not be truthful and candid.

Library awards, for example, are usually given to new libraries and recognition is not based on normal library qualities but on newness and uniqueness. When the local library lost its coffee counter, it seemed like it should relinquish the award that was based in great part on having such an amenity. There are wonderful old libraries all around the United States. They do not have the same potential to win these awards for one reason only - they are old. Stately, majestic, magnificent, with books and reference materials galore. But they are old and are not considered. Plus, they are established and not as desperate to garner accolades so probably do not apply for the awards as do new libraries like the one in Cheyenne.

Delusion is not a positive economic growth quality. Its shelf life is of short duration and businesses who visit the City to determine the potential for an expansion or relocation will see past the spray parks and concrete walkways very quickly.

Once again, a less than established or reputable magazine has bestowed a curious honor on Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Children's Health is a newsstand only magazine from Rodale, Inc., the publisher of *Men's Health* and *Women's Health*. Remember, Cheyenne was recently "honored" by *Men's Health*.

Children's Health is a wondrous and impressive title for a magazine. Sounds like a magazine with hundreds of thousands of subscribers and a long history of providing enlightened, informative and trendy articles for parents. Right?

Ten best places to raise a family		
CNN/Money Magazine 2008	CNN/Money Magazine 2009	Children's Health Magazine
1. Middleton, WI	Louisville, CO	Burlington, VT
2. Hanover, NH	Chanhassen, MN	Madison, WI
3. Louisville, CO	Papillion, NE	Fargo, ND
4. Lake Mary, FL	Middleton, WI	Lincoln, NE
5. Claremont, CA	Milton, MA	Fremont, CA
6. Papillion, NE	Warren, NJ	Lexington, KY
7. Milton, MA	Keller, TX	Honolulu, HI
8. Chaska, MN	Peach Tree City, GA	Cheyenne, WY
9. Wallingford, PA	Lake St. Louis, MO	Omaha, NE
10. Suwanee, GA	Mukilteo, WA	Yonkers, NY
XX BUSINESS WEEK - Ranks Top City in each state - Wyoming's Best City was Casper, with Cheyenne 2nd		

Not so fast, pilgrim.

The issue recognizing Cheyenne for being the eighth best city in the nation in which to "raise a family" was the magazine's very first issue. And, in spite of 98% of this sort of magazine's circulation coming via subscription, *Children's Health* will only be available by newsstand sales and at the pricey offering of \$5.99. It is also a magazine without a committed frequency. After its first issue was published in September, it may be several months until the second issue is published. It could, although unlikely, be never.

The criteria used often favors a smaller city with a strong government employment base. *Children's Health* used criteria including, but not limited to: Cost of Living; Unemployment; Travel Time to Work; Fast Food Restaurants; Air Quality; Superfund Sites; Percent of Occupied Housing Units that are Owner-Occupied; Percent Change in Housing Prices; Missing Children; Violent Crime; Pupil/Teacher Ratio by County; Current Expenditures/Student; Museums, Zoos, Parental Leave, etc.

These rankings can be comical. For example, there is little correlation between spending per student and quality of education. In fact, it is often just the opposite - higher spending often gets the poorest results and the lowest spending gets the best results.

For a community desperate for recognition and validation, a ranking such as this one may seem helpful. The truth is, it will be forgotten tomorrow (if it hasn't already been forgotten) and has no staying power. Or real benefit.

Interestingly, New York City is ranked 15th (come on), Newark, NJ is ranked 46th, Oakland, CA is 71st, Miami is 99th and Detroit is No. 100. Any more questions about cred?



Bohemian Metals
 Jewelry, Mineral, and Fossil Gallery
 Specializing in Custom Jewelry Design and Repair
 314 W. 17th St. * (307)-778-8782
 Creating One-Of-A-Kind Items for One-Of-A-Kind People for over 15 years!

WOODHOUSE RODEN
 Law Firm
 1912 Capitol Ave., Suite 500
 American National Bank Bldg, Fifth Floor
 432-9399 - FAX 432-7522
 GayWoodhouseLaw@aol.com
 "Advocating for your legal rights."
 www.gaywoodhouse.com

The Wyoming State Bar does not certify any lawyer as a specialist or expert. Anyone considering a lawyer should independently investigate the lawyer's credentials and ability, and not rely upon advertisements or self-proclaimed expertise.