

# Triangle Rated High As A Place To Live

By Elson Armstrong, Jr.  
From the 1920's to the early 1940's, people flocked to the big American cities like Detroit, New York, Cleveland, and Boston in search of the good life. From the mid-40's to the early 60's, California was the magic word as large human migrations inundated both the Bay Area (San Francisco-Oakland) and southern California (Los Angeles-San Diego) and from the late 1960's through the 1970's, Texas, Florida and cities such as Atlanta and Phoenix "enjoyed" thunderous growth.

You may be shocked to hear that the next "search for the U.S. version of Eldorado" will probably occur right here in your own backyard. In fact, the explosive growth in the Research Triangle (Durham, Raleigh, Chapel Hill) actually began in the mid-1960's. Steadily moving forward through the 1970's and, according to several respected national publications, this area will be among the prime areas to live in during the 1980's.

Rand McNally recently published an almanac that rated 277 U.S. metropolitan areas for desirability as living areas. The data included were climate, cultural activities, recreation, employment, image the area has on outsiders, and numerous other items. The Triangle rated No. 9 — outstripping such places as Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York and Cleveland. While this study remains controversial, the more respected *Wall Street Journal* has designated the Triangle as one of the "hottest" growth areas of the next decade.

It doesn't take a study for long time natives to realize that Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill and surrounding areas have changed tremendously in just the past fifteen years.

Durham and Raleigh have seen their populations soar past the 100,000 mark (Raleigh 165,000; Durham 120,000) and both cities are now in that twilight zone of transition from small cities to medium sized metropolitan areas.

Towns like Chapel Hill and Cary were for years sleepy villages. They now boast populations of over 25,000 and Parkwood, an unincorporated bedroom community in southern Durham County, has over 5,000 permanent residents.

The Triangle Area of North Carolina is an ideal area for growth for several reasons.

Among the foremost is that six world-renowned universities are here — Duke, UNC, N.C. Central, Shaw, Saint Augustine's, N.C. State — are located within thirty miles of each other. For decades the area was called a cradle of education. With the advent of the 1960's, when higher education became a high priority, students and professors flocked to this region.

Also, research projects became valuable which added to the growth of the area universities.

The area was also blessed with some of the nation's most respected medical facilities thus there may be more doctors residing here per capita than any where else in America.

The idea for a Research Triangle Park which would pool the research facilities of Duke, Carolina, and N.C. State was born in the 1950's and by the mid-1960's the Park located in southeastern Durham County with a smaller portion in northwestern Wake County was opened. It is now the largest facility of its type in the U.S.

In short time, large companies such as IBM, Monsanto, General Electric, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency flocked to the Park with large research operations. In time, employees from other regions moved into the area and today the Triangle includes an interesting mixture of populations from the northeast, midwest, west coast, and natives to the region.

A recent black transplant said, "Heck, they're closing the steel mills in my hometown (Pittsburgh) and I followed my company here. I like it here and I plan to stay".

This statement has been echoed by many black and white newcomers to the region. Many of them rate the area favorably on recreation (numerous lakes, parks, museums, art show, college activities, right here in the area plus the mountains and the coast are only a few hours drive away); climate (the area has four distinct seasons and the climate is suitable for year round tennis and golf, winters are usually rather short and mild — even though this year's has been exceptional — summers can be long, hot and humid but usually tempered by summer showers, spring and autumn can be breath taking); education (the universities, colleges, and junior colleges offer wide ranging curricula, the secondary school

Announcements have been sent to schools, youth agencies and others involved in work with youth asking them to play a major role in these events. To kick off the Calendar of Events for 1982, a Valentine Day, Citywide Teen Disco and Dance Contest is being held Saturday, February 13 at 8 p.m. at the Durham Civic Center. Participants must be between 13 and 19 years of age. Registration blanks are available at the Record Bar, Northgate and South Square Mall. General Admission tickets are \$3. Parents, teachers and friends are encouraged to attend the events to show support for the youth in their efforts. These projects are being coordinated by CONWIL Enterprises and the purposes are to address the teen population of Durham by:

- organizing, planning and directing workshops, seminars and programs of educational activities and social and cultural awareness;
- coordinating activities and programs that can assist in the development of mature and responsible citizens;
- providing constructive and productive creative activities;

Other events being finalized for 1982 will include workshops, writing, public speech clinics, personal achievement classes, health clinics, teen rap sessions, and other events of interest. For further information, call 489-0291 or 489-8956.



REGISTRATION UNDERWAY AT ST. AUG.'S — Saint Augustine's College held its registration for the 1981-82 academic second semester during last week. Students poured in, anxiously signing up for classes. Among those most anxious to register were seniors, as this was their last time around.

systems consistently rank above the national average on test scores and many schools receive strong community support.

The shortcomings of the area usually bring these comments: "I wish there were more first class restaurants" (this area has improved with new openings such as the Hotel Europa); "It lacks professional sports" (this area has always been big on college sports, perhaps as the population grows, there will eventually be pro teams here, in the early 1970's, the ABA Carolina Cougars played here but the team never caught on); "We need larger civic centers" (this problem should be remedied by the mid-1980's when the 24,000 seat arena opens at UNC, a large civic convention center is also being planned for downtown Durham).

Like any other growing area, the Triangle has its problems which include rising crime, drugs, uncontrolled growth in some areas, and fights for community control. In race relations, no area in America is exactly a Utopia and the

Triangle has had its share of racial upheavals. Many blacks and whites believe that people in this region are more honest about their prejudices. One Durham resident said, "In the north and in California they smile in your face and call you 'nigger' behind your back. Here you know when a person dislikes you, therefore you know how to deal with them".

Many residents here point out that school busing and open housing were accepted in this area more peaceably than in so-called liberal areas such as Boston, New York and Los Angeles.

There will be two recreational lakes opening in the Triangle this summer — Jordan Lake in Chatham County and Falls of the Neuse Lake in western Wake and eastern Durham counties.

One Durham resident said that when he graduated from high school (in the late 1960's), he couldn't wait to "book" Durham because he figured that this area offered him little. After living in New York for a while, this same resident returned

home, "because I found that it wasn't such a bad place after all". Numerous residents have related the same kind of stories of people who left in the 1960's and now reside here. Larry Mason of Durham said, "Once many of them see that these big cities aren't exactly paradise, they return home". Like it or not, the

Triangle is and will continue to grow. What were once tobacco towns are now becoming cosmopolitan; where one could once find entertainment only in the roadside dance halls, now includes opera, symphony and live theater. The Triangle may indeed be the 'in' place to live in the 1980's.

# It's A Bird, It's A Plane, It's The Sun!

By Elson Armstrong, Jr.  
After what seemed to be an eternity of gloom, rain, freezing rain, clouds, and fog, Durhamites finally saw the sun this week (you DO remember the sun, don't you?)

Those low hanging clouds finally gave way to bright sunshine by Tuesday but not before mother nature gave city residents another snow scare. Snow was reportedly falling heavy in some sections of Durham about 7:30 a.m. Tuesday morning and by 3 a.m., even though the sun was breaking through, the snow continued to fall. Luckily for the anti-snow people, it didn't stick. Snow overs were disappointed.

Incredibly, patches of snow and ice left over from the snowstorm two weeks ago could still be found in Durham on Tuesday. This is due to the continuing blast of frigid air. For a few days, the temperature reach the low forties, but the promised sixty degree highs never occurred.

the weather people are again forecasting milder weather by the weekend, but most Durhamites will believe that when they feel it!

The bad weather this winter can be blamed on the path of the jet stream — an upper level wind that controls the paths of air masses and storms. This winter the jet stream is sweeping down over Siberia and Alaska and pushing polar air masses deep into the south. There has been no major break in this pattern for at least three weeks, thus the prolonged cold spell in Durham. Many people have asked if this cold winter means that Durham will swelter this summer. While weather experts place little value on the theory that a cold winter means a hot summer, the last really cold winter in Durham, 1977, was followed by an extremely hot summer that saw temperatures top out at 107 degrees.

Maybe next July, when we're dying from the heat, we can refresh ourselves by remembering January, 1982.

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