



Digest ranks city in top 10

In the midst of a drought and possible power shortage, Eugene residents may be better off than they think.

Or so says a report in January's Science Digest Magazine which rated Eugene among the ten healthiest cities in America.

Defining a healthy area as one with better than average longevity, lower than average incidence of killer diseases and fatal accidents, minimal pollution and good health care, the Digest reported that some areas of the United States are definitely healthier than others.

The Digest also found several areas in the nation to be health hazards. Included among them was Washington, D.C., where the average age of death is 65, almost two years earlier than the nearest average area, South Carolina.

New Jersey, according to the National Center for Health Statistics, is the leader in cancer mortality. Alaska is number one in fatal accidents. Wyoming is the leader in fatal automobile accidents. Air in Tucson and Phoenix is highest in measured pollutants and Rhode Island is first in fatal heart disease.

Heading the top ten list of most healthy areas is

anywhere in the state of Hawaii. Based on longevity, the most important and easiest figure to assess, residents of Hawaii live three years longer than the average resident in the rest of the nation. Unless you're female, who tend to live a tenth of a percentage point longer in Minnesota than Hawaii.

Ranking tenth in longevity, Oregon fared far better in air quality than the rest of the nation. Based on a 1974 Environmental Protection Agency study on air quality trends, air in most of Oregon is better than the national average. Portland is one of two large urban centers in the United States with the lowest level of measured air pollutants (soot, dust and sulphur dioxide).

Ranking second in best medical care, behind Middletown, Conn., Eugene is also located in a county with below-average mortality rates for heart disease and cancer.

The Digest concluded, after all criteria was considered, the ten healthiest areas of the nation are: anywhere in Hawaii; Eugene, Oregon; San Francisco, Calif.; St. Cloud, Minn.; Austin, Texas; La Junta, Colo.; Utica, N.Y.; Kanab, Utah; Ketchikan, Alaska, and Middletown, Conn.

Ex-war prisoner promotes friendship

By LORA CUYKENDALL
Of the Emerald

For the past six months Jim Veneris has been on a one-man crusade that has taken him to one hundred college campuses and put him on sixty different television shows, including "Good Morning America," "The Mike Douglas Show" and the "CBS Evening News."

Veneris, is one of 21 POW's who became the focal point of American anti-Communist fervor in 1954 when they decided to remain in China at the end of the Korean War. After his three and one-half year stay in a North Korean prisoner of war camp, Veneris says he was convinced of the people's friendship, and now, 23 years later, he is in the United States trying to erase any last vestiges of antagonism between the countries.

"I did not denounce my country or my people," says Veneris. "The American people are good people and the Chinese people are good people." Veneris is making a speaking tour around the country under the auspices of the U.S.-China Peoples Friendship Association, a group begun in 1972 to increase the flow of information between the countries. He spoke Saturday at Koinonia Center on campus.

Veneris, the son of a Greek immigrant, spent his boyhood in Vandergrift, Penn., before his family moved to Los Angeles. He served in the Army for five years during World War II and re-enlisted in the fall of 1950 to help in the effort "to stop the spread of Communism." Veneris was captured on Dec. 1, 1951, during a relatively "quiet" period of the war.

Veneris' decision to remain in China after the war ended brought charges in the American press that he was a "traitor" and a victim of Chinese brainwashing. "Twenty-one Stayed," a book published in 1955, examined the backgrounds of the POW's.

Veneris says he chose China because "the conditions were good and the people were my friends. I wanted to stay and work for friendship between our peoples."

Veneris does not regret that decision — he was not stronger in his opposition of the anti-Communist forces in America, spearheaded by Sen. Joe McCarthy. "I wish I would have worked harder against the McCarthyites. The prisoners who came back to America and said the Chinese had treated them well were regarded as crazy people. It only took a handful of people to mess up the minds of 200 million Americans."

Veneris now lives in an industrial town 300 miles south of Peking. He works with his wife at a paper mill that employs some 2,300 persons, and they live with their six children in a six room house behind the factory. Veneris says he begins his day with an early morning jog before going to work at 7:30 a.m. His working day ends at 3:30 p.m., and he spends the afternoon and evenings at home with his family talking and reading.

Veneris says he is happy in China. "Can I regret 200 million American people? Never. Can I regret 800 million Chinese people? Never. Can I regret friendship? Never. Both peoples are great peoples."

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