

Hey, Forbes – stick this news in your next rankings

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THAT'S LIFE



After months of snide belittling by Forbes and other

know-it-all national publications, someone finally has found something positive to write about the Miami Valley. Not the entire Miami Valley, you understand, but at least one slice of it.

In a state-by-state analysis headlined “The Best Places to Raise Your Kids, 2009,” BusinessWeek has designated Kettering as Ohio’s sec-

ond best. According to the magazine, the only city in the state better for serious child-raisers is Columbus.

As a resident of Kettering, I couldn’t be prouder, although me living there probably had very little to do with it being selected. If I weren’t living there, in fact, Kettering might have wound up No. 1.

And I’ve never lived in Columbus, so I can’t comment on whether it’s a better place to practice parenthood than Kettering. Just about the only time we ever go to Columbus is to visit one of my favorite restaurants in German Village,

where the wait can be pretty long, but certainly not long enough to raise children. I’m sure it’s a very nice city for children-raising, though. A lot probably depends upon how you feel about your children being exposed constantly to people walking around in scarlet and gray outfits, contorting their bodies and shouting, “O... H... I... O.”

Because the magazine’s editors probably didn’t have enough time or energy to actually raise children in every one of the cities it rated, it made its selections by using statistical information accumulated by a New York-

based provider of real estate analysis. The survey included only towns with at least 50,000 residents and an average family income between \$40,000 and \$100,000.

School performance and safety received the most weight, but the number of schools, household expenditures, crime rates, air quality, job growth, family income, museums, parks, theaters and diversity also were factors that were taken into account. Columbus, the magazine explained, finished first in Ohio because, “The state capital is also home to Ohio State University, the country’s larg-

est college campus. Columbus is a vibrant city with a strong arts scene and an excellent zoo.”

Unfortunately, the editors didn’t cite the reasons that made Kettering the second-best place in which to raise kids, although I’m pretty sure “excellent zoo” wouldn’t have been one of them. And the magazine didn’t really make it clear if Kettering was No. 2 or just tied for No. 2. Following the comments about Columbus, it merely wrote, “Runners-up: Kettering, Cincinnati.” But I’m assuming Kettering finished ahead based on the “crime rates” thing, because

Cincinnati has the Bengals.

It would have been nice if the article had listed a few of the advantages that make Kettering a great place in which to raise children. Is it mostly good schools and safety, or are their other factors? Lincoln Park? The Skate Plaza? Delco Park? Harrigan’s Tavern?

I’m not complaining, though. Anytime a national magazine puts a Miami Valley community on its list without alluding to plant closings, unemployment or real estate foreclosures, we should clip the article and send it to the editors of Forbes.