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Norman in top 10 places to live

By Jane Glenn Cannon
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NORMAN -- Money magazine today named Norman one of the top 10 best places to live in the United States.

A strong local economy, good schools and lots of art and entertainment opportunities all factored into the ranking. Being the home of the University of Oklahoma and having one of the top-rated college football teams in the nation probably didn't hurt either.

Each year, the magazine ranks the top 100 best places to live in America. The magazine posted the 2008 list today on its Web site, placing Norman in the No. 6 spot. The No. 1 best place to live, according to the magazine, is Plymouth, Minn.

Other top 10 cities and their rankings include Fort Collins, Colo., No. 2; Naperville, Ill., No. 3; Irvine, Calif., No. 4; Franklin Township, N.J., No. 5; Round Rock, Texas, No. 7; Columbia/Ellcott City, Md., No. 8; Overland Park, Kan., No. 9, and Fishers, Ind., No. 10.

The magazine bases its rating on what matters most to people -- ample job opportunities, good schools and low crime, green space and recreational opportunities. This year, the price of gasoline and availability of transportation alternatives were considerations, as were the housing market and general cost of living.

Norman was ranked among the top 100 best places to live in 2007, coming in at No. 40. This is the city's first time to be ranked in the top 10.

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