



Can **Cubs'** shortstop return to form? — Rozner, Sports

Daily Herald

Your party can defy 'Gravity' with these treats — Food



Homeowners' haven

Huntley named the best community in Illinois to own a home

By MADHU KRISHNAMURTHY
mkrishnamurthy@dailyherald.com

Homebuyers looking to plant roots in the suburbs might want to consider Huntley, which has been named the No. 1 place in Illinois for homeownership by a consumer finance website.

The village's homeownership rate is 93.5 percent and it is among the fastest-growing communities in the Chicago area with the highest growth rate, according to analyst Maggie Clark of NerdWallet.com.

The San Francisco-based website looked at 121 communities in Illinois with a

population of more than 20,000 to determine which are the best for homebuyers based on the following criteria: availability of homes; whether people can afford to live there; and if the area is growing.

Algonquin, Bartlett, Lake in the Hills, Romeoville and South Elgin also made

NerdWallet's top 10 list of the best places to own a home.

"We're really very honored," said Vic Narusis, Huntley business recruitment coordinator. "This isn't the first award we've received from them. Last

See HUNTLEY on PAGE 5



CHRISTOPHER HANKINS/chankins@dailyherald.com
Newer homes along Donahue Drive highlight the building boom that has helped Huntley in recent years. The village has been named the best community in Illinois for homeowners by NerdWallet.com. This particular street is in the Talamore subdivision on the north side of the village.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2014

Continued from Page 1

DAILY HERALD SECTION 1 PAGE 5

F12M

Huntley: Village's taxes are among lowest in the suburbs

Continued from Page 1

year, we were named one of the top 10 best cities for small families by NerdWallet."

Narusis said the recognition was entirely unsolicited and came as a surprise.

Clark said the website researches consumer financial products, such as mortgages, bank accounts and credit cards, and conducts cost-of-living studies using census data.

"Huntley has the highest homeownership rate on our list," Clark said. "Of the homes in the city, 93.5 percent of them are owned rather than rented. That's pretty strong. It also was pretty affordable."

Homeowner costs were 34.5 percent of the median household income, which is slightly higher than in other towns on the list. But the population growth outweighed the affordability, Clark said.

Huntley is among the top 20 communities on NerdWallet's list with a population growth of 12.4 percent between 2010 and 2012.

"It was the fastest-growing on our top 20 list," Clark said. "It just signals to homebuyers that other people are moving to the city too ... that there is something that is drawing people to the town and that the town can support new residents. It's a pretty stable place, and people are investing and sticking around. It's not transient."

The website also looked at the top employers in the area and noted that Huntley has a number of relatively large employers in town.

Those include Centegra Health System, which is building a new hospital, Dean's Dairy and Weber Stephens, a manufacturer of gas and charcoal grills.

The village's taxes also are among the lowest in the suburbs, according to

Best Places for Homeownership in Illinois

Here are the communities that made the Top 10 list:

- Huntley** — 93.5 percent homeownership rate and one of the fastest-growing communities in the suburbs.
- Plainfield** — Will County's oldest community, Plainfield has a unique mix of historic buildings and new construction housing, quaint shops and restaurants in its central business district. It tops the list for median monthly household income at \$9,303.
- Oswego** — Largest community in Kendall County with a population growth of 9.3 percent between 2010 and 2012. Homeowner costs amount for 27.4 percent of median household income.
- South Elgin** — Natural beauty is one of the selling points for new residents, with the Fox River running right through the village, and miles of hiking and biking trails in the Kane County Forest Preserves. Homeowner costs amount to 28 percent of median monthly household income; 90.4 percent homeownership rate.
- Romeoville** — Lowest monthly homeowner costs on the list at \$1,875. The population grew by 4.5 percent between 2010 and 2012. The town also has more than 300 acres of park land with seven community parks and 23 neighborhood parks.
- Lockport** — Historic ambience, quiet, tree-lined streets and affordable housing prices contribute to the high homeownership rate of 87.6 percent.
- Algonquin** — Homeowner costs are 26.6 percent of median monthly household income — the lowest in the top 10 — and 88.3 percent of residents own their homes.
- Bartlett** — More than 30 percent of the village's population is under the age of 30. The village has more than 380 acres of parks, including the Bartlett Trail, a paved pathway more than 14 miles long. Homeowner costs are 28.8 percent of median household income, and 88.2 percent of residents own their homes.
- Lake in the Hills** — Situated along the Randall Retail Corridor with accessibility to metro areas like Elgin and Chicago, the village has a 91 percent homeownership rate.
- Tinley Park** — Surrounded by thousands of acres of forest preserves, the village has a diverse business environment and is a major destination for diners. Monthly homeowner costs are \$1,893. Source: NerdWallet.com

the website. Another consideration was Huntley's low crime rate, which has declined in the past year, Narusis said.

"Cities with high crime rates were excluded from being eligible," Narusis said.

Narusis said the recognition is a testament to the cooperative work of all the governing bodies in the area.

"It makes us unique," Narusis said.

"The houses wouldn't be affordable, if those taxing bodies didn't work cooperatively to be as efficient as they could. It's absolutely a collaborative effort. It was not an accident that this happened in Huntley. It's the efforts of a lot of people over a lot of time."



Retail continues to expand along the Route 47 corridor on the south end of Huntley.

Christopher Hankins | Staff Photographer

"Huntley has the highest homeownership rate on our list," Clark said. "Of the homes in the city, 93.5 percent of them are owned rather than rented. That's pretty strong. It also was pretty affordable."



The village of Huntley has changed dramatically in the past decade, and not just with a new welcome sign at Main Street and Route 47. The village ranked No. 1 on NerdWallet.com's list of best places for homeownership in Illinois.

Christopher Hankins | Staff Photographer

Come Grow With Us!

