



Local Towns Make Roster of 'Prettiest'

BY JOHN KRAHNERT III: STAFF WRITER

Two of Moore County's towns are among the prettiest in the state, according to a recent poll.

A panel of 32 in-state journalists voted Pinehurst and Southern Pines in the top 10 most attractive small towns in North Carolina. Pinehurst finished second in the voting, while Southern Pines finished ninth. Cameron also received votes, but the release did not disclose how many.

Pinehurst missed out on the top spot by just 13 votes. Blowing Rock, located in the mountains, took top honors with 206 votes, while Pinehurst finished with 193.

"I think the people in this community deserve it," Pinehurst Mayor George Lane said. "It's a beautiful place to live and to visit. We're indeed fortunate."

Pinehurst finished ahead of Beaufort (109 votes), Southport (90 votes), Ocracoke (88 votes), Highlands (85 votes), Edenton (76 votes), Linville (75 votes), Southern Pines (70 votes) and Banner Elk (65 votes).

Davidson and Cashiers tied with 61 votes and just missed out on the recognition.

Southern Pines Mayor Mike Haney was also pleased with his town's inclusion on the list, adding that it was a product of his town's residents.

"We're in really good company," he said. "That's quite an honor. It's a testament to the pride of the citizens of Southern Pines. I'm flattered and honored."

The writers selected their top 10 from a list of 45 towns with a population under 15,000. Bill Hensley, of Charlotte, a writer and former state director of travel and tourism, conducted the poll, according to the news release.

The release said that from the outset, Blowing Rock and Pinehurst set the pace. Lavish praise was heaped on all the top finishers as the panelists made their cases for beauty.

The towns were singled out for their charm, unique settings, landscapes, historic homes, architecture, character and commitment to preservation, among other factors.

Of the top 12 vote-getters, five are in the mountains, four on the coast and three in the Piedmont.

"North Carolina is fortunate to have so many pretty towns," said Carol Timblin, a Charlotte travel writer, in the release. "Choosing the 10 prettiest was a challenge but it was an enjoyable assignment. It made me realize just how wonderful it is to live surrounded by such immense beauty."

Other towns receiving votes were Apex, Bath, Badin, Bald Head, Brevard, Burnsville, Chadbourn, Dillsboro, Duck, Elon, Flat Rock, Hendersonville, Hillsborough, Lake Lure, Manteo, Morehead City,

Pittsboro, Sylva, Sparta, Tarboro, Tryon, Waynesville, Washington, West Jefferson and Wrightsville Beach.

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