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L.-A.

I moved to Lewiston in the summer of 2006. My first impression of Lewiston-Auburn was not real positive, because it didn't remind me of the towns where I came from in Southern California. I thought they were just two plain cities, Mill towns on either side of a river, that were past their heyday.

As time went by I realized that I had to look past first "appearances." In other words, "Don't judge a book by it's cover." The more I learned about what was happening in these towns, the more I came to know that they had some really positive things to offer. The biggest conclusion I can come to at this point is that Lewiston-Auburn is a family-friendly community. This can be supported by special events that happen here throughout the year, or places you can go to on a daily or weekly basis.

Some of the places that I've enjoyed visiting in Auburn are: Lost Valley Ski area -- It's great to have a place nearby to ski and snowboard; Lake Auburn- for fishing or boating; and the Community Little Theatre -- for a top-notch stage play. My family has attended events in Lewiston at the Colisee- for both concerts and Maineiacs ice hockey games, and also the Franco-American Center for performance arts. All these places I've just mentioned hosted safe and wholesome events.

I'm familiar with a few of the yearly attractions in Lewiston-Auburn. The biggest that I know of is the Great Falls Balloon Festival -- the twin cities are really alive during this weekend. There's also cultural events like the Franco-American Festival or the Greek-American Festival which celebrate Lewistonians' and Auburnians' heritages.

If all of the already-mentioned places aren't enough, there is a large selection of churches and places of worship to choose from. Churches include: Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Latter Day Saints, Baptist, a variety of Protestant and non-denominational. Some of the churches host youth group events, Suppers, concerts, plays, fund-raisers, musicals, productions and conferences throughout the year. Talk about lots of positive things to choose from! Also, I'm sure there must be a Muslim House

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of Worship with the growing Muslim-faith population of L.-A. Which brings me to my next point to support "family-friendliness." L.-A. is a culturally diverse community.

Someone told me that the twin cities consisted mainly of French and Irish Americans in the early days. There is also a Scandinavian and Greek population. More recently, the Somalian and African community has developed here. I also know of some Asians and Hispanics (I'm one!) in the area. I don't know the exact reason why there are so many new people with different cultural backgrounds coming here. My guess would be that they have found a family-oriented community that they want to be part of. My parents know a family from New Zealand who moved to Lewiston a few years ago. They studied the L.-A. area on the internet and knew it was the right place for their family. They are very happy here. One last point about culture. My mother says that when she goes to the Auburn Wal-Mart on say, a Saturday, she sees so many cultures represented, languages spoken, etc. It reminds her of a mini-melting pot just like the other LA (out west) that we left two years ago. I think this is very positive that so many heritages can come together in one area...and thrive.

So, to end this, I'm convinced that once people come to L.-A, and see all these great things, they want to stay. It is a place rich in cultural heritage and good old-fashioned values. I think it's a twin-city that celebrates traditions and makes people feel healthy and happy. I do believe it is still in it's heyday.