

If we are willing to accept this commitment to the humanities, then, once again we will be looked upon as “cultured doctors,” rather than greedy businessmen. Once again we will be members of an esteemed profession. Plenty of coins will still jingle in our pockets, and we will be happier. The medical profession will be restored to its pedestal, and doctors will again be loved.

## The Healthiest Little Community in the United States

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THE FIRST SIGN he saw as he approached the little town said “Slow Down and Enjoy.” His foot had already relaxed its hold on the gas pedal when he saw the second, “Welcome to the Healthiest Little Community in the United States.” As he pulled into town he noted a clean, tidy little town snuggled away in the Arkansas River Valley. The tennis courts and jogging paths were noticeable as he pulled into a filling station in the main business district. After a fill-up and rest stop, he walked across the street for lunch. “You get really hungry driving cross country,” he thought. He asked for the no-smoking section, “please,” and the waitress said, “Sit any place you like, sir, this is a no-smoking community.” He was curious about that comment when he sat down but he noticed

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that no one in this busy restaurant at lunchtime was smoking at all. There were no ashtrays.

The menu was interesting. Quite a variety of fish and chicken entrees, and a vegetarian plate was featured. The salt and cholesterol content on every item was listed. He figured that the 380 tasty calories he ate, a meal high in fiber, would probably last him to the next town where he planned to spend the evening.

As he was paying the bill he remarked about the trim, active people who he had seen walking up and down the street and the general attitude of healthiness that prevailed. “Your hospital must not do much business,” he said to the manager. “Oh, our hospital closed five years ago because, I guess, we really didn't need it. We kept part of it for a nursing home for our old folks. There are more and more of them moving to this part of the country because of the clean air and tranquil life-style. The kids have everything organized, have entertainment and plenty to do. Some of the old folks are learning to fish for the first time in their lives.”

The traveler was astonished. Here was a community where no one smoked and cigarettes were not even for sale. The town had decided it would be best if kids never started smoking. Everyone was active, either working or playing. Almost no one was overweight and everyone seemed to enjoy the atmosphere of health.

“We turned the other half of the hospital into a health promotion center,” the manager went on. “People get their blood measured, checks for cancer and a lung capacity test. There is plenty of sunshine in the valley so we use a lot of sun screen. If anyone has sugar diabetes, we find that out. Eye checks for glaucoma and tests for blood where it shouldn't be are done up there by the volunteers.”

The visitor got back in his car, buckled his seat belt and drove slowly out of town. “I guess this *is* the healthiest community in the United States! I wonder how they did it.”