



THE TOP 43 Communities IN THE TRISTATE

TOP 20 COMMUNITIES		SAFETY		EDUCATION		HOUSING					TAXES	
		Population	Safety Ranking	School District	Education Ranking	Units Sold 2008	Median Home Sale Price 2008	Median Home Sale Price 2004	4-Year Change in Median Home Price	Homes Owner-Occupied	Property Tax per \$100,000	Average Commute (in minutes)
1	Mason (Warren)	29,555	6	Mason	3	318	\$280,050	\$275,000	1.8%	84.1%	\$1,727	22.5
2	Indian Hill	5,893	3	Indian Hill	2	72	\$1,047,500	\$916,000	14.4%	96.5%	\$1,177	22.4
3	West Chester (Butler)*	66,272	4	Lakota	7	603	\$209,550	\$199,000	5.3%	90.4%	\$1,802	23.6
4	Madeira	8,421	8	Madeira	8	130	\$192,600	\$180,000	7.0%	91.3%	\$2,003	19.5
5	Turtle Creek Twp. (Warren)	15,110	5	Lebanon	17	89	\$225,000	\$158,900	41.6%	80.0%	\$1,595	22.5
6	Anderson Twp.	45,277	2	Forest Hills	6	475	\$210,000	\$196,875	6.7%	88.1%	\$1,751	23.1
7	Liberty Twp. (Butler)	33,319	10	Lakota	7	456	\$225,000	\$222,810	1.0%	94.0%	\$1,688	23.6
8	Wyoming	8,355	11	Wyoming	4	98	\$249,000	\$278,000	-10.4%	88.4%	\$1,866	20.5
9	Hamilton Twp. (Warren)	17,431	7	Little Miami	20	344	\$183,250	\$185,400	-1.2%	92.1%	\$1,416	23.7
10	Edgewood, Ky.	8,891	9	Kenton County	19	75	\$172,900	\$179,850	-3.9%	92.4%	\$1,415	21.3
11	Terrace Park	2,174	1	Mariemont	5	28	\$411,650	\$400,000	2.9%	93.0%	\$1,987	23.2
12	Newtown	3,833	15	Forest Hills	6	25	\$188,000	\$140,900	33.4%	68.8%	\$1,727	22.8
13	Villa Hills, Ky.	7,729	13	Kenton County	19	75	\$160,000	\$175,000	-8.6%	88.2%	\$1,374	21.9
14	Loveland	11,540	14	Loveland	10	155	\$182,900	\$215,000	-14.9%	74.1%	\$1,717	23.6
15	Miami Twp. (Hamilton)	14,460	12	Three Rivers	21	26	\$189,900	\$185,473	2.4%	87.6%	\$1,499	28.1
16	Montgomery	10,210	21	Sycamore	1	97	\$320,000	\$306,200	4.5%	91.5%	\$1,590	22.3
17	Glendale	2,176	17	Princeton	24	27	\$235,000	\$256,250	-8.3%	78.0%	\$1,743	22.1
18	Union, Ky.	3,537	18	Boone County	26	290	\$235,250	\$220,000	6.9%	96.3%	\$995	24.5
19	Mariemont	3,146	22	Mariemont	5	60	\$277,450	\$285,000	-2.6%	61.2%	\$1,857	19.1
20	Amberley Village	3,550	19	Cincinnati Public	25	48	\$335,000	\$300,650	11.4%	97.1%	\$1,865	20.2

THE TOP 15

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

- 1 Sycamore
- 2 Indian Hill
- 3 Mason
- 4 Wyoming
- 5 Mariemont
- 6 Forest Hills
- 7 Lakota
- 8 Madeira
- 9 Milford
- 10 Loveland
- 11 Fort Thomas, Ky.
- 12 Fairfield City
- 13 Ross
- 14 Kings Local
- 15 Talawanda

SAFETY RANKINGS

- 1 Terrace Park
- 2 Anderson Township
- 3 Indian Hill
- 4 West Chester
- 5 Turtle Creek Township
- 6 Mason
- 7 Hamilton Township
- 8 Madeira
- 9 Edgewood, Ky.
- 10 Liberty Township
- 11 Wyoming
- 12 Miami Township (Hamilton)
- 13 Villa Hills, Ky.
- 14 Loveland
- 15 Newtown



THE TOP 43 Communities in the Tristate *continued*

COMMUNITY	SAFETY		EDUCATION		HOUSING					TAXES	
	Population	Safety Ranking	School District	Education Ranking	Units Sold 2008	Median Home Sale Price 2008	Median Home Sale Price 2004	4-Year Change in Median Home Price	Homes Owner-Occupied	Property Tax per \$100,000	Average Commute (in minutes)
Blue Ash	12,767	29	Sycamore	1	91	\$199,000	\$168,500	18.1%	73.5%	\$1,445	19.6
Bright, Ind.	5,803	33	Sunman-Dearborn	22	57	\$169,900	\$167,062	1.7%	86.6%	\$1,865	33.7
Columbia-Tusculum	3,081	36	Cincinnati Public	25	56	\$238,500	\$194,500	22.6%	59.0%	\$1,950	15.1
Crosby Twp.	2,748	23	Southwest Local	18	17	\$195,000	\$124,500	56.6%	87.2%	\$1,471	29.9
Deerfield Twp. (Warren)	30,521	26	Mason	3	272	\$253,000	\$236,000	7.2%	78.7%	\$1,747	25.4
Evendale	2,912	42	Princeton	24	22	\$255,750	\$224,000	14.2%	96.3%	\$1,147	21.1
Fairfield Twp. (Butler)	15,571	35	Fairfield City	12	208	\$175,000	\$172,500	1.4%	93.2%	\$1,472	28
Fort Mitchell, Ky.	7,556	31	Beechwood	16	62	\$193,250	\$167,000	15.7%	52.7%	\$1,967	20.1
Fort Thomas, Ky.	15,298	20	Fort Thomas	11	143	\$159,000	\$147,000	8.2%	69.1%	\$1,570	20
Fort Wright, Ky.	5,440	41	Kenton County	19	51	\$169,000	\$140,000	20.7%	72.5%	\$1,374	19.3
Hebron, Ky.	1,147	43	Boone County	26	236	\$178,000	\$171,750	3.6%	74.0%	\$957	23.1
Hyde Park	13,640	28	Cincinnati Public	25	189	\$300,000	\$288,250	4.1%	57.0%	\$1,950	15.1
Miami Twp. (Clermont)	39,310	27	Milford	9	420	\$203,250	\$201,000	1.1%	86.8%	\$1,928	22.9
Mount Lookout	3,236	37	Cincinnati Public	25	113	\$416,388	\$291,000	43.1%	57.0%	\$1,950	15.1
Mount Adams	1,692	39	Cincinnati Public	25	16	\$295,000	\$483,950	-39.0%	67.0%	\$1,950	5.1
Oakley	11,244	38	Cincinnati Public	25	133	\$191,100	\$174,000	9.8%	57.0%	\$1,950	15.1
Oxford (Butler)	22,210	34	Talawanda	15	61	\$188,000	\$182,000	3.3%	33.7%	\$1,292	15.5
Park Hills, Ky.	2,781	30	Kenton County	19	35	\$165,000	\$165,000	0.0%	56.7%	\$1,384	20.4
Pierce Twp. (Clermont)	13,455	32	West Clermont	23	98	\$193,000	\$215,550	-10.5%	79.2%	\$1,730	28.2
Ross Twp. (Butler)	7,764	24	Ross	13	57	\$188,583	\$206,945	-8.9%	87.4%	\$1,312	23.1
Salem Twp. (Warren)	5,091	16	Little Miami	20	25	\$196,500	\$166,450	18.1%	77.5%	\$1,442	77.5
South Lebanon (Warren)	3,602	40	Kings Local	14	61	\$212,500	\$276,032	-23.0%	69.9%	\$1,598	22.1
Symmes Twp.	15,798	25	Sycamore	1	140	\$298,500	\$324,000	-7.9%	75.9%	\$1,611	21.1

*includes Beckett Ridge

ON THE COVER: A "FINE" EXAMPLE

Ask David and Molly Fine, who appear on our "Rating the Burbs" cover, what they like about their particular suburb, and you'll hear a range of comments.

"What I like about Mariemont is the close-knit community. I appreciate living in a place that affords my family an old-time neighborhood complete with parks, town square and plenty of places to walk," says David Fine, who spent 23 years as vice president of design resources for an upscale interior furnishings manufacturer before earning his real estate license five years ago. He currently works as a commercial real estate agent with Townmark Inc. Realty.

"David and I have lived in Mariemont for 11 years," adds Molly, who works for the University of Cincinnati Supplemental Educational Services

division, in addition to training intervention specialists for Cincinnati Public Schools. "We love the square and have enjoyed walking to the movie theater and going to Graeter's afterwards."

The Fines were chosen by *Cincy* as a representative suburban couple at the suggestion of Mariemont mayor Dan Policastro. "The Fines are involved in a lot of things here," notes the mayor, who adds they can always be seen in front of their Tudor house on Pleasant Street, working in their garden and yard. "They are always volunteering for a lot of things that need to be done in the community."

The family stays involved in Mariemont civic life through the Kiwanis Club of Mariemont,



Mariemont Masonic Lodge and the local softball league. "Both our kids have flourished in a fantastic Boy Scout troop," Molly adds.

All this proving what our "Rating the Burbs" project is all about: That life can be good in the suburbs. If not Fine.



EDUCATION: Stellar Public School SYSTEMS

DISTRICT	RANK	Enrollment	Schools	Per-pupil spending	State Rating	Teacher Ratio	Teachers w/ Masters	Percent Disadvantaged	Percent Gifted
Sycamore	1	5,480	7	\$13,159	Excellent With Distinction	15	80	11	44.4
Indian Hill	2	2,163	4	\$13,998	Excellent With Distinction	14	66	2	55.9
Mason	3	10,158	6	\$9,815	Excellent With Distinction	17	64	4	41.4
Wyoming	4	1,964	5	\$10,734	Excellent With Distinction	15	71	5	43.4
Mariemont	5	1,632	5	\$12,152	Excellent	15	81	N/A	39.7
Forest Hills	6	7,327	9	\$10,097	Excellent With Distinction	17	69	7	27.9
Lakota	7	17,265	22	\$9,126	Excellent With Distinction	18	64	10	23.5
Madeira	8	1,389	3	\$10,689	Excellent	14	71	6	32.9
Milford	9	6,060	11	\$8,938	Excellent	18	71	15	25.5
Loveland	10	4,566	6	\$9,322	Excellent	19	74	9	22.8
Fort Thomas, Ky.	11	2,400	5	\$8,153	N/A	17	64	13	N/A
Fairfield City	12	9,658	10	\$8,191	Excellent	20	60	32	23.2
Ross	13	2,808	4	\$8,140	Excellent With Distinction	18	68	17	14.5
Kings Local	14	3,775	6	\$9,721	Excellent With Distinction	18	60	10	14.3
Talawanda	15	2,982	5	\$10,168	Excellent	16	56	31	26.6
Beechwood, Ky.	16	1,043	2	\$7,723	N/A	15	62	7	23
Lebanon	17	5,202	8	\$7,440	Excellent With Distinction	19	59	19	5.1
Southwest Local	18	3,748	7	\$8,816	Excellent	19	52	25	17.5
Kenton Co., Ky.	19	13,185	19	\$7,970	N/A	17	57	30	26
Little Miami	20	3,765	8	\$9,545	Effective	18	54	12	22.3
Three Rivers	21	1,965	4	\$9,908	Effective	18	58	23	24.6
Sunman-Dearborn, Ind.	22	4,338	7	\$10,100	Progress	19	64	17	8
West Clermont	23	8,679	12	\$8,528	Effective	18	76	21	23.5
Princeton	24	5,080	10	\$14,703	Effective	12	67	48	12.1
Cincinnati Public	25	33,781	65	\$12,317	Cont. Imp.	17	64	60	10.6
Boone Co., Ky.	26	17,683	23	\$7,455	N/A	18	62	27	N/A

* Depicts data from 2006-2007 school year; ** Depicts data from 2007-2008 school year in 2006-2007 column

THE PRICIEST PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Only a few private and parochial high schools in the Tristate top \$6,000 in annual tuition, so if you want to live close to a pricey private, choose from: Cincinnati Christian Hills Academy in Symmes Township; Cincinnati Country Day School in Indian Hill; Covington Latin; Elder in Price Hill; McNicholas in Mount Washington; Summit Country Day in Hyde Park; St. Ursula Academy near Hyde Park; St. Ursula Villa in Mount Lookout; St. Xavier in Finneytown; the Seven Hills School near Hyde Park; Ursuline Academy in Blue Ash; or Villa Madonna Academy in Villa Hills. Hyde Park tops the list of Tristate neighborhoods where parents send their children to private schools (seven out of 10 families), according to U.S. Census stats. The No. 2 community where parents send their kids off to private schools is Indian Hill (four out of 10 families).

FASTEST-GROWING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Everybody is rushing to the burbs, it seems. According to the U.S. Department of Education, the five fastest-growing school districts (as charted by student-body growth in the past decade) are: Boone County Schools in Florence, Campbell County Schools in Alexandria, Lakota Local Schools in West Chester/Liberty Township, Mason City Schools in Mason, and Forest Hills Local Schools in Anderson Township/Newtown.

2008 BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS

Public and private elementary, middle and high schools that are academically superior or that demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement.

- Blue Ash Elementary School
- Cardinal Pacelli School (Mount Lookout)
- Madeira Elementary School
- St. Dominic School (Delhi Township)
- St. Ignatius Loyola School (Monfort Heights)
- Turpin High School (Anderson Township)

*No Tristate schools in Kentucky or Indiana were 2008 Blue Ribbon Schools
Source: U.S. Department of Education



	State Measures Met	Academic Rating	Attendance Rate	Graduation Rate	SAT*	ACT*	AP Classes	# of AP exams taken by graduates*	% Graduates with AP High Scores*	Extracurricular	Sports
	30 out of 30	108.1	96.4	99.1	1128	25	21	418	93.8	56	22
	30 out of 30	108.7	96.3	98.1	1136	25	19	249	88.8	40	16
	30 out of 30	108.8	96.4	97.1	1118	24	15	349	91.1	83	17
	30 out of 30	109	96.5	100	1170	26	19	259	84.2	24	17
	30 out of 30	106.5	95.8	98.1	1110	24	14	133	91.7	21	14
	30 out of 30	106	96.3	96.3	1098	24	13	373	90.6	33	20
	30 out of 30	102.9	96.5	95.5	1094	23	18	425	91.1	49*	20
	30 out of 30	107.6	96.2	95.4	1098	25	9	106	85.8	24*	13
	28 out of 30	100.8	95.4	92.7	1102	23	8	150	95.3	20	19
	30 out of 30	104.8	95.5	97.5	1084	23	9	175	76	37*	16
	7 out of 7	102.4	96.8*	97.9*	N/A	22.1	18	121	66	29	12
	27 out of 30	99.4	96.3	96.1	1078	22	14	200	76	41	28
	28 out of 30	100.8	95.7	92.8	996	21	8	61	82	17	18
	29 out of 30	105	95.8	95.9	1134	24	8	176	59.7	17*	16
	28 out of 30	99.2	95.7	97.6	1076	22	4	58	74.1	18	15
	7 out of 7	98.7	96.3*	98.6*	1220	23.5	11	54	37	28	10
	29 out of 30	100.9	95.5	93.2	1116	22	17	152	65.1	28	14
	26 out of 30	98.4	94.6	91.6	1066	21	10	66	75.8	43	14
	14 out of 16	88.2	95.4*	90.4*	1168	19.4	31	386	53.7**	40	13
	26 out of 30	99.7	96.1	97.8	1064	22	5	59	66.1	18*	14
	27 out of 30	97.8	94.3	96.9	1012	21	7	46	69.6	7	13
	N/A	N/A	95.6	90.9	1013	21.6	11	196	42	28	13
	24 out of 30	96.3	95.3	92.5	1084	22	11	300	32.7	15	15
	20 out of 30	93.3	95.5	96.1	1062	21	8	191	45.5	17	18
	9 out of 30	81.9	94.8	80	944	19	38	695	76.5	50	13
	24 out of 25	90.4	95.5*	90.5*	N/A	19.7	17	440	31.5	37	13

All information based on 2007-2008 school year; categories or statistics marked with an asterisk are from 2006-2007. N/A = comparable data not applicable or available. Ohio state district ratings: "Cont Imp" = "Continuous Improvement," the level below "Excellent With Distinction," "Excellent" and "Effective." Teachers with Masters = the percent of teachers in the district who have master's degrees. Percent Disadvantaged = economically disadvantaged students who qualify for free/reduced lunches. Percent Gifted = students identified as academically gifted or advanced. State Measures Met = Ohio and Kentucky's state academic performance measure (we show how many indicators each district met out of the total possible in Ohio and Kentucky); Indiana uses different measurements.

Academic Rating = Ohio's composite, weighted "Performance Index" for each school and district based on state assessment measures; a similar composite measure is used for Kentucky. In both states, a score of 100 is the desired goal (with 120 being a perfect score in Ohio and 140 in Kentucky). AP classes = the total number of subjects a district offers. Number of AP exams taken by graduates = the total number of AP exams taken by graduating seniors in a district. AP High Scores = the total number of graduating seniors in a district scoring a 3 or higher on an AP exam. Extracurricular = the total number of types of extracurricular activities a district offers. Sports = the total number of types of sports a district offers.



THE Safest NEIGHBORHOODS

COMMUNITY	RANK	Population	PROPERTY CRIME				VIOLENT CRIME				
			Burglary	Theft	Auto Theft	Property Crime Per 1,000 Population	Murder	Rape	Assault	Robbery	Violent crime per 1,000 population
Terrace Park	1	2,174	3	3	2	3.68	0	0	2	1	1.38
Anderson Twp.	2	45,277	65	260	16	7.53	0	3	29	5	0.82
Indian Hill	3	5,893	8	51	2	10.35	0	0	0	2	0.34
West Chester (Butler)	4	66,272	284	121	45	7.25	1	24	32	33	1.45
Turtle Creek Twp. (Warren)	5	15,110	39	91	10	9.27	0	4	17	0	1.39
Mason (Warren)	6	29,555	81	80	17	6.02	1	6	94	6	3.62
Hamilton Twp. (Warren)	7	17,431	34	107	5	8.38	1	2	45	1	2.81
Madeira	8	8,421	11	75	5	10.81	0	2	6	2	1.19
Edgewood, Ky.	9	8,891	18	82	4	11.70	0	0	5	2	0.79
Liberty Twp. (Butler)	10	33,319	79	306	0	11.56	0	4	36	1	1.23
Wyoming	11	8,355	22	72	4	11.72	0	0	5	5	1.20
Miami Twp. (Hamilton)	12	14,460	33	105	17	11.48	0	3	37	0	2.96
Villa Hills, Ky.	13	7,729	15	95	1	14.36	0	0	8	1	1.16
Loveland	14	11,540	16	134	4	13.34	0	4	24	3	2.69
Newtown (Hamilton)	15	3,833	6	55	1	16.18	0	0	3	0	0.78
Salem Twp. (Warren)	16	5,091	12	52	15	15.52	0	1	6	0	1.37
Glendale	17	2,176	3	18	0	9.65	0	0	15	0	6.89
Union, Ky.	18	3,537	9	28	0	10.46	0	1	22	0	6.50
Amberley Village	19	3,550	15	46	6	18.87	0	0	3	0	0.85
Fort Thomas, Ky.	20	15,298	40	208	0	16.21	0	3	58	5	4.31
Montgomery	21	10,210	20	183	8	20.67	0	0	18	2	1.96
Mariemont	22	3,146	5	63	3	22.57	0	0	7	1	2.54
Crosby Twp.	23	2,748	15	36	1	18.92	0	1	4	3	2.91
Ross Twp. (Butler)	24	7,764	52	90	34	22.67	0	0	1	1	0.26
Symmes Twp.	25	15,798	38	318	17	23.61	0	6	49	4	3.73
Deerfield Twp. (Warren)	26	30,521	92	659	47	26.15	0	0	71	3	2.42
Miami Twp. (Clermont)	27	39,310	132	826	25	25.01	0	7	109	8	3.15
Hyde Park	28	13,640	56	341	20	30.66	0	3	5	8	1.18



The Safest Neighborhoods *continued*

COMMUNITY	RANK	Population	PROPERTY CRIME				VIOLENT CRIME				
			Burglary	Theft	Auto Theft	Property Crime Per 1,000 Population	Murder	Rape	Assault	Robbery	Violent crime per 1,000 population
Blue Ash	29	12,767	39	298	12	27.34	0	3	51	3	4.46
Park Hills, Ky.	30	2,781	17	80	3	35.96	0	0	0	0	0.00
Fort Mitchell, Ky.	31	7,556	44	192	16	33.35	0	3	6	6	1.99
Pierce Twp. (Clermont)	32	13,455	46	381	1	31.81	0	4	66	5	5.57
Bright, Ind.	33	5,803	0	215	0	39.78	0	3	27	0	5.55
Oxford (Butler)	34	22,210	120	522	26	30.08	0	15	167	6	8.46
Fairfield Twp. (Butler)	35	15,571	63	628	11	45.08	0	5	45	10	3.85
Columbia-Tusculum	36	3,081	37	80	18	45.00	0	1	3	2	2.00
Mount Lookout	37	3,236	13	153	8	53.70	0	2	1	0	0.93
Oakley	38	11,244	67	515	33	54.91	1	3	5	30	3.48
Mount Adams	39	1,692	18	80	2	66.23	0	1	0	1	1.32
South Lebanon (Warren)	40	3,602	27	177	9	59.13	0	9	28	0	10.27
Fort Wright, Ky.	41	5,440	37	351	13	73.71	0	1	4	11	2.94
Evendale	42	2,912	12	214	8	80.36	0	0	16	5	7.21
Hebron, Ky.	43	1,147	32	151	15	16.62	0	1	124	2	127

RESCUE ME IN A HOUSE FIRE OR HEART ATTACK EMERGENCY, NOT ALL BURBS ARE CREATED EQUAL

If you're moving to the suburbs, take comfort in the fact that a fire engine and life squad are right around the corner.

Or not.

Actually, your chance of getting a prompt response time for any given household emergency can vary quite a bit from neighborhood to neighborhood. *Cincy* crunched raw numbers obtained from the Department of Homeland

Security, comparing average fire department response times from across the Tristate.

Want to see a fire truck less than two minutes after dialing 911? Move to Mariemont, which easily glided to the No. 1 spot. What about knowing those paramedics will arrive in an average of three to four minutes? Buy a house in Glendale, Terrace Park, Amberley Village or Milford.

Morgan Township, where it takes an average

of almost 12 minutes to get firefighter/EMS help, came in last place on our list. (The national standard is six minutes.)

And before you assume that volunteer fire departments are somehow more sluggish than professional in quickly responding to a disaster, know that No. 3 and No. 4 on our list, Glendale and Amberley Village, are both volunteer operations. So there.

AVERAGE FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONSE TIMES (in minutes)

THE TOP 10

1. Mariemont 1:50
2. Glendale 3:00
3. Terrace Park 3:00
4. Amberley Village 3:15
5. Milford 3:38
6. Wilder 3:42
7. Forest Park 3:45
8. Elmsere 3:49
9. North College Hill 4:02
10. Evendale 4:04

THE REST

- 4:05 Hyde Park
- 4:05 Mount Adams
- 4:05 Mount Lookout
- 4:14 Sycamore Twp.
- 4:19 Reading
- 4:25 Fairfield
- 4:28 Springdale
- 4:30 Loveland
- 4:30 Symmes Twp.
- 4:31 Fort Mitchell
- 4:31 Montgomery
- 4:31 Lakeside Park
- 4:33 Sharonville
- 4:34 Anderson Twp.

- 4:34 Newtown
- 4:39 Delhi Twp.
- 4:41 Middletown
- 4:41 Monroe
- 4:44 Colerain Twp.
- 4:44 Harrison
- 4:46 Hamilton
- 4:56 New Richmond
- 5:05 Indian Hill
- 5:05 Madeira
- 5:13 Ross Twp.
- 5:14 Erlanger
- 5:18 Blue Ash
- 5:18 Wyoming
- 5:25 Hebron

- 5:27 Liberty Twp.
- 5:31 Mount Healthy
- 5:32 Fairfield Twp.
- 5:41 Alexandria
- 5:57 West Chester
- 6:00 This is the national gold standard**
- 6:00 Park Hills
- 6:02 Florence
- 6:02 Miami Twp. (Hamilton)
- 6:03 Independence
- 6:03 Mason
- 6:05 Cleves

- 6:08 Pierce Twp.
- 6:13 Greenhills
- 6:18 Morrow
- 6:18 Salem Twp.
- 6:30 Crestview Hills
- 6:30 Crescent Springs
- 6:30 Miami Twp. (Clermont)
- 6:31 Deerfield Twp.
- 6:32 Taylor Mill
- 6:35 Burlington
- 6:35 Edgewood
- 6:42 Fort Wright
- 6:44 Monroe Twp.
- 6:52 Clear Creek Twp.

- 7:04 Edgewood
- 7:37 Madison Twp.
- 8:09 Stonelick Twp.
- 8:28 Milford Twp.
- 8:40 Crosby Twp.
- 8:58 Turtlecreek Twp.
- 9:04 Reily Twp.
- 9:09 Grants Lick
- 9:10 Oxford
- 9:34 Hanover Twp.
- 9:43 Felicity
- 9:43 Franklin
- 11:42 Morgan Twp.

Car sales are not really my forte,” Jeff Wyler is saying in a remarkably candid moment.

The occasion is an interview with a reporter, and Wyler is apparently unaware — or unconcerned — that he’s just uttered what must be the moral equivalent of, say, Winston Churchill revealing “You know, I’m not really very good at fighting Nazis.”

Wyler just laughs. As Greater Cincinnati’s pre-eminent auto dealer, you’d think the man would live and breathe showroom deals and automotive wrangling. In truth, Wyler concedes, “I haven’t actually sold a car in at least 16 years.” And even back in his car-dealing heyday, he stayed away from the showroom floor as much as possible. “I’m just not knowledgeable enough about all the various products. My role is not as a salesman. I’m the CEO of a company.”

And what a company it is. The Jeff Wyler Automotive family operates 27 new car and truck franchises in the Tristate, employing 650 people with annual sales exceeding \$500 million.

What make of cars does Wyler sell? Everything from Chevrolet, Pontiac, Buick, Cadillac, Dodge, Chrysler and Jeep, all the way to Honda, Toyota, Mazda, Nissan, Kia, Hyundai and more.

How Jeff Wyler branded himself, his name, is a story in itself. At a recent Northern Kentucky University business class,

CAR TALK

JEFF WYLER OPENS UP ABOUT HOW HE CREATED HIS BRAND NAME, BUILT A DEALERSHIP DYNASTY, AND WHAT DRIVES HIM NOW ...

By Felix Winternitz • Photography by Mark Bowen

students were read the statement “Cars, like eggs, are cheaper in the country.” A full 80 percent recognized the line as a Jeff Wyler staple slogan (with its cutesy spelling of “cheaper”), even though Wyler says he hasn’t used that tagline in television commercials since the 1980s — that is to say, years before many of these students were born.

What’s more, almost all the students in the classroom recognized the Jeff Wyler name as something to do with auto sales, even though most of the kids have barely bought their first car.

“Yeah, my marketing guys say ‘You, Jeff, are a brand,’” Wyler notes. “It comes from 35 years of doing commercials.”

Even so, Wyler is somewhat mystified at his almost legendary, if not iconic, status. “It’s really amazing to me. It’s surprising that youngsters who weren’t even born yet (know the Wyler egg tagline).”

The car dealer’s own marketing department has compiled research indicating he has a 95-percent name identification in the Tristate market. “It’s good for me, I guess, it’s good for what I do. We do sell a lot of cars.”

Ironically, when Wyler first started his Clermont County business in the 1970s, he was not allowed to advertise, at least not in the Cincinnati newspapers (word was that certain Hamilton County auto dealers had cut some kind of an exclusivity deal with the dailies).

So, Wyler decided to place the majority of his marketing budget in local television, a medium relatively untried at the time, by new car dealers (who tended to rely on Detroit’s Big Three and their slick national

TV commercials). The purely local commercials paid off, as did Wyler’s early brainstorm to locate in the “country.”

TAKING A BACK SEAT TO NONE

Wyler points to the sea of paved asphalt around him, displaying miles and miles of brand-new cars, and observes: “When I first came out here, these were all beanfields.” His decision to build on the rural outskirts was, in hindsight, smart economics. He believed that the eventual completion of Interstate 275 would create an audience willing to drive all the way out to the hinterlands. Land was cheap out

there then; now, with the development of Eastgate Mall and burgeoning retail and housing units along state Route 32, the land he sits on could well be as valuable as his dealerships.

Wyler experimented with another unique concept early on. By acquiring multiple dealerships, he steered the car-buying experience away from any one particular make. Consumers were going out to Wyler’s “auto-mall,” a mega strip where the car brand was de-emphasized, where you could test-drive multiple makes and models. This convenience, partnered with price, made a difference, Wyler believes.

Succeeding in business has allowed Wyler to indulge in a personal passion. Noting that, as a college student, he worked the Reds ticket office in order to earn tuition money, he plainly states, “I love baseball.”

In 2006, he took the opportunity to buy shares in the Cincinnati Reds. The process of achieving minority-owner status through Major League Baseball, however, was brutal. “It was the most thorough background check that anybody has ever done on me,” Wyler reveals.

Despite a hectic travel schedule, Wyler makes sure to pencil in the first Monday in April, Opening Day of the Reds season. “My dad had a great quote. He always said, ‘Son, you need to live your life so that if your funeral is on Opening Day, it will still be well-attended.’”

Actually, working as a Reds ticket-seller is just one of the many jobs Wyler took, sometimes as many as three at a time, to work his way through the University of

THE WYLER FILE

Education: Earned his B.A. from the University of Cincinnati in 1965, and attended the “Owner/President Management Program” at the Harvard School of Business in 1989

Military Service: United States Army

Member: Cincinnati Country Club, Queen City Club, Commercial Club and Metropolitan Club, plus the Royal Poinciana Golf & Country Club in Naples, Fla., the Double Eagle Club in Galena, and the Golf Club in New Albany.

Personal: Lives with his wife, Linda, in Hyde Park. He has four children — Julie, Jessica, David and James — and six grandchildren.