

Oakley among cities where population numbers declining

TOPEKA (AP) — Here are cities in Kansas where the population grew more than 3 percent last year, based on U.S. Census Bureau estimates for 2002 and 2003.

They are ranked by their percentage growth.

CITY	COUNTY	2002	2003	PCT CH
Spring Hill	Johnson	3,353	3,745	11.7
Goddard	Sedgwick	2,632	2,932	11.4
Gardner	Johnson	10,748	11,670	8.6
Basehor	Leavenworth	2,518	2,715	7.8

Park City	Sedgwick	6,437	6,877	6.8
Andover	Butler	7,726	8,222	6.4
Mayetta	Jackson	321	336	4.7
Lansing	Leavenworth	9,587	10,032	4.6
Tonganoxie	Leavenworth	3,176	3,317	4.4
Louisburg	Miami	2,769	2,889	4.3
Olathe	Johnson	101,219	105,274	4.0
Bentley	Sedgwick	391	405	3.6
Princeton	Franklin	322	332	3.1
Maize	Sedgwick	1,981	2,042	3.1
Spearville	Ford	818	843	3.1

Here are the cities in which the population declined 3 percent or more:

CITY	COUNTY	2002	2003	PCT CH
Waldron	Harper	17	16	-5.9
Bazine	Ness	291	278	-4.5
Sharon Springs	Wallace	796	762	-4.3
Ransom	Ness	320	307	-4.1

Ness City	Ness	1,462	1,403	-4.0
Cedar	Smith	25	24	-4.0
Gaylord	Smith	136	131	-3.7
Utica	Ness	213	206	-3.3
Scandia	Republic	400	387	-3.3
Russell Springs	Logan	31	30	-3.2
Winona	Logan	219	212	-3.2
Tribune	Greeley	790	765	-3.2
Natoma	Osborne	348	337	-3.2
Oakley	Logan	2,096	2,030	-3.1
Bird City	Cheyenne	458	444	-3.1
Wallace	Wallace	66	64	-3.0

Houseguests offended with behavior of host

DEAR ABBY: My fiancée and I recently traveled out of town to visit my best friend, "Frank," who recently married his sweetheart, "Gail." Frank graciously invited my fiancée and me to stay at their apartment. This had been our arrangement prior to his marriage, and I accepted the offer.

Each morning, my fiancée and I got up early and took our morning showers before our hosts. As we finished our showers, Gail would run into the bathroom with an armful of cleaning supplies and scrub it from ceiling to floor.

We are not dirty people. We didn't make a mess in their bathroom. We were a little offended, but said nothing. Was this her way of telling us she didn't want us staying there? Should we stay at a hotel next time we visit?

— FORMER HOUSEGUEST
DEAR FORMER HOUSEGUEST: I'd say she conveyed that message pretty clearly. Considering the fact that they are newlyweds, I think you'd all be more comfortable were you to book a room at a nearby hotel or motel.

DEAR ABBY: I am a 42-year-old woman. To those around me I seem to have everything — great kids, a beautiful home, a career and a pretty good life. But deep down I am miserably lonely.

I divorced a cheating spouse eight years ago. I haven't been in a serious relationship since.

I have concentrated on my children, my career and my financial portfolio. But now that my kids are



Abigail Van Buren

• Dear Abby

older and I have a lot of idle time on my hands, I miss being in a relationship.

I have tried singles groups, chat lines, and I'm even attending more social events, to no avail. I take good care of myself and look good for my age. But the 20- and 30-something competition makes it hard, if not impossible, to attract the kind of man I'd like to be with.

What advice have you for someone my age who has been benched for years and is ready to play ball again?

— LONELY IN GEORGIA
DEAR LONELY: Only this: Stop selling yourself short. You have stability and life experience to offer, and a man with an eye for quality will appreciate it. Don't be discouraged; dating is a hit-and-miss game, regardless of age. You are only in the fourth inning, so get off your rusty-dusty, stay out there and keep on pitching.

DEAR ABBY: I am 15. My grandfather recently committed suicide. He asked to be cremated. Since there was no funeral or visitation, I feel like there was no closure. Is there any way I can tell my grandfather goodbye?

— NEEDS CLOSURE
DEAR NEEDS CLOSURE: Please accept my sympathy for

your loss. I'll tell you a technique that has worked for many other people. Write your grandfather a letter. Put into it all the things you wanted to say to him but didn't have a chance to. Put it aside for a week, then re-read it and "send it" to your grandfather by burning it. I hope it works for you, too.

DEAR ABBY: "Frank" and I have been married for three years, but we have known each other since 1994. When we first met, we both drank and partied a lot, but neither of us has had a drink in about seven years. Three years ago, Frank started gambling. We used to do it for entertainment, but now he takes off for hours and won't answer his phone when he's at the casino. He has won thousands of dollars and lost more.

I have threatened Frank with divorce. I have told him to get out (but he won't leave), threatened to leave him (but I never have), and I have wept, begged, and even tried to ignore it.

I stay because I love him and want to help him with his problem, but I don't want to wind up living in a tent. Please help.

— LOSING BIG IN TUCSON
DEAR LOSING BIG: Your concerns are legitimate. It's no coincidence that your husband got hooked on gambling after he stopped drinking. It appears he traded one addiction for another.

A group that might help you is Gam-Anon Family Groups, a 12-step fellowship for husbands, wives, relatives and friends of compulsive gamblers — people

whose lives have been affected by their loved ones' problem. The phone number is 718-352-1671 and the Web site is www.gam-anon.org.

DEAR ABBY: I have a son who is 32. He says he'll never leave my house or "me" until he's 40. He moved out twice, for no longer than two months each time. Then he came back, saying it was lonely and expensive.

I have talked to him about getting his own place, but he insists he wants to stay here. I can't seem to get him out. He's always wanting to get his laundry done — by me. He says he can't do it himself. Help!

— CAN'T CUT THE APRON STRINGS

DEAR CAN'T: What makes you think your son will be willing to leave at the age of 40? He has room, board and maid service in your cozy nest.

Yes, living on one's own is expensive, and it can also sometimes be lonely. But learning to deal with life's tribulations is a part of growing up. You'll be doing your son a favor if you give him a deadline to move and insist he abide by it. And next time the laundry basket gets full, take him to a Laundromat and show him what to do.

P.S. He may need psychiatric counseling, so be prepared!

Editor's note: Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, Calif. 90069.



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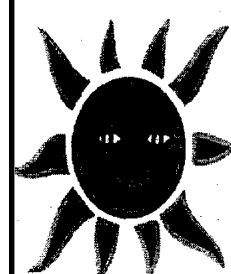
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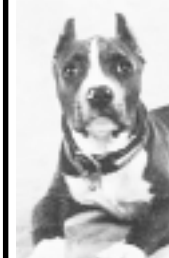
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