

BOONE COUNTY: SHANGRI-LA OF THE OZARKS by Kurt Saxon copyright 1981

During the final years of a mighty civilization, those who mean to survive its collapse must be able to make quick decisions. We've all seen films of refugees from the world's turmoils since the forties, fifties, sixties, seventies. And now in the eighties, the pitiful trash from Cuba, Haiti, and Mexico.

How long did our latest hordes of unwanted wait their chance? Moreover, how many of them just sat around watching their systems deteriorate without doing anything? How many of them were a part of the problem? How long will it be before they are met with guns at our shores and borders? Their good fortune lies in having a destination before it is blocked.

All too soon, not only national borders, but state and even county borders will be closed to increasingly unwelcome outsiders. So your decision to relocate to a more suitable area will soon be based more on the natives' permission than your own willingness to move.

Since beginning THE SURVIVOR several years ago I've studied several alternatives to survival in the densely populated, and therefore doomed, areas of our country. I discounted the high mountain areas for several reasons. Their altitude gives them a short growing season which forces the people to import nearly all their food. Their winters are long and terribly cold. The price of fuel prohibits the amounts needed to last the duration.

Being almost totally dependent on outside supplies, mountain towns will prove to be vastly overpopulated when the really bad times come. Anyone who has anything will be forced to share to the point of beggary.

The isolated wilderness buff playing Grizzly Adams will find the game wiped out or driven off after the first hunting forays. Improvident townies will sack the homestead unless you have the ammo and determination to stack them like cordwood around your place. It's not worth it.

Desert towns are just as bad in their way. There, the lack of water will doom any area packed with refugees. The isolated dweller on the desert, like the lone mountaineer, would soon run out of supplies if he didn't die of boredom first.

Northern California, Oregon and Washington state have long been touted as survivalists' havens. The climate is mild and one can sleep outdoors, if necessary, much of the year. But, aside from a few fortified holdings, these areas would be swamped with refugees. The climate and road systems would insure that literally millions of California refugees would migrate there by car, bicycle and afoot.

The north central states are too cold and barren to attract many refugees. But, as in the case of the high mountain areas, their own surplus populations would be a considerable problem.

It almost goes without saying that the densely populated areas of the midwest and northeast would be deathtraps for survivalist and refugee alike. Only the most determined townies could fight off or reroute the milling bands of refugees there.

The southern coastal states are being swamped by Cubans and Haitians, not to mention blacks, Mexicans and other non-white and shiftless types who simply squat where the living is easy. When living ceases to be easy, these social dregs will become predatory much more intensively than working class and middle class whites who grew up with a stake in the system.

The only part of the US I consider viable as any survivalist's refuge from the coming storm is the Ozarks. Temperate climate. Plenty of water. All but luxury foods grown locally. Wood for

fuel plentiful and cheap or free. Highly defensible from outsiders. Low population density.

Most of the people here own farms or were raised on them. They were comparatively isolated from the outside until better road systems were put in. They are doggedly independent and are unashamedly intolerant of parasites, thieves and degenerates. Their police officers are alert and dedicated. Mostly local men, they know the territory and the people far better than officers in most other regions.

The per-capita crime rate in the Ozarks is the lowest in the country and the police in the region have the highest record for arrests of lawbreakers. Boone County leads the area in strict law enforcement.

In the last year, not one woman has been raped. There has not been one mugging or even an armed robbery here. Even so, the police keep a low profile. You seldom see them unless you're in violation of the law.

Mainly, it's the honest and hardworking people, themselves, with their built-in contempt for inferiors, which keeps the overall crime rate so low. A Boone County jury, presided over by a hanging judge, keeps most idiots out of the area.

I've been here over a year and have yet to see a hippy, fag, beggar or tramp.

Boone County is dry, which accounts for the lack of drunks and derelicts which infest most other downtown areas. If you drink, you have to go to Berryville, 31 miles away. There you can buy any kind of liquor you want and bring it back.

Although very friendly and helpful, most area residents are gun owners and are very proficient due to a lifetime of hunting. The Ozarks will be a sorry place indeed for looters in the years ahead.

Employment opportunities are low and the minimum wage is the average pay. Living is very easy here and inexpensive and no one seems to go without. I've never seen anyone ragged or hungry looking.

I wouldn't advise you to come here unless you've already made your pile, have a business, trade or service to offer or mean to buy land to grow marketable products on. If you don't have anything going now, you ought to think up a business. If you can make anything worthwhile you can sell it here. But if you can't find at least one thing you can do in all four volumes of THE SURVIVOR, you might as well stay where you are and eat, drink and be merry.

If you have a mailorder business, Harrison is perfect. The last thing to completely break down will be the postal service. So, as long as you have stock to sell you'll be in good shape.

Another thing about the mailorder business is that you can locate in the least expensive areas, of which Boone County is certainly one.

If you have property in a high priced area and can get a buyer for it, you can pay for the move, get set up here and still have oodles left over for investment in your stock in trade. Property here goes for about one third of what it would cost in or near the larger cities. You can also rent here for much less than you would pay elsewhere.

People here are honest by nature and you can even buy property over the phone with confidence. The idea is that there is so few people in the area that a cheat would be talked out of business in no time. Besides a realtor would rather be honest than get mauled every time you met him on the street.

I bought my house over the phone. I contacted Shirley Bell, of Bell Real Estate and told her I wanted a house with a basement. She called me back several days later and said she had what I wanted. I visualized an old frame house leaning against a tree with a hole dug under it for pigs and chickens. I bought it anyway.

When I got here I found a modern house on a half acre right at the edge of town. It has four bedrooms, a bath and a half, a full basement, wall-to-wall carpeting, drapes and a deluxe kitchen and all for only \$38,500.

In California, the place would cost \$150,000. And it wasn't unusual. There are even better deals. There are places right in town and others so secluded you have to guide people there.

I've heard a lot of complaints about property taxes in other areas. They go into the thousands of dollars per year. I had Shirley Bell look up some average taxes here. A \$25,000 property is taxed at an average rate of \$76.00 per year. \$50,000 - \$150.00. \$75,000 - \$272.00. \$100,000 - \$395.00.

Although time is running out fast, you may be forced to wait a few months to move anywhere. If you want to get better acquainted with Boone County before coming here, you can subscribe to the local newspaper for six months. \$11.50 will get the paper sent anywhere. Send to: The Harrison Daily Times, 111 Rush, Harrison, AR 72601.

Another way to learn about a town is through its phone book. You can go to your local phone company and have them order a Harrison phone book. It takes about ten days, and it's free. From it you can get an idea of the businesses, services and facilities the area offers.

If you have some idea of the kind of property you want, just call Shirley Bell at 501-741-8888. She'll be glad to tell you what she can get in your line and I'm sure you'll be more than satisfied.