

PLAY, EAT, SHOP: There's something for everyone in Simpsonville

By Chris Worthy
Contributing Writer

Serge Guillot and his wife, Kristy, are finding life in Simpsonville to be very sweet.

Expecting their first child this summer, the couple moved south in search of a place where they could start their family and their business, the Ice Cream Station.

The Guillot family is enjoying much of what resulted in Simpsonville's spot on Family Circle Magazine's 2010 list of 10 Best Towns for Families. The magazine cited the city's low cost of living, good schools, abundance of family activities and small-town lifestyle as reasons why it is among the best locations for families to live.

"We have been here just a year," Guillot said "We were living in the New Jersey-New York area. We chose to live here because we wanted a small town. It has a small town feel — the convenience of a larger city, but the feeling of a small town."

Guillot is especially fond of the area's four distinct — but mild — seasons and the openness of local residents.

"It's the best place to live in the United States," he said. "The people and local shops are so friendly."

And the lines outside his ice cream shop indicate that locals and visitors are glad he made the move.

"The job I was working in New York had minimal people interaction," he said. "We thought this would be a fun place to meet people. Everybody loves ice



cream."

The pace allows Guillot to enjoy all that life has to offer.

"It was rush, rush, rush in New York," he said. "This is a safe place and very family friendly. It's not overly commercialized and keeping up with the Joneses."

Simpsonville Area Chamber of Commerce President Kelly Wilkins said the city offers programs and activities that meet the needs of residents of all ages.

"Simpsonville has so much to offer," Wilkins said. "With our parks and recreation, we have great places to play out-

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side. You can play, eat and shop. Everything you need is in Simpsonville."

Bart Shreve, his wife, Angela, and their son, Jordan, 9, have fully embraced life in Simpsonville. Shreve lives, works and plays here, while also giving of his time to support the community. Along with his son, Shreve can often be found at one of the city's parks, on a nearby golf course or at Ray Thompson's Upstate Karate.

"He and I both go to Upstate Karate," Shreve said. "I coach baseball in the youth program here at Heritage Park."

Shreve, who works at Frontier Communications in Simpsonville, said the city is ideal for his family's lifestyle.

"It is about the best family atmosphere I've ever been around," the Alabama native said. "It's an awesome town to raise a family."

Local activities, including Freedom Weekend Aloft and the Labor Day Family Fun Festival, are favorites for Shreve and his family, but he also cites the availability of parks and restaurants as part of what keeps them in town.

"There is plenty to do here," he said. "I used to have to go out of town to eat."



And as Jordan grows, Shreve said the local schools and the supportive family atmosphere are a key part of their love of their adopted hometown.

"We love every minute of being here

in the heart of Simpsonville," Shreve said. "I can't say enough about it. I couldn't see raising a family anywhere but here. The people here are just friendly, helpful people."

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