

News

Live long and live in Pike County, Pennsylvania How do local areas stack up to national average?

By Raja Abdulrahim
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Pike County, Pa.: Get ready to gloat.

You already have lower sales and property taxes to rub in the faces of your New York counterparts. Now you can tout a little longer life expectancy, too.

Pike women, on average, lived to be 81 and men 75.7, according to figures from a study published last week in the Public Library of Science.

That compares with the national average of 80.1 years for women and 74.8 years for men, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Women and men in Ulster County fared pretty well, too, both being within one or two months of those national numbers.

In Orange, men bucked the trend and lived longer than expected. Orange women: Better luck in the next study.

But Sullivan County — well, maybe it's the higher elevation and too little oxygen, but women came in at 78.5 years and men at 72.5 years.

Sylvia McDonald, though, doesn't worry about such life mile markers.

Those 72nd, 78th and even 80th birthdays are but a distant memory.

The resident of Glen Arden in Goshen, who turned 97 on Sept. 12, celebrated with a party yesterday.

McDonald doesn't look back, only forward. Age, she says, is only a number.

"If I have all my buttons up here," she said, tapping her head with a finger, "and my feet will take me places, I'm happy. If I'm in a bed, I'm no good."

Her friend Roger Cohill is happy making it to 83 years young, but he recognizes the down side of getting up there.

"What is stressful is that you see so many of your friends leaving," he said. "I used to play poker with five or six of us, and there's only two of us left."

THIS IS YOUR LIFE (EXPECTANCY)

National

Women: 80.1

Men: 74.8

Pike:

Women: 81.0

Men: 75.7

Orange

Women: 79.6

Men: 75.1

Sullivan

Women: 78.5

Men: 72.5

Ulster

Women: 80.0

Men: 75.0

Source: Public Library of Science