

THE

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2010 U.S. CENSUS

## Boone County grew 22%

### All cities show population climb

BY MAUREEN HAYDEN  
CNHI Statehouse Bureau

The population of Boone County has grown significantly over the past 10 years, based on estimates just released by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Boone County's population increased by nearly 10,000 (from 46,380 to 56,287 people) in the past decade, a 22.1-percent increase. It also moved up in the rankings of counties by size, from 30th to 27th largest in the state.

Based on the estimates: Advance grew by 5 percent (from 555 to 590), Jamestown grew by 14.4 percent (from 886 to 1,014), Lebanon grew by 9 percent (from 14,385 to 15,706), Thorntown grew by 4.2 percent (from 1,562 to 1,627), Whitestown grew by 203 percent (from 471 to 1,453), and Zionsville grew by 36 percent (from 10,531 to 14,012).

The gains in population mean good things for Boone County, said Dax Norton, Boone County Economic Development Corporation executive director. Norton has seen the numbers, and he believes they are an accurate reflection of what's happening here.

Boone County's growth was significantly greater than the state average. Overall, Indiana saw an estimated 5.6 percent population growth since 2000, according to the demographic experts who crunch Census numbers.

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The U.S. Census Bureau released new population estimates for Indiana cities and towns this week. The estimates aren't based on the current 2010 Census, but on the 2000 Census, updated annually with estimates. To find the population estimates for Indiana cities and towns, go to the STATS Indiana website at [www.stats.indiana.edu](http://www.stats.indiana.edu) and click on Population under the Data by Topic category. The link is [www.stats.indiana.edu/topic/population.asp](http://www.stats.indiana.edu/topic/population.asp).

"It's good stuff," Norton said. "It's one of the best assets we have."

Norton said a growing population is attractive to business.

He said the quality of schools in the county - Zionsville and Lebanon high schools are both ranked in the listing of Best High Schools by *U.S. News & World Report* - is a key to the population growth.

"The schools attract people, and the people attract companies," he said.

As a whole, Indiana is doing well, too, compared to other states.

"Indiana outperformed its industrial neighbors," said Matt Kinghorn, an economist with the Indiana Business Research Center at Indiana University's Kelly School of Business. "Indiana is in a better position in terms of economics and population growth than Ohio, Michigan and Illinois."

Kinghorn said analysis of the population estimates over the last year reflect the slowdown of out-migration. He cites a slump in the housing market and employment insecurity as resulting in fewer people moving

from central cities to suburban areas.

"The tough employment climate means that fewer people are relocating for new jobs," Kinghorn said.

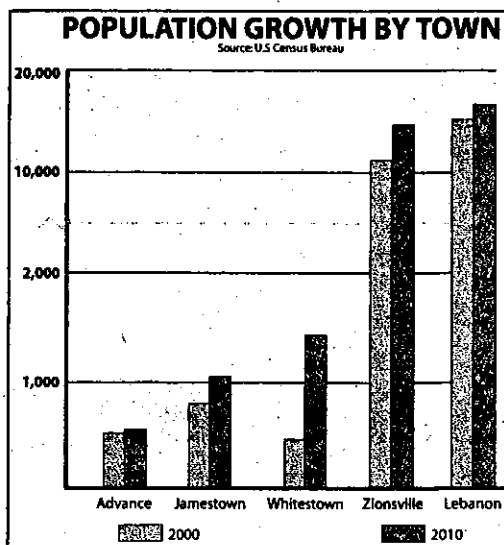
The latest population estimates were released this week to the center, the state's official representative to the U.S. Census Bureau. Final figures will be released by the Census Bureau next June.

Among the center's key findings:

■ Most Hoosiers live in cities or towns. Of Indiana's 6.4 million residents, almost 65 percent live in places that were legally incorporated as of Jan. 1, 2009. In Boone County, 61 percent live in incorporated cities or towns.

■ Unincorporated areas - located outside of official city and town boundaries - led the state's population increase early this decade, but that's reversed. Incorporated cities and towns account for 70 percent of all growth between 2006 and 2009.

■ Suburban areas around Indianapolis and Lake County lead the state's population growth over the decade, but that growth was tempered by the recession. Four of



REPORTER GRAPHIC BY CODY JONES

the fastest growing suburban communities (Fishers, Noblesville, Greenwood and Crown Point) had population increases in 2009 that were below their average since 2000.

■ Out of the top 20 largest cities in Indiana; those with the greatest rate of population loss since 2000 include Hammond (-7.8 percent), Gary (-6.9 percent), Muncie (-4.4 percent), Anderson (-4.2 percent) and Evansville (-4.2 percent).

■ Indianapolis is the 14th largest city in the U.S., ranking just behind

Jacksonville, Fla., and ahead of Austin, Texas.

All these numbers could change. The 2010 Census won't wind down until the end of the summer. While most Indiana residents have mailed back in their 2010 Census forms, Census workers are still out visiting households that didn't respond.

Still, Norton thinks the numbers are accurate, and he expects to see another 20 to 30 percent growth in Boone County during the next 10

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years. Kinghorn, too, thinks the population estimates released this week are good indicators of what's to come.

*Lebanon Reporter Managing Editor Marda Johnson contributed to this report. Maureen Hayden is statehouse bureau chief for CNHI's Indiana newspapers.*

