

# Setauket ranked happiest spot on Long Island

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*A Zippia.com survey ranked Setauket and East Setauket as the fourth happiest spot in New York State, beating out all other Long Island communities on the list. File photo*

The pursuit of happiness is alive and well in Setauket.

Zippia.com gathered data for 341 different places in New York with more than 2,000 people and ranked them based on overall happiness, placing Setauket and East Setauket as the fourth happiest place in New York State, beating out all other Long Island communities in the top-10, including North Wantagh in fifth, North Merrick in ninth and Cold Spring Harbor, ranked 10th overall. The career research website considered various topics, like education, employment, commute times and home ownership in its search for the state's biggest smiles, and Setauket natives stood in support of the findings.

"I like Setauket's sense of place," said George Hoffman, a Setauket mover and shaker who heads the region's environmental watchdog, the Setauket Harbor Task Force. "[I enjoy] its authentic architecture and revolutionary war roots, the beauty of its coastal waters and its links to the shipbuilding and seafaring days."

The North Shore native said he enjoyed interacting with Setauket's "highly educated and close community of interesting and engaging residents" and compared it to the kind of small town found in areas like New England.

"Nothing is perfect, but living in Setauket is pretty darn close," he said.

Beverly Tyler, the Three Village historian, said the Setauket area is one of beauty, variety and history that is backed up by its array of historic structures, schools, public buildings, parks, trails and green spaces.

“The residents here have, over the years, formed groups and organizations that have not only preserved our history and our culture, but have expanded our understanding and concern for each other,” Tyler said. “From the first English settlers who came here 361 years ago and accepted Quakers and other religious settlers looking for safety and community, to the European immigrants who came here in large numbers in the 19th century and initially faced uncertain and conditional acceptance, we have often led the way to an understanding that our differences make us stronger and help vitalize our community.”

Ted Gutmann, director of Setauket’s own Emma S. Clark Memorial Library, said his front-row seat to the greater Setauket and East Setauket community has proven to him how unique the area is. After years at the helm of the community’s library, Gutmann said his patrons often share stories of visitors from afar loving Setauket’s character and pride.

“There are other nice towns on Long Island. There are other historic towns on Long Island. But I think what sets Setauket (and all of the Three Villages) apart is the true sense of community here,” he said. “Having worked at the Emma S. Clark Memorial Library in different positions for virtually my entire career, I have experienced firsthand the sense of pride and neighborliness that exists here.”

Lisa DeVerna, who works in the library’s community outreach and special projects department, echoed her director’s sentiments.

“I think Setauket has such a rich history, from the Spy Ring during the American Revolution to people like William Sidney Mount, who grew up here,” she said. “Combine this with the excellent Three Village school district and our proximity to major roads, which makes it easy for people to get to work and travel, it’s no wonder Setauket is such a great place to live.”

Also making the list were Niskayuna in first, Westvale in second, Harris Hill in third, North Hills in sixth, Tappan in seventh and West Hills in eighth.