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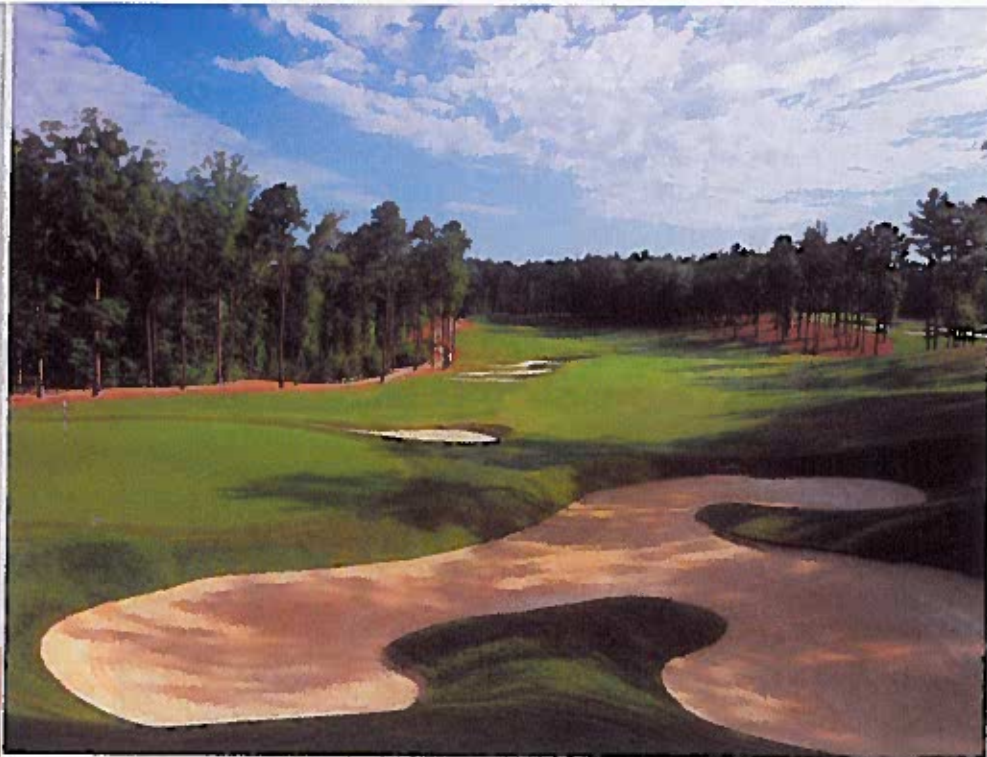
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RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

From the 11th tee of the Lonnie Poole Golf Course in Raleigh, golfers pause and admire the scene before them. A sloping green fairway offers ominous bunkers to the left, but for newcomers, the vista beyond the trees is captivating. Clearly, the tall stately buildings of downtown Raleigh are well out of bounds, but the view is so unusual and grand that it calls for a moment of reflection.

"The whole course is visually daunting," says Art Bruneau, a turf specialist and part-time professor at North Carolina State University, who moved here five years ago from Ohio. "Because of the contours, the course can look totally different at various times of day."

Lonnie Poole has been designated an Audubon International Signature Golf Sanctuary, one of only two university courses in the world to be honored as such.

Of all Greater Raleigh's 20-plus public golf courses, this one is the premier, located on NC State's Centennial Campus. The course borders a busy interstate to the south, but traffic is invisible through the forest, a common characteristic in many neighborhoods in Raleigh, nicknamed the City of Oaks. The state capital in west-central North Carolina has affluent older homes inside the "beltline," formed by Interstate 440, and gated communities that rim the city. Both volunteer work and part-time jobs are available. Parks abound, and cultural and educational venues are abundant, from museums and theater to the state fairgrounds with its popular flea market. The city has top-notch medical facilities, including Rex Hospital

and WakeMed Health and Hospitals.

While Raleigh continues to grow, concrete is relatively scarce compared to most urban centers, with miles of hiking and biking trails, several of them in city parks with lakes. Many retirees enjoy continuing-education courses at NC State's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

Population: 423,179 in the city, 952,151 in Wake County

Climate:
January: High 51°/ Low 30°
July: High 90°/ Low 69°

Cost of living: Below average

Housing cost: The median sales price for existing single-family homes in Raleigh-Cary was \$196,900 in 2013, according to the National Association of Realtors.

Information: Greater Raleigh Chamber of

Commerce, (919) 664-7000 or RaleighChamber.org. Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau, (800) 849-8499 or VisitRaleigh.com.

PINEHURST, NORTH CAROLINA

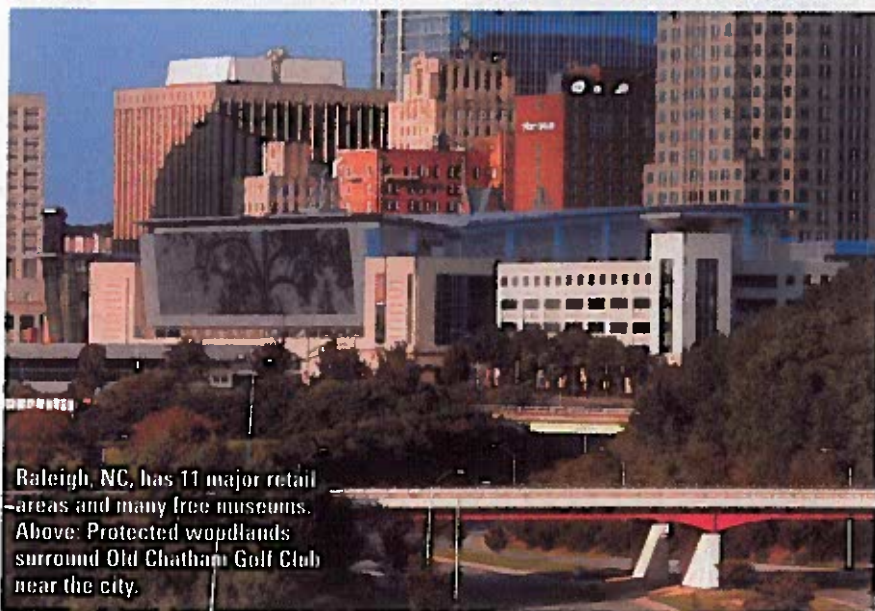
Golf at Pinehurst is more than 100 years old, with the first holes opening to the public in 1898. More than 700 holes of golf are in the area, and all the big names, from Arnold Palmer to Tiger Woods, have come to love its sandy, rolling hills and pine tree-lined fairways.

"When my wife and I came here, we wanted to play golf every day and submerge ourselves in the golf world," says Anthony Price, 59, who moved to Pinehurst from the Washington, DC, area in 2005 with Sherry, 57, a former administrator for Fairfax County (VA) Public Schools. They loved it, but soon yearned for more varied activities. They joined a newcomers organization and began socializing in dining clubs, wine tastings and theater outings.

"I can't say enough about the experience we've had in Pinehurst," says Anthony, a former executive at Verizon Communications Inc. "Professional and college sports are close by, and you can also volunteer and give back to the community in hundreds of nonprofits around here."

Pinehurst and neighboring Southern Pines, part of the Sandhills region, is well-known for horses and pottery, says Miles with the convention and visitors bureau. Equestrian events, polo matches and harness racing are popular. "On top of that, we are in a great location — two hours to the beach, three or four hours to the North Carolina mountains and about an hour to Raleigh," he says.

FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital, which ▶



Raleigh, NC, has 11 major retail areas and many free museums. Above: Protected woodlands surround Old Chatham Golf Club near the city.