

STATE PROFILE



West Virginia State Profile

Brief History

State History

People have lived in West Virginia for about 12,500 years, the earliest being the Paleo-Indians. Other native American cultures inhabited the area, but by the time the first European settlers arrived, all the Native American villages were gone, and the area was a hunting ground used by many tribes (including the Shawnee, Cherokee, Delaware, and Iroquois). The first white settlement of what is now West Virginia was probably at Mecklenburg (now Shepherdstown) in 1727. In 1731 Morgan Morgan established the first permanent white settlement on Mill Creek in present-day Berkeley County.

West Virginia shares its history with Virginia from 1607 until Virginia seceded from the Union in 1861. Delegates representing western counties formed their own government, which was granted statehood in 1863 by President Abraham Lincoln after conditions had been met requiring the gradual emancipation of slaves. West Virginia is the only state to be designated by presidential proclamation. In 1915, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that in forming a separate state, West Virginia owed more than \$12 million for “a just proportion of the public debt of the Commonwealth of Virginia.” A check was delivered in 1919, and bonds paid off the remainder in 1939.

West Virginia was a battleground during the Civil War. Although Confederates were unable to control significant regions of western Virginia for considerable periods of time during the war, they were successful in conducting destructive raids. The Eastern Panhandle saw continual fighting. Although it was not originally a part of West Virginia, it was annexed in 1863 because it contained the strategically important Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The divisions caused by the Civil War lasted long afterward. These were usually fought out in political arenas but occasionally developed into violence.

1882 saw the beginning of the now famous Hatfield-McCoy feud along the border region between West Virginia and Kentucky. The feud included many killings, involving the governors of both states in lengthy and heated controversy. The bloodshed of the West Virginia Hatfields and the Kentucky McCoy's ended in 1896.

Although coal was discovered on the Coal River in 1742, an economical method of transporting it in quantity, as well as other West Virginia natural resources, was not available until the growth of the railroads in the latter half of the 1800s.

Rapid industrial expansion began after the Civil War, attracting thousands of European immigrants and African Americans into the area. However, it was accompanied by serious labor problems, particularly in coal mines where wages were low and working conditions were dangerous. Mine owners bitterly resisted unionization. Strikes were often associated with serious and extended violence during the late 19th Century and the early 20th Century. Miners' strikes between 1912 and 1921 required the intervention of state and federal troops to quell the violence. Unionization grew after the Great Depression as a result of reforms. The state's chemical industry was founded during World War I when German chemicals were no longer available and was expanded during World War II. Both wars also brought unprecedented boom periods to the mining and steel industries in West Virginia.

Economic conditions improved during the 1960s as federal aid poured into the state and massive efforts were made to attract new industry. In the 1970s, West Virginia's coal-based economy flourished as energy prices rose dramatically; but West Virginia suffered through one of the worst economic periods in its history in the 1980s when energy prices fell.

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Capital City

When West Virginia became a state in 1863, the capital was located in Wheeling.

The State Legislature designated Charleston as the capital city in 1870. Kanawha County citizens provided a boat to move all state records to their new home in Charleston.

In 1875, the Legislature voted to return the capital to Wheeling. Although state officials boarded steamers on May 21 to journey to Wheeling, state archives and records did not arrive until late September, causing state government to be at a standstill for four months.

In 1877, the Legislature decided that the citizens would choose between Charleston, Martinsburg, and Clarksburg for a permanent capital location. As a result of the election, it was proclaimed that eight years hence, Charleston would be the government's permanent seat, and state officials again boarded a boat to move from Wheeling to Charleston, towing a barge containing the State records, papers, and library.

Capitol Building

The new capitol opened in May 1885 and served until its destruction by fire on January 3, 1921. For the next six years West Virginia state government was run from a "pasteboard capitol," a temporary structure built hastily in the wake of the fire. Although this structure was also destroyed by fire in 1927, the present capitol was already under construction on the north bank of the Kanawha River.

This new building, designed by Cass Gilbert, was completed in 1932 at a cost of \$10 million. In 1912, Gilbert had designed the world's first skyscraper, the Woolworth Building in New York City. His other works include the state capitols of Arkansas and Minnesota, and the U.S. Treasury Building and the U.S. Supreme Court Building in Washington, D.C.



Two-thirds of the capitol interior is made of four different kinds of marble. The rotunda section and two wings provide 535,000 square feet of floor space and house 333 rooms. The exterior of the capitol, built in the classical style, is of buff Indiana limestone. The 293 foot gold dome atop the structure is five feet higher than the dome of the U.S. Capitol and in 1988 was totally gilded in 14 karat gold leaf applied to the copper and lead roof in tiny 3 3/8 inch squares. After undergoing structural repairs, the dome was restored in the fall of 2005 to Gilbert's original two-tone concept of lead gray paint and gold leaf details.

Health Care



There are approximately 3,700 practicing physicians in West Virginia, as well as over 27,000 active registered nurses, nearly 8,000 active licensed practical nurses, 77 hospitals and medical centers (includes ambulatory surgical centers), 32 primary care centers with 132 satellites (of which 49 are school-based health center sites) for a total of 164 clinical sites, and 49 local boards of health serving all 55 counties. There are nine free primary care clinics, and residents can access services in 54 county offices of the Department of Health and Human Resources.

Health Care Access and Utilization¹

Hospital Admissions – Rate per 1,000 (WV Rank among 50 states and D.C., 1=high)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
West Virginia	163 (2nd)	164 (2nd)	161 (2nd)	156 (2nd)	158 (2nd)	156 (2nd)
United States	120	119	119	118	117	117

Hospital Emergency Room Visits – Rate per 1,000 (WV Rank among 50 states and D.C., 1=high)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
West Virginia	614 (2nd)	624 (2nd)	642 (1st)	629 (3rd)	647 (2nd)	652 (3rd)
United States	382	383	387	396	401	404

No Health Insurance Coverage—Percent of total population (WV Rank among 50 states and D.C., 1=high)

	West Virginia			United States		
	2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009	2007	2008	2009
	13.8% (25th)	14.6% (22nd)	15.0% (29th)	15.3%	15.4%	17.0%

Infant Mortality for West Virginia and the U.S.

Number and rate per 1,000 live births (1 Preliminary data)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
West Virginia	7.6	7.3	9.1	7.3	7.6	8.1	7.4	7.4	7.7	7.8 ¹
United States	6.9	6.9	7.0	6.9	6.8	6.9	6.9	6.7	N/A	N/A

Health Status²

	Year	WV Average	Rank	U.S. Average
Adults with diabetes	2009	12.4%	2	9.1%
Smokers	2009	25.6%	1	18.0%
Obesity	2009	31.7%	6	27.4%
“Fair or poor” health status of residents	2009	22.8%	2	16.1%
Currently diagnosed with asthma	2009	8.8%	27	8.4%
Heavy drinking among adults	2009	2.7%	53	5.1%
Adults with history of heart attack	2009	6.5%	1	4.0%
Adults with history of stroke	2009	3.7%	4	2.5%

The percentage of public high school students who have never smoked cigarettes has nearly doubled, increasing from 25.7% in 2000 to 47.8% in 2009 (an increase of 86%). Similar results are seen among middle school never-smokers (53.1% in 2000, to 73.1% in 2009).³

The percentage of public high school students who are current smokers (smoked cigarettes one or more days in the past month) has decreased from 38.5% in 2000 to 22.3% in 2009—a decrease of 42%.³

¹ Source: The Kaiser Family Foundation, <<http://statehealthfacts.org>>.

² According to the 2009 Behavioral Risk Factor Survey conducted by the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health.

³ According to the West Virginia Youth Tobacco Survey conducted in 2009.

K–12 Education



West Virginia has 417 public elementary schools and 275 public secondary schools staffed by 24,619 professional personnel and 13,909 service personnel in the current 2010-2011 school year. In addition, in 2009-2010, there were 4,430 home schools and 101 church-related and other private schools teaching 6,739 and 10,343 students, respectively.

Each county in the state constitutes a school district; an elected county board of education governs each district. Each board may levy ad valorem taxes and issue bonds.

The 2010 *Quality Counts* report ranked West Virginia’s public education system ninth in the nation. *Quality Counts* (produced by Education Week and the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center) provides results for education policy and performance areas that constitute a state-by-state review.

The state is a leader in early education. The annual Pew report “Votes Count” cited West Virginia’s Universal Pre-K Program as an example of “smart, research-based policy and strong, sustained commitments.” The report evaluates state budgets to determine which legislatures count voluntary, high-quality pre-k among their top education reform strategies. West Virginia passed legislation that requires universal preschool to be available to all of the state’s four-year-olds by the 2012-2013 school year. Half of the programs will be in collaborative settings with Head Start, child care, and private programs. The program enrolled about 51% of the state’s four-year-olds in 2009, and is on pace to serve about 60% (about 15,550 children) in 2010-2011. About nine percent of the state’s three-year-olds, mainly special needs children, also are served through the program.

Public School Enrollment Grades PK–12¹ Academic Years 2001–02 through 2010–11

	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
Elementary	155,635	155,144	153,616	152,470	152,969	154,479	155,830	157,520	159,205	155,687
Secondary	126,597	126,447	126,945	126,987	126,819	126,818	125,903	124,388	122,623	125,517
Total All Grades	282,232	281,591	280,561	279,457	279,788	281,297	281,733	281,908	281,828	281,204

¹ Kindergarten has been added beginning with Academic Year 2006–2007.

Higher Education



ACT composite scores by all test takers

The 2010 national average of ACT composite scores is 21.0. The West Virginia composite scores are shown below:

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
WV ACT scores	N/A	20.3	20.3	20.1	20.3	20.6	20.6	20.7	20.7	20.7

Enrollment—West Virginia Public Colleges and Universities

Academic Year	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Enrollment (FTE)	62,877	64,965	66,993	68,657	69,847	71,173	71,252	72,531	76,367	78,559
Age 25 or older undergraduate enrollment	16,852	17,190	17,668	18,236	18,828	19,027	18,864	18,510	21,830	23,268
Percent undergraduate 25 and above	25%	25%	25%	25%	26%	26%	25%	25%	27%	28%

Certificates and Degrees—Public and Independent Colleges and Universities

Academic Year	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Total certificates and degrees awarded	14,189	14,323	15,176	15,498	16,425	16,781	17,415	17,726	17,477	17,863
Certificates and associate's degrees	2,440	2,460	2,703	2,843	3,437	3,289	3,524	3,553	3,520	3,594
Bachelor's degrees	8,537	9,032	9,324	9,167	9,535	9,931	10,239	10,450	10,184	10,188

West Virginia Independent Colleges and Universities

This information is group data for the eight private, not-for-profit higher education member institutions of West Virginia Independent Colleges & Universities, Inc. (WVICU). These institutions include: Alderson-Broadus College in Philippi, Appalachian Bible College in Bradley, Bethany College in Bethany, Davis & Elkins College in Elkins, Ohio Valley University in Vienna, University of Charleston in Charleston, West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon, and Wheeling Jesuit University in Wheeling.

Enrollment Data

Academic Year	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11 ¹
Student enrollment	10,969	10,917	10,813	10,656	11,137	10,256	10,917	7,525

In-State Students

Academic Year	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11 ¹
Students in-state	6,916	6,710	6,478	6,102	6,212	5,984	6,367	3,588
Percentage in-state	60%	58%	60%	64%	61%	58%	59%	49%

First Generation College Students

Academic Year	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11 ¹
Percentage	38%	40%	39%	31%	21%	27%	25%

Number of Graduates

Academic Year	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10 ¹
Total graduates	2,220	2,264	2,555	2,648	2,661	2,542	1,407

¹ The data from the most recent year is from eight member schools of the WVICU; all of the prior years included data from a ninth member, Mountain State University.

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Law Enforcement



In 2009, there were 170 municipal law enforcement agencies in West Virginia, plus the State Police with 62 detachments, DNR with 55 detachments, 55 sheriff's departments, the State Fire Commission, and 12 higher education campuses with full police powers. There were 3,300 full-time sworn law enforcement officers—3,195 men and 105 women.

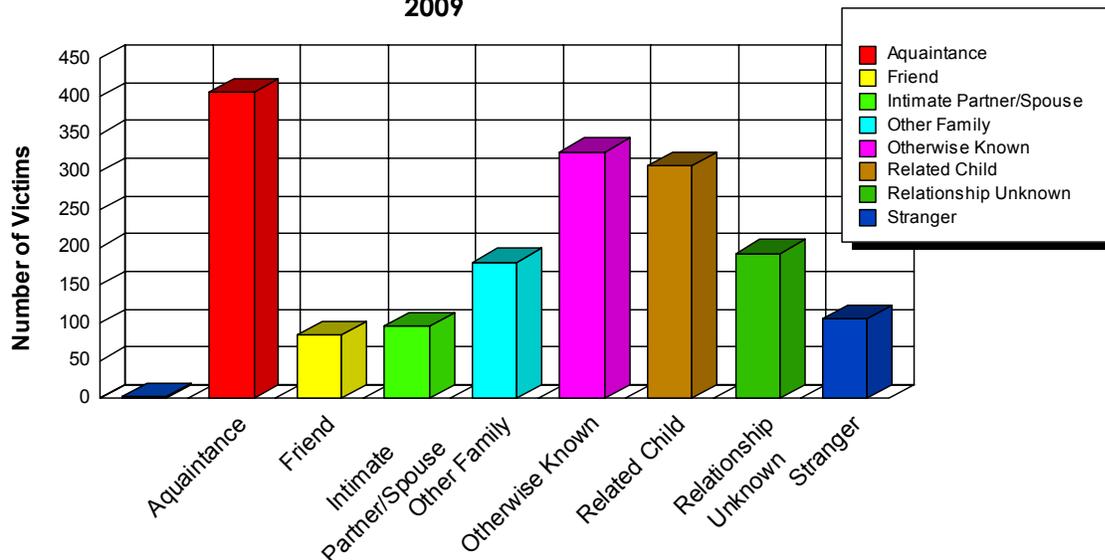
Sworn Officers	Male	Female	Total
Municipal officers	1,397	52	1,449
Sheriff's officers	1,006	29	1,035
State Police	653	23	676
DNR officers	108	0	108
Fire Commission officers	31	1	32
Total officers	3,195	105	3,300

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Sworn officers per 1,000 residents	1.74	1.75	1.67	1.80	1.80

2009 Sexual Assaults in West Virginia

	Victims	Offenders
Gender	82.9% were female 16.9% were male 0.2% were unknown	6.2% were female 93.3% were male 0.5% were unknown
Race	93% were white 5% were black 2% were other or unknown	85.2% were white 11.8% were black 3% were other or unknown
Age	Average age was 17 Most common age was 15 64.8% were juveniles	Average age was 31 Most common age was 20 29.4% were juveniles

Sexual Assault - Victim's Relationship to Offender 2009



NOTE: Related Child includes child, grandchild, stepchild, child or boyfriend/girlfriend, and child or intimate partner. Intimate Partner/Spouse includes spouse, ex-spouse, cohabitating partner, boyfriend/girlfriend, estranged spouse, intimate partner, and homosexual partner. Other Family includes parent, in-law, sibling, grandparent, stepparent, stepsibling, and parent. Otherwise Known includes employer, employee, babysitter, other household member, neighbor, and otherwise known.

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Fire Services



West Virginia has 446 fire departments—416 of these are volunteer fire departments, 12 career departments (fully paid), and 18 are a combination of paid and volunteer. There are approximately 11,147 firefighters—870 paid and 10,277 volunteers.

Many of these fire service personnel make up six distinct regional response teams which are situated throughout the state under the leadership of the State Fire Commission. The regional response teams are comprised of trained members of public safety groups (fire, EMS, law enforcement, etc.) and the private sector for the purpose of mitigating actual or suspected hazardous materials incidents, weapons of mass destruction, and other emergencies across West Virginia.

Fire service members and other emergency services groups are also grouped into eight swift-water rescue teams deployed by the State Fire Commission (under the authority of the Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety) during disasters involving flooding, water rescue, and water-related fatalities, etc.

West Virginia	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
Fire fatalities	79	42	57	99 ¹
Fires investigated by the State Fire Marshal's Office	1,004	974	970	930
Adults arrested for arson	86	87	86	82
Juveniles arrested for arson	76	6	10	9

¹ 29 of these fire fatalities were from the Upper Big Branch Mine disaster in Raleigh County.

From July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010, fire-related incidents totaled 8,470.

Most Frequent Fire Incident Type	Frequency	Total Dollar Loss
Building fires	2,499	\$279,887,756
Passenger vehicle fire	1,137	\$4,577,488
Cooking fire, confined to container	661	\$185,507
Outside rubbish, trash or waste fire	646	\$25,172
Brush, or brush and grass mixture fire	638	\$42,676
Chimney or flue fire, confined to chimney or flue	388	\$135,600
Fire, other	360	\$1,751,975
Forest, woods or wildland fire	313	\$155,375
Outside rubbish fire, other	254	\$540
Dumpster or other outside trash receptacle fire	240	\$33,235
Fires in structures other than in a building	209	\$5,794,400
Fire in mobile home used as fixed residence	188	\$3,268,400
Natural vegetation fire, other	134	\$6,082
Outside equipment fire	117	\$2,163,375
Road freight or transport vehicle fire	108	\$2,028,603
Special outside fire, other	97	\$24,970
Mobile property (vehicle) fire, other	96	\$507,451
Grass fire	88	\$0
Off-road vehicle or heavy equipment fire	60	\$2,290,916
Outside storage fire	31	\$1,560,904
Fuel burner/boiler malfunction, fire confined	29	\$12,050
Cultivated vegetation, crop fire, other	17	\$6,780
Construction or demolition landfill fire	22	\$2,700
Fire in portable building, fixed location	9	\$3,400

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Transportation



The Division of Highways is responsible for planning, engineering, right-of-way acquisition, construction, reconstruction, traffic regulation and maintenance of more than 34,000 miles of state roads. Additional duties include highway research, outdoor advertising contiguous to state roads, roadside development, safety and weigh enforcement, and dissemination of highway information.

West Virginia is one of only four states that has jurisdiction over both state and county roads. Nearly 36,000 miles or 92% of state and county roads are state-maintained, which leads the United States in percentage of state-maintained highway miles. This ranks West Virginia as the sixth largest state-maintained highway network in the country.

Road ownership:

- 34,726 miles of state owned roads (includes 88 miles of the West Virginia Turnpike and 549 miles of Interstate highways)
- 835 miles of federally owned roads
- 2,891 miles of municipally owned roads

Of these public roadways:

- 1,824 miles are included in the National Highway System, 23 miles of which are connectors to other modes of transportation such as airports, trains, and buses.
- Two national byways and eight state scenic byways.

General statistics:

- The number of individual drivers' licenses issued as a Class E-Regular, Class D, or CDL license is 1,206,026.
- West Virginia has 33 public-use airports; seven of which have commercial air service.
- West Virginia is home to over 400 miles of navigable waterways; The Port of Huntington Tri-State, 199 miles in length, is the largest statistic inland port in America, as well as the fourth largest port for tonnage.
- There were 2,401 route miles of railroad operated in West Virginia at the end of 2009.
- West Virginia has 18 public transit systems providing services in 33 of the state's 55 counties. Public transit vehicles traveled 11,233,001 miles and provided 5,824,833 one way trips (of which 1,142,093 were for the elderly or individuals with disabilities).

Seat belt usage in West Virginia and the U.S. from 2001 through 2008

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	% change 2007-2008
WV	52.3%	71.6%	73.6%	75.8%	84.9%	88.5%	89.6%	89.5%	(0.1%)
Nation	73%	75%	79%	80%	82%	81%	82%	83%	1%

Recreation and Culture



Tourism remains a growing sector of the state's economy, and a wealth of recreational and cultural opportunities is available. West Virginia, the third most heavily forested state in the nation, abounds with scenic natural beauty and outdoor sports and activities. People, locally and from around the world come to enjoy skiing, whitewater rafting, camping, hiking, hunting, fishing, golfing, wildlife, photography, birding, all-terrain vehicle riding and biking. Visitors also can tour numerous historic sites, journey into an underground coal mine, visit the world's largest moveable radio telescope, spy bald eagles in their natural habitats, and purchase and enjoy West Virginia crafts, arts and cuisine.

From rustic Civilian Conservation Corps era areas with little development to massive modern resorts; from restored logging railroads and company towns to Civil War battlefields; from natural areas with national significance to areas that are primarily day-use local recreational facilities; West Virginia state parks, forests and wildlife management areas are of tremendous variety. West Virginia has 34 state parks, recreational facilities on nine state forests and four wildlife management areas. There are hundreds of miles of walking and multipurpose trails throughout the state park system, as well as two rail trails within its jurisdiction—the Greenbrier River Trail and the North Bend Rail Trail.

The history of West Virginia is woven into every region of the state. There are more than 200 historic sites and museums in West Virginia showcasing everything from prehistoric life and culture to contemporary art. More than 20,000 sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, with each one telling a unique story about our state's culture, history and people. More than 1,000 historic highway markers have been erected along roadsides throughout West Virginia since this program began in 1937.

The Culture Center at the State Capitol Complex is the state's premier welcome center and home to the West Virginia State Museum and the West Virginia State Archives. Throughout 2010, more than 95,000 visitors to the Culture Center enjoyed exhibits, performances, and lectures. Many (including Vandalia Festival, art and culture exhibits, and lectures and performances such as the Collegiate Series) are free and open to the public. The popular "West Virginia's Gift to the World" exhibits focused in 2010 on West Virginia state parks, state forests, and whitewater rafting. The popular Juried Quilt Exhibit, the enchanting hand-blown glass garden by Ron Hinkle, and exhibits featuring the West Virginia State Police and West Virginia National Guard brought diverse audiences to the Culture Center in 2010.

The Culture Center houses two state agencies. The West Virginia Division of Culture and History includes administrative office, Archives and History, Arts, Museums, and the State Historic Preservation Office. This agency also includes the State Museum and the West Virginia State Theater. A new feature of the Culture Center is the West Virginia State Museum Shop featuring Tamarack: The Best of West Virginia. The shop showcases museum-related items, as well as fine West Virginia juried handcrafts, food products, and art. The other agency housed in the Culture Center is the West Virginia Library Commission.

The West Virginia State Museum, opened in 2009 after extensive renovations, occupies 24,000 square feet in the building's lower level and features a show path that takes visitors from prehistoric to contemporary times in West Virginia. Special effects, narration, surround sound, and dynamic theater lighting provide visitors with the experience of being "in the moment" of the state's history. In 2010, more than 14,000 school students from 44 counties in the state visited the museum on field trips and participated in the museum's education programs featuring state-of-the-art technology. More than 3,000 groups toured the museum.

In 2010, the Archives and History Section hosted more than 34,300 patrons and added 261,376 records. The section introduced two genealogy clubs and a lecture series to encourage visitors to learn more about accessing the extensive on-line archival files of the state. The Arts Section hosted 15 students at its annual "Poetry Out Loud" program and recognized artists and arts organizations around the state with the Governor's Arts Awards.

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The second agency housed in the Culture Center is the Library Commission, made up of administrative offices, Library Development, Network Services, the Reference Library, and the Regional Library for the Blind. The Library Commission develops library services in all types of libraries throughout West Virginia, of which there are 174 public libraries, 27 academic libraries, and 44 specialty libraries (27 are open to the public).

The public libraries contain 5,695,585 items in print, audio, video, and electronic format, and they provide public Internet access and access to at least ten on-line databases. Each of the ten databases may include thousands of individual titles available to library users. Last fiscal year, West Virginians visited their public libraries 6,216,728 times, borrowed 7,878,903 items, and used library electronic resources 1,490,164 times. The growth in the use of electronic resources has not diminished the use of traditional library resources, since both circulation and electronic use are increasing.

Music and Arts

West Virginia has a rich heritage in music and arts, from traditional Appalachian dance and traditional music, to some of the country's top performers and outstanding performance venues. The 240,000 square-foot Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences of West Virginia in downtown Charleston houses the performing arts, visual arts, and the sciences under one roof—one of the few centers of its kind in the country. The facility is home to the Avampato Discovery Museum and the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra. The West Virginia Symphony is the state's premiere orchestra, offering a symphonic series, a pop series, special events series, opera and ballet, touring concerts, and the Montclair String Quartet. The other two symphony orchestras in the state are in Huntington and Wheeling.

Mountain Stage, a production of West Virginia Public Broadcasting, is a series of two-hour specials that presents acts ranging from traditional roots and country music to avant-garde rock and jazz. In addition to showcasing both established and emerging artists from the United States, the show has featured artists from all over the world, recording before a live audience at the state Culture Center on Charleston's Capitol complex.

The annual Vandalia Gathering, scheduled over the Memorial Day weekend, attracts hundreds of old-time musicians and music lovers inside and outside the state. Often referred to as a state "family reunion," The Vandalia Gathering brings young performers and veteran musicians together to play for this annual festival. West Virginia hospitality is on display with food, crafts, and the sounds of great traditional music.

For 70 years, the Marshall Artists Series has brought some of the nation's finest performers to Huntington and the luxurious vaudeville-era Keith-Albee Theatre. It is the oldest continuous live arts presentation program in the country. The theater itself is a showpiece that was second only in size to New York's Roxy Theater when it was built in 1928. Today, it is restored to its original glory and operated as a performing arts center.

One of the many festivals and fairs scheduled throughout West Virginia, the Augusta Heritage Festival (planned annually the second weekend in August) brings together Cajun, Creole, guitar, blues, swing, Irish, bluegrass, folk arts, old-time, vocal and traditional music and dance, artists and crafts exhibitors, storytellers, singers, dancers, and more.

The Appalachian String Band Festival, held at historic Camp Washington Carver, attracts thousands of campers and day-trippers. This must-attend event brings a wide range of performers from West Virginia, across the country, and around the world. This week-long family event—held in late July—is packed with individual and band performances, flatfoot dancing, square dancing, children's craft projects, impromptu jam sessions, instrument vendors, and good food, all in a beautiful outdoor setting.

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Major Points of Interest

Appalachian Power Park — Charleston is home to the West Virginia Power, a Class A affiliate of the Pittsburgh Pirates, located in the historic East End. It is popular among capital city visitors and baseball fans for its downtown location and open-air feel.

American Mountain Theater in Elkins — The American Mountain Theater, a 525-seat state-of-the-art music theater in the historic rail yard in Elkins, is the state's first and only "Branson Style" family music, comedy, and variety show. A cast of seasoned entertainers treats visitors to country, gospel, bluegrass, and patriotic music as well as light-hearted comedic impersonations of popular entertainers. Dance numbers also are included in the show, along with clean family comedy



Berkeley Springs — Long before the first Europeans discovered its warm waters, this region was already a famous health spa attracting Native Americans from Canada to the Carolinas. George Washington even slept here. Today, Berkeley Springs offers relaxing spas, unique shops, local arts, and an International Water Tasting Festival.

Cabela's — As an outfitter for hunting, fishing, and outdoor activities, Cabela's offers a 175,000 square-foot store in Wheeling. It includes a wildlife museum, a television broadcast studio, three freshwater aquariums totaling 55,000 gallons (stocked with fish native to West Virginia), and a 25-seat restaurant with park-like seating that overlooks the entire store.

Casino and Racetracks — Entertainment is a sure bet at West Virginia's racetracks as all four facilities now offer table games such as blackjack, poker, and roulette. Hancock County's Mountaineer Casino Racetrack & Resort in Chester includes approximately 3,220 slot machines, a year-round thoroughbred racetrack, an upscale hotel with amenities, golf course, fine dining, a theater and events center, and a convention center. Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center in Wheeling, Ohio County, features a 151-room hotel, more than 2,400 slot machines, a 550-seat showroom, greyhound racing, casual and fine dining restaurants, a food court, and a gift shop. Kanawha County's Mardi Gras Casino and Resort in Nitro offers table games to complement the already 90,000 square feet of gaming entertainment and 1,800 slots, greyhound racing, and dining experiences in the New Orleans-style lounge with live music, a trackside restaurant, and snack bars.

Chief Logan Lodge, Hotel, and Conference Center — The newest lodging addition to the West Virginia State Parks system, this facility sits along the heavily traveled Corridor G near Logan. It offers a 75-room lodge with many amenities in place and more in the planning stages. The facility is close to trailheads for the Hatfield-McCoy Trails system. A state-of-the-art recreation center features an aquatic center with Olympic-style 25-meter, eight-lane competition swimming pool; climate controlled fitness center; professional sports shop with equipment and accessories; multi-purpose areas for indoor soccer, volleyball, and basketball; three indoor tennis courts; elevated walking track; and locker rooms with amenities, showers, and daily-use lockers.



Civil War Sesquicentennial, Trails and Signage Program — Steeped in Civil War history, West Virginia is partnering with other states and organizations to commemorate the war's 150th anniversary. A new

State Profile Recreation and Culture

tourist signage program will mark the location of key Civil War sites and will help interpret West Virginia's unique history. The program is an initiative designed to drive historical tourists, as well as interested families and laymen, to the locations of important Civil War events in several states. It will serve as a cornerstone of sustained promotion of historic events long after the sesquicentennial is over. The program includes erecting interpretive signage at approved locations such as the Droop Mountain Battlefield and the boyhood home of Confederate General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson. Sites that participate in the program are included in a mass cross-promotional marketing effort facilitated by Civil Wars Trails Inc. throughout North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and Tennessee.

Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences — Located in the historic East End of Charleston, the Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences includes a performance hall, a science and children's interactive museum, a large format film theater, a planetarium, and many arts events.



Coal Heritage Trail — Visitors and historians can experience life as it was in the coal camps of Appalachia on the Coal Heritage Trail in West Virginia. This scenic byway winds through southern West Virginia's rugged mountains and valleys that contain remnants of the early 20th century coal boom, including the millionaire mansions in Bramwell and the Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine.

The Greenbrier Resort — The Greenbrier is a AAA Five-Diamond, award-winning resort nestled on 6,500 acres in the scenic Allegheny Mountains in White Sulphur Springs. This world-renowned getaway offers more than 50 activities, including three 18-hole championship golf courses, a golf academy, a gallery

of fine shops, and a host of traditional amenities that have distinguished the resort for more than 200 years. Rejuvenated with a \$50 million renovation, The Greenbrier now offers a new level of luxury and includes the Tavern Casino that features 44 slots, blackjack, roulette, and three-card poker to guests only. The Casino at The Greenbrier, opened in Spring 2010, features an elegant Monte Carlo style casino with multiple table games. In 2010, The Greenbrier Resort hosted the newest PGA TOUR event, The Greenbrier Classic.

Harpers Ferry — In 1859, John Brown's raid on the arsenal at Harpers Ferry focused the country's attention on slavery, and many runaway slaves sought refuge in the town during the Civil War. Enjoy ranger-led interpretive walks and activities.

Hatfield-McCoy Trails and Visitors Center — The Hatfield-McCoy Trails system draws beginner to expert all-terrain vehicle enthusiasts and thrill seekers for more than 500 miles of the East Coast's biggest and best ATV trails coursing through the mountains of southern West Virginia. The popularity of the new system has resulted in new tourism-related developments near the trailheads, easily accessible after a short drive from Charleston. Big news for Pinnacle Creek Trail System fans: a new connector is open and you can now ride the trails from Pineville to Mullens. The new Hatfield-McCoy Visitors Center on U.S. 119 in Boone County is the first stop for trail riders coming to the area from the north, serving as the Hatfield-McCoy's retail center and the trailhead for the Little Coal River trails.

Lost World Caverns and Organ Cave — For the adventurous at heart there is Lost World Caverns. These caverns were once home to the prehistoric cave bear and offer wild caving adventures for those eager to explore the cave's narrow passages away from the normal tour. Organ Cave, less than five miles from Lewisburg, is the 22nd largest cave in the world. Organ Cave is still largely uncharted territory with more than 200 known—yet unexplored—passageways.

National Radio Astronomy Observatory at Green Bank (NRAO) — Home of the Robert C. Byrd Green Bank Telescope, the world's largest movable radio telescope, NRAO is where researchers study the universe through natural radio emissions. In addition, "Catching the Wave" includes interactive exhibits and programs for K-12 students and the general public.

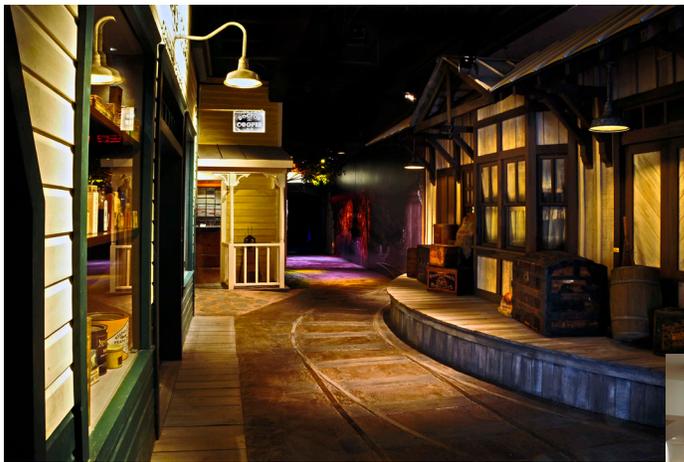
State Profile Recreation and Culture

Oglebay Resort and the Winter Festival of Lights — Oglebay is a 1,700-acre resort with abundant recreational activities, well-appointed accommodations, a zoo, gardens, three golf courses, downhill ski area, and shops nestled in the hills surrounding Wheeling. Three years ago, Oglebay completed a \$15 million renovation and expansion project, including the addition of a new guest wing with 56 deluxe rooms and suites. Home to America's largest light show, the Winter Festival of Lights covers more than 300 acres. The festival has been listed on the American Bus Association's Top International Events and was recently listed as one of the top 200 events in the country by Discover America.

Snowshoe Mountain Resort — Named one of the top ski resorts in the Southeast, Snowshoe Mountain offers a Western-style ski village with first-rate accommodations, specialty shops, gourmet eateries, and excellent slopes for a range of skiing experiences. The resort also includes two terrain parks, two terrain gardens, 14 lifts, night skiing, and snow tubing. The 1,500-foot drop stands among the biggest verticals in the area. Additionally, a new mid-station to its Western Express lift will allow Snowshoe to open the upper portion of both Cupp Run and Shay's Revenge, allowing skiers and snowboarders to access 26 additional acres of terrain in the Western Territory area.

State Museum and Gift Shop — The West Virginia State Museum reopened to the public in 2009 following extensive exhibit renovations. Located on the grounds of the State Capitol, the museum is located on the lower floor of the Culture

Center. The museum is dedicated to inspiring, educating, and enriching the lives of the public by instilling a deeper understanding and sense of pride through the collection, preservation, and exhibition of diverse cultural and historic traditions focusing on every aspect of West Virginia. On the main floor of the Culture Center is the West Virginia State Museum Shop—1,700 square feet featuring West Virginia artisans' products from Tamarack, in addition to souvenirs and collectibles.



Stonewall Resort — This resort sits along the shore of the state's second-largest impoundment, Stonewall Jackson Lake, and features an Arnold Palmer-designed championship golf course and clubhouse, lodge, deluxe cottages, houseboat rentals, spa, restaurant, and a 125-passenger excursion boat for dinner and sightseeing cruises.

Tamarack — Tamarack is the nation's first and only statewide collection of handmade crafts, art, and cuisine showcasing "The Best of West Virginia" from hand-carved furniture to glass, from pottery to Appalachian quilts, and more. Tamarack offers regional specialty foods and products, as well as performances, craft demonstrations, shopping, theater, art gallery, and a food court managed by The Greenbrier.

West Virginia Scenic Railroads — West Virginia features more than 80 railroad attractions, including the world-famous Cass Scenic Railroad State Park, the Mountain State Mystery Train and New River Gorge excursions. There are also favorites like the Potomac Eagle excursions, on which passengers enjoy a 90% chance of seeing a bald eagle, in addition to the Durbin and Greenbrier Valley Railroad. West Virginia is steeped in railroad traditions, and a number of historic facilities mark this heritage.

(This is by no means a complete list. There are numerous local, state, and national parks, as well as a plethora of fairs and festivals held every year across the state. Information on any of these activities is available by calling the West Virginia Division of Tourism at 800-CALL-WVA.)

State Profile
Form of Government

West Virginia has a constitutional representative government with three distinct branches.

Legislative Branch

Senators are elected to four-year terms with half of the seats up for election every two years. All members of the House of Delegates are up for election every two years. State lawmakers must be United States citizens and eligible to vote. A delegate must be at least 18 years old and a resident of his/her district for one year, while a senator must be at least 25 years old and a resident of the state for five years. If a legislator moves out of his/her district, the seat becomes vacant.

If a vacancy occurs in either house of the Legislature, the governor appoints an individual of the same political party as the departing member to fill the seat until the next general election.

Senatorial districts.....	17
Delegate districts.....	58
Congressional districts	3
Members of House of Delegates.....	100
Members of the Senate.....	34

Executive Branch

West Virginia’s Constitution provides for six elected officials in the executive branch of government:

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| Governor | Attorney General |
| Auditor | Commissioner of Agriculture |
| Secretary of State | Treasurer |

A governor is elected for a term of four years. Having served during all or any part of two consecutive terms, he or she is then ineligible for the office of governor during any part of the term immediately following the second of the two consecutive terms. West Virginia’s senate president is also the lieutenant governor. The terms of the other five elected officials are four years without term limitations.

Judicial Branch

As of January 1, 1976, West Virginia created a unified court system, uniting all state courts (except municipal courts) into a single system supervised and administered by the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals. This system was comprised of only the Supreme Court of Appeals, circuit courts, and magistrate courts. However, at the beginning of 2002, family courts were added to the judicial system.

The Supreme Court of Appeals is West Virginia’s highest court and the court of last resort. West Virginia is one of only eleven states with a single appellate court. The Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia is the busiest appellate court of its type in the United States. There are two terms of the court each year. The five justices are elected in partisan elections to 12-year terms. Justices must have practiced law for at least ten years. The position of chief justice is determined annually by vote of the Court. The Governor appoints justices to fill vacancies.

West Virginia is divided into 31 circuits with 70 circuit judges. The circuits range in size from one with seven judges to 11 with one judge. Although as few as one or as many as four counties comprise a circuit, each county has a courthouse where the circuit judge presides. Circuit judges are elected in partisan elections to eight- year terms and must have practiced law for at least five years. The Governor appoints judges to fill vacancies.

There are 45 family court judges serving 27 family court circuits. Family court judges are elected in partisan elections for eight-year terms.

There are 158 magistrates statewide, with at least two in every county and ten in the largest county. The circuit courts hear appeals of magistrate court cases. Magistrates run for four-year terms in partisan elections and are not required to be lawyers. Circuit judges appoint magistrates to fill vacancies.

State Profile

Demographics and Economics

Population, Income, and Age Calendar Years 1999-2009

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Population											
West Virginia (in thousands)	1,812	1,808	1,799	1,799	1,802	1,803	1,804	1,807	1,811	1,815	1,820
Change	-0.22	-0.22	-0.50	0.00	0.17	0.06	0.06	0.17	0.22	0.22	0.28
National (in thousands)	272,691	281,422	285,082	287,804	290,326	293,046	295,753	298,593	301,580	304,375	307,007
Change	0.90	3.20	1.30	0.95	0.88	0.94	0.92	0.96	1.00	0.93	0.86
Total Personal Income											
West Virginia (in thousands)	\$38,136	\$40,067	\$42,463	\$43,884	\$44,906	\$46,497	\$48,139	\$51,894	\$54,555	\$57,411	N/A
Change	2.60	5.06	5.98	3.35	2.33	3.54	3.53	7.80	5.13	5.24	N/A
National (in millions)	\$7,906	\$8,555	\$8,879	\$9,055	\$9,369	\$9,929	\$10,477	\$11,257	\$11,880	\$12,226	N/A
Change	5.14	8.21	3.79	1.98	3.47	5.98	5.52	7.44	5.53	2.91	N/A
Per Capita Personal Income											
West Virginia	\$21,049	\$22,174	\$23,609	\$24,388	\$24,917	\$25,785	\$26,686	\$28,714	\$30,121	\$31,634	N/A
Change	2.82	5.34	6.47	3.30	2.17	3.48	3.49	7.60	4.90	5.02	N/A
National	\$28,333	\$30,318	\$31,145	\$31,462	\$32,271	\$33,881	\$35,424	\$37,698	\$39,392	\$40,166	N/A
Change	3.94	7.01	2.73	1.02	2.57	4.99	4.55	6.42	4.49	1.96	N/A
Median age - West Virginians	38.9	40.2	40.6	40.9	41.1	41.2	41.4	41.6	41.8	41.9	42.0

Sources:

- 1) Table 1. Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for the United States, Regions, States, and Puerto Rico: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2009 (NST-EST2009-01). U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. Release date: December 2009. Retrieved December 14, 2010.
- 2) Table 2. Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex and Age for West Virginia: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2009 (SC-EST2009-02-54). U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. Release date: June 2010. Retrieved December 14, 2010.
- 3) Resident Population Estimates of the United States by Age and Sex: April 1, 1990 to July 1, 1999, with Short-Term Projection to November 1, 2000. Population Estimates Program, Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau. Internet release date: January 2, 2001. Retrieved December 14, 2010.
- 4) Estimates of the Median Age of the Population for the U.S., Regions, Divisions, and States: July 1, 1999 (includes April 1, 1990 census median age figures). Population Estimates Program, Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau. Internet release date: March 9, 2000. Retrieved December 14, 2010.
- 5) CA1-3 - Personal income, population, per capita personal income, 1999 - 2008. Regional Economic Information Systems, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce. Release date: April 2010. Retrieved December 14, 2010.

Government and Largest Private Employers in West Virginia (By Employment Range)

As of June 30, 2000

Federal Government	22,620
State Government	39,695
Local Government	73,719

As of June 30, 2010

Federal Government	25,680
State Government	41,882
Local Government	77,440

1 Wal Mart Associates	6,000 - 9,999	1 Wal Mart Associates, Inc.	10,000 - 13,000
2 Charleston Area Medical Center, Inc.	3,000 - 5,999	2 West Virginia United Health System	7,000 - 9,999
3 Kroger	3,000 - 5,999	3 Charleston Area Medical Center, Inc.	5,000 - 6,999
4 Weirton Steel Corporation	3,000 - 5,999	4 Kroger	3,000 - 4,999
5 CSX	3,000 - 5,999	5 American Electric Power	1,000 - 2,999
6 E I DuPont de Nemours & Company	3,000 - 5,999	6 Consolidation Coal Company	1,000 - 2,999
7 Hospital Corporation of America	3,000 - 5,999	7 Lowe's Home Centers, Inc.	1,000 - 2,999
8 Bell Atlantic	3,000 - 5,999	8 St. Mary's Hospital	1,000 - 2,999
9 Union Carbide Corporation	1,000 - 2,999	9 Res-Care, Inc.	1,000 - 2,999
10 West Virginia University Hospitals	1,000 - 2,999	10 Mylan Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	1,000 - 2,999

State Profile Demographics and Economics

Economic Base

West Virginia is truly an energy state due to its rich natural resources and positive business climate for energy-related companies. West Virginia ranks second in the U.S. in exporting electricity and is playing an increasingly important role in the production of coal, wind power, and natural gas.

The state ranks second in the nation in coal production (coal being mined in 25 of West Virginia's 55 counties). Annual coal production was 137 million tons in 2009, 59% of which came from underground mines. Coal mining provided 22,578 direct West Virginia jobs in 2009 at an annual average wage above \$72,000, generating more than \$1.7 billion in wages.

In alternative wind energy, over 1,000 megawatts of wind power is in service or in development. The state has the third-largest wind capacity of any state in the eastern United States, and the largest wind farm east of the Mississippi.

West Virginia is also one of the largest producers of natural gas east of the Mississippi River and is finding new ways to recover massive natural gas reserves from the Marcellus Shale. Natural gas production in 2008 was 246 billion cubic feet, and oil production in 2009 was 1.9 million barrels.

Small businesses are the backbone of West Virginia's economy, accounting for more than 86% of West Virginia's nearly 40,000 businesses that employ fewer than 20 people. Employing more than a half-million West Virginians, small businesses are moving forward the important work of incubating new products and services.

The West Virginia economy includes innovation-driven, technology-based businesses, piloted by a highly skilled West Virginia work force. More than \$13 billion in new business investments have come to West Virginia since 2005. A growing number of companies operate in the state, leading the advance in aerospace, biometrics, biotechnology, chemical and polymers, and information technology.

Aerospace is one of the fastest growing sectors of the West Virginia economy. The concentration of biometrics and identity-management assets within West Virginia is unequalled in the world. The state is home to nearly 150 chemical and polymer manufacturing companies that employ approximately 12,800 workers. West Virginia is also a growing location for companies with extensive business services operations.

Rich in natural resources West Virginia is the third-most forested state in the nation with 12 million acres of forests. About 15,000 employees work in the forest products industry, directly and indirectly contributing about \$2.1 billion to the economy. In addition, another \$3 billion is generated by the forests from recreation, hunting, tourism, and other related activities.

In total, 1,005,953 fishing, hunting, and trapping license privileges (totaling \$16,507,154) were sold in 2009. Through the end of calendar year 2009, West Virginia had recorded the sale of 41,667 adult lifetime licenses and 14,611 infant lifetime licenses. The most recent published data shows these license holders and other wildlife recreationists produce more than \$1.2 billion in economic impact each year.

Outdoor-related recreational opportunities provided or regulated by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources have an estimated economic impact of more than \$1.7 billion each year. Those activities include hunting, fishing, state parks and forests, wildlife viewing, whitewater rafting, and recreational boating. These activities make up a major portion of the state's growing tourism industry.

Smith Travel Research hotel occupancy and room demand figures available from January through November 2010 indicate a banner year for the state's travel and tourism industry. At nearly 650,000, July 2010 showed a 13% increase in room demand over the same month last year—the highest rate since the Division of Tourism began tracking numbers in 2002. October's report showed a room demand of 590,036, uncharacteristically high for a fall

State Profile Demographics and Economics

month. (More room nights were sold in October than in any other month prior to 2010.) The year-to-date through November 2010 showed the number of room nights sold was 5.7 million (up ten percent). Occupancy rates through November 2010 were 63.3% (up 7.8%).

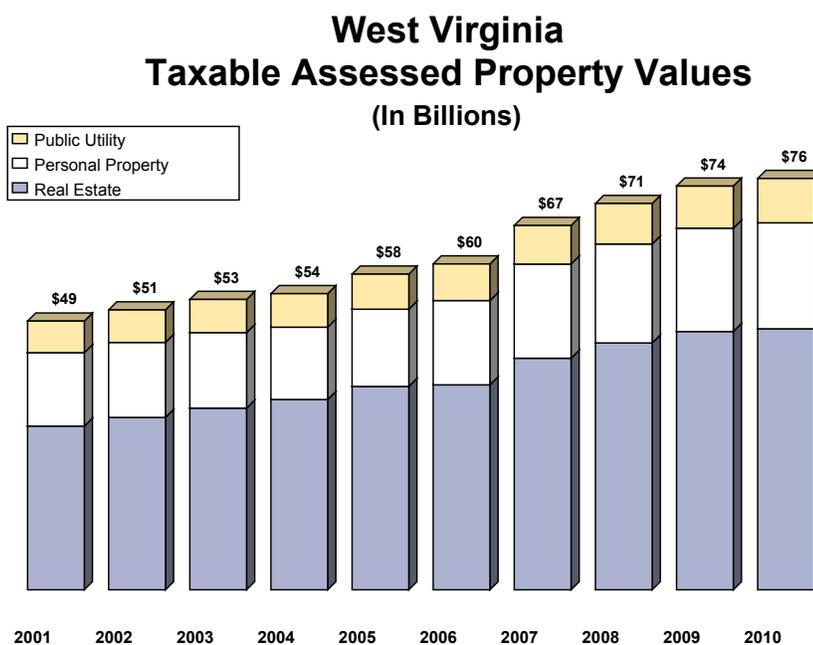
Dovetailing nicely with the state's tourism industry are West Virginia agribusiness products, as research indicates that vacationers seek unique culinary experiences when they travel. These products are an expanding element of the state's economy, annually producing approximately \$100 million worth of value-added, West Virginia Grown products. Nearly all of these companies are locally owned and operated, injecting a large portion of their net revenue back into the local economies in the form of wages and business expenses. West Virginia products are recognized for their high quality, improving the image of the Mountain State across the country and throughout the world.

West Virginia has 23,200 primarily family-owned and operated farms; for both 2008 and 2009, these farms totalled 3.7 million acres (with an average of 159 acres per farm) and annually generated over a half-billion dollars worth of crops and livestock. Although the state is ranked 37th in population and 41st in geographical size, it ranks tenth in apple production, 14th in peach production, 11th in turkey production, and 16th in broiler chicken production.

Property Values

Property subject to property tax in West Virginia is to be revalued annually. All properties, with the exception of farms and managed timberland, are to be assessed at 60% of their actual market value. Total assessed valuations for Tax Year 2010 came to \$75.68 billion (see the following chart). The statewide average levy rate for all property was 1.91% of assessed value.

A major portion of the expense of local government units is met from the proceeds of taxes levied upon real and personal property. The property tax is administered by officials of local taxing authorities (municipalities, county school boards, and county governments), as well as by officials of a number of state agencies. Less than one-half of one percent of the property tax collected goes to state government. For example, of property taxes levied for FY 2010, the State received 0.42%, the counties 26.44%, the school boards 66.30%, and the municipalities 6.84%.



1 The tax on Class I intangibles is being phased out over a six-year period beginning in 1998, when over a 50% reduction in Class I intangible assessments reduced personal property valuations by \$1.0 billion.

Source: Department of Revenue, Property Tax Division

Miscellaneous—State Symbols

State Flag

The state flag was officially adopted by the Legislature on March 7, 1929, by Senate Joint Resolution 18.

Prominently displayed on the pure white field of today's flag and emblazoned in proper colors is a coat of arms, the lower half of which is wreathed by rhododendron, the State Flower. Across the top, lettered on a ribbon, is the constitutional designation "State of West Virginia." The white field is bordered on four sides by a strip of blue, and, for parade purposes, all but the staff side are to be trimmed with gold fringe.



The great seal of West Virginia, which also is the coat of arms, was adopted by the Legislature on September 26, 1863, and symbolizes the principal pursuits and resources of West Virginia. Described briefly, the obverse side of the seal bears the legend "State of West Virginia," together with the motto, "Montani Semper Liberi" (Mountaineers Are Always Free); a farmer stands to the left and a miner to the right of a large ivy-draped rock bearing the date of the state's admission to the Union. In front of the rock are two hunters' rifles upon which rests a Phrygian cap or "cap of liberty."

Joseph H. Diss Debar, of Doddridge county, designed the state seal in 1863 at the request of the first West Virginia Legislature.

Official Colors

Old gold and blue were designated as official state colors by Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 20, adopted by the Legislature on March 8, 1963.

Official Day

On January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln approved the Statehood Bill for West Virginia on the condition that it would gradually abolish slavery. West Virginia was proclaimed a state on April 20, 1863, with the bill becoming effective sixty days later on June 20, 1863. "West Virginia Day" became a legal holiday by Chapter 59, Acts of the Legislature, Regular Session, 1927.

State Songs

"The West Virginia Hills," "This Is My West Virginia," and "West Virginia, My Home Sweet Home" were designated as the official state songs of West Virginia, each ranking equally with the others in official status, by House Concurrent Resolution No. 19, adopted by the Legislature on February 28, 1963.

State Profile
Miscellaneous—State Symbols



State Flower

The *Rhododendron Maximum*, or “Big Laurel,” was made the official state flower of West Virginia by House Joint Resolution No. 19, adopted by the Legislature on January 29, 1903, following a recommendation by the governor and a vote by the pupils of public schools. The rhododendron is a shrub of the heath family and may be recognized by its large evergreen leaves and delicate pale pink or white bloom, mottled with either red or yellow flecks.

State Tree

The sugar maple (*Acer Saccharum*) was made West Virginia’s official tree by House Concurrent Resolution No. 12, adopted by the Legislature on March 7, 1949, authorizing a vote by pupils of public schools and civic organizations. It produces an excellent wood for future use as well as maple syrup. A single tree can be 70 to 120 feet high, has a five-lobed leaf and a small wing-shaped pod, and produces two to three pounds of sugar when “sugared off.”

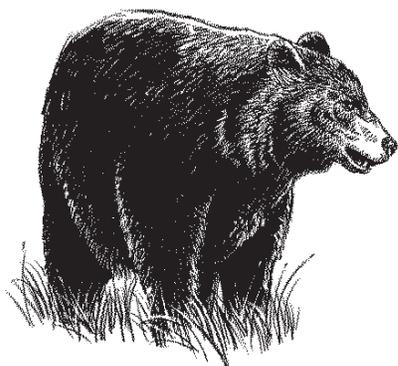


State Bird

The cardinal (*Richmondia Cardinalis*) was made West Virginia’s official bird by House Concurrent Resolution No. 12, adopted by the Legislature on March 7, 1949, authorizing a vote by pupils of public schools and civic organizations. The male of the species is a rich scarlet with a mask and shading of black, while the young birds and females are a less brilliant color. The adult bird measures approximately eight inches long. It ranges from New York State to the Gulf of Mexico and as far west as Oklahoma.

State Fish

The brook trout was designated the state fish by House Concurrent Resolution No. 6, adopted in 1973 following a poll of sportsmen who favored the brook trout. The brook trout is a native West Virginia species.



State Animal

The black bear (*Euractos Americanus*) was selected as the official state animal of West Virginia by a poll of students, teachers, and sportsmen conducted by the Department of Natural Resources in 1954-55 and officially adopted by the Legislature in 1973 by House Concurrent Resolution No. 6. It is the only species of bear found in the state. While commonly referred to as the “black bear,” its coloring is actually deeply tinted with brown. Its habitat in West Virginia is primarily in the eastern mountain region. A litter usually consists of one or two cubs, rarely three, each weighing about eight ounces at birth. The adult reaches an average maximum weight of 250 pounds.

State Profile
Miscellaneous—State Symbols



State Fruit

The Golden Delicious apple was designated as the official state fruit by Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 7, adopted by the Legislature on February 20, 1995. This apple variety was discovered by Anderson Mullins in Clay County, West Virginia, in 1905. The plain apple had been previously designated as the official state fruit by House Concurrent Resolution No. 56, adopted March 7, 1972.

State Butterfly

The monarch butterfly was declared the official butterfly of West Virginia by Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 11, adopted by the Legislature on March 1, 1995.



Photo by Ray Garton

State Gem

The state gem, so designated by House Concurrent Resolution No. 39, March 10, 1990, is technically not a gemstone, but rather the silicified Mississippian fossil coral *Lithostrotonella*, preserved as the siliceous mineral chalcedony. It is found in the Hillsdale Limestone in portions of Greenbrier and Pocahontas counties and is often cut and polished for jewelry and for display.

State Soil

The state soil is Monongahela silt loam, adopted by concurrent resolution in 1997, making West Virginia the twelfth state to have an official state soil.



State Insect

The honeybee became West Virginia's official state insect in 2002 by the Legislature's Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 9. In addition to its flavorful honey, the honeybee pollinates many of the state's most important crops including fruits, vegetables, and grasses. Its activity produces more benefit to the state's economy than any other insect. The honeybee has six legs, four wings, and its coloring ranges from dark yellow to gold with three dark bands on its abdomen.

State Profile
Miscellaneous—State Symbols

State Reptile

The timber rattlesnake was made West Virginia's official reptile by Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 28, adopted by the Legislature on March 8, 2008. The timber rattlesnake is present throughout the state, and its color and pattern is reminiscent of West Virginia's fauna and flora. It is important to preserve it as both predator and prey in the state's ecology.



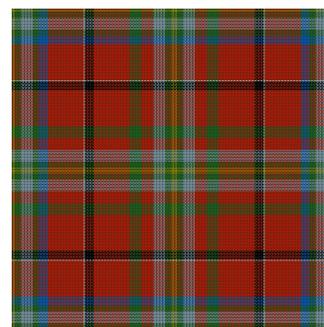
State Fossil

The fossil *Megalonyx jeffersonii* was made West Virginia's official fossil by Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 28, adopted by the Legislature on March 8, 2008. In 1797, President Thomas Jefferson obtained and described fossil bones from a limestone cave in what is now Monroe County. These bones were described in 1799 as the bones of a giant extinct ground sloth by Casper Wistar, who named this new species after President Jefferson. The bones were from the Ice Age or Pleistocene Epoch that lasted from 10,000 to 1.8 million years ago.

State Tartan

On March 6, 2008, the Legislature adopted House Concurrent Resolution 29, designating an adaptation of "West Virginia Shawl" as the official tartan of the state. According to the resolution, a majority of West Virginia's earliest settlers were descendants of Celtic people.

The pattern was designed by Dr. Phillip D. Smith and John A. Grant III. It was recorded by the Scottish Tartan Authority on May 27, 2008, reference number 7631.



The colors were chosen to represent the mountain state as follows:

- Scarlet for the state bird, the cardinal
- Yellow for the fall colors of the state tree, the sugar maple
- Dark blue for the mountain rivers and lakes
- Black for the official state animal, the black bear, and the state's oil and coal
- Green for the state flower, the rhododendron, and the state's mountain meadows
- Azure for the sky above
- White to have all the colors of the United States intertwined with the State of West Virginia

State Profile
Miscellaneous—State Symbols



Photo supplied by the Mineral Information Institute, an affiliate of the SME Foundation

State Rock

West Virginia is the second largest bituminous coal producing state in the United States, producing 157,456 short tons of bituminous coal in 2008. In 1742 the first discovery of coal by an European explorer in West Virginia was made by John Peter Salley in the area now near Racine. John Peter Salley, therefore, named the nearby tributary of the Kanawha River (where he observed the coal deposit) as the Coal River. Bituminous coal being found naturally deposited in the vast majority of the 55 counties, the coal industry has evolved into, and has been for many years, an integral part of the economic and social fabric of the state. This resolution was drafted as a result of a petition started by a student from Gilbert High School in Mingo County.

Miscellaneous—Famous West Virginians

Randy Barnes (1966–) perhaps the world’s greatest shot-putter. He holds both the outdoor and indoor world records and was a gold medalist in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. He grew up in St. Albans, Kanawha County.

Pearl Buck (1892–1973), American novelist, born in Hillsboro, Pocahontas County. She was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature and the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. Many of her more than 85 books sympathetically portray China and its people.

Robert Carlyle Byrd (1917– 2010) was elected in 2006 to a ninth consecutive term in the U.S. Senate. He was the majority leader of the Senate from 1977 to 1981 and from 1987 to 1989. Byrd was from Sophia, Raleigh County.

Bob Denver (1935–2005), who played “Gilligan” on the TV series *Gilligan’s Island* and “Maynard G. Krebs” on the TV series *The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis*, lived near Princeton, Mercer County. His wife Dreama is from West Virginia.

Jennifer Garner (1972–) starred in the ABC series *Alias*. She has appeared in films such as *Pearl Harbor*, *Mr. Magoo*, and *Elektra*, been featured in several television films, and had regular roles in television series. She was born in Houston, but grew up in the Charleston area and graduated from George Washington High School.

Homer H. Hickam, Jr. (1943–) is the author of *Rocket Boys: A Memoir*, the story of his life in the little town of Coalwood, McDowell County, that inspired the number one bestseller and award-winning movie *October Sky*.

Thomas Jonathan “Stonewall” Jackson (1824–1863) was a general in the Confederacy during the Civil War and is considered among the most skillful tacticians in military history. He was born in Clarksburg (then Virginia).

Anna Jarvis (1864–1948) considered the founder of Mother’s Day. Following the death of her own mother in 1905, she began campaigning to have one day a year set aside to honor mothers. In 1914 President Wilson signed a proclamation declaring Mother’s Day a holiday. She was born near Grafton, Taylor County.

Don Jesse Knotts (1924–2006), television and movie actor, born in Morgantown (Monongalia County) to a farm family he described as “dirt poor.” He attended West Virginia University where he majored in speech, hoping to become a teacher. Knotts played the role of “Barney Fife” on the *Andy Griffith Show*.

Captain Jon A. McBride (1943–) became an astronaut in August 1979 and piloted the Challenger when it was launched on October 5, 1984. He was a Republican candidate for Governor of West Virginia in 1996. McBride was born in Charleston, Kanawha County.

Kathy Mattea (1959–), country music star, born in South Charleston and grew up in Cross Lanes, Kanawha County.

John Forbes Nash Jr. (1928–), described as a mathematical genius who essentially lost 30 years of his life to paranoid schizophrenia and who re-emerged into public glory (once the disease was in remission) to receive the 1994 Nobel Prize in Economics for a brilliant doctoral dissertation begun in 1950 (from *A Beautiful Mind*, a biography of Nash by Sylvia Nasar that inspired a movie of the same name). Nash was born and reared in Bluefield, Mercer County.

Brad Paisley (1972–), Grammy award-winning country music star and 2008 Country Music Association Vocalist of the Year. He was born in Glen Dale, where his father retired as assistant fire chief.

Mary Lou Retton (1968–), gymnast who won four medals in the 1984 Summer Olympics, including the gold in the all-around gymnastics competition. She is from Fairmont, Marion County.

Jerome Alan “Jerry” West (1938–), a professional basketball star for the Los Angeles Lakers, was chosen one of the 50 greatest National Basketball Association basketball players in 1996. He was born in Cabin Creek, Kanawha County.

Charles Elwood “Chuck” Yeager (1923–) became the first person to fly faster than the speed of sound in October 1947 and the first person to fly more than twice the speed of sound in December 1953. He was born at Myra in Lincoln County.

This is just a sampling of the many famous West Virginians. For a more extensive list, visit Jeff Miller’s Famous West Virginians page at <<http://jeff560.tripod.com/wv-fam.html>>.

Miscellaneous—Interesting Facts



The third-largest diamond ever found in the United States, the “Punch” Jones Diamond, was found near Peterstown, in Monroe County within one-half mile of the Virginia state line. It has been suggested that the diamond actually occurred in rocks in Virginia and that erosion carried it to the West Virginia side of the state line. There are no other likely sites for diamonds in this state.

No other precious gems are known to have been found in West Virginia. Among the few gemstones found in West Virginia are some opal, some types of quartz, and two coal or coal-like minerals which, though softer than most gemstones, are cut, polished, and carved into jewelry.

A variety of the yellow apple, the Golden Delicious, originated in Clay County. The original Grimes Golden Apple Tree was discovered in 1775 near Wellsburg.

The first steamboat was launched by James Rumsey in the Potomac River at New Mecklenburg (Shepherdstown) on December 3, 1787.

On February 14, 1824, at Harpers Ferry, John S. Gallaher published the “Ladies Garland,” one of the first papers in the nation devoted mainly to the interests of women.

One of the first suspension bridges in the world was completed in Wheeling in November 1849.

Bailey Brown, the first Union soldier killed in the Civil War, died on May 22, 1861, at Fetterman, Taylor County.



The first rural free mail delivery began in Charles Town, October 6, 1896, then spread across the United States.

A naval battle was fought in West Virginia waters during the Civil War. United States Navy armored steamers were actively engaged in the Battle of Buffington Island near Ravenswood on July 19, 1863.

Mother’s Day was first observed at Andrews Church in Grafton on May 10, 1908.

Outdoor advertising had its origin in Wheeling about 1908 when the Block Brothers Tobacco Company painted bridges and barns with the wording: “Treat Yourself to the Best, Chew Mail Pouch.”

West Virginia was the first state to have a sales tax. It became effective July 1, 1921.

Mrs. Minnie Buckingham Harper, a member of the House of Delegates by appointment in 1928, was the first African American woman to become a member of a legislative body in the United States.

West Virginia’s Memorial Tunnel was the first in the nation to be monitored by television. It opened November 8, 1954.

West Virginia was the first state to use new technology to “measure” and store electronically the face and fingertip images of licensed drivers. Because this recorded information is unique to each individual, these images can prevent stolen identity should a driver’s license be lost or taken.

The longest steel arch bridge (1,700 feet) in the United States is the New River Gorge Bridge in Fayette County.

Organ Cave, near Ronceverte, is the third largest cave in the United States and the largest in the state.

State Profile

Sources

The information contained in this section has been gathered from a variety of sources, including the following:

West Virginia state government:

- West Virginia Legislature
- West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Commerce
 - Division of Energy
 - Division of Forestry
 - Division of Natural Resources
 - Division of Tourism
 - Geological and Economic Survey
 - Marketing and Communications
 - West Virginia Development Office
 - WorkForce West Virginia
- Department of Education
- Department of Education and the Arts
 - Division of Culture and History
 - Library Commission
- Department of Health and Human Resources
- Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety
 - Division of Justice and Community Services
 - State Fire Commission
 - West Virginia State Police
- Department of Revenue
 - Tax Division
- Department of Transportation
- Higher Education Policy Commission

Mineral Information Institute (an affiliate of the SME Foundation in Littleton, Colorado)

West Virginia Independent Colleges and Universities

U.S. Census Bureau

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and REIS 2008

U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration