



VIEWS & VISIONS

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There is MORE! in Morgantown

Susan Riddle, President and Chief Executive Officer
Greater Morgantown Convention & Visitors Bureau

Susan Riddle is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Greater Morgantown Convention and Visitors Bureau. She has been leading Mountaineer Country's premier destination marketing organization since 2016. Riddle is a member of the West Virginia Association of CVBs, the West Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association, and the Southeast Tourism Society. She presently serves as Treasurer of the Morgantown Area Chamber of Commerce and Arts Monongalia. A West Virginian by choice, Riddle is happy to share what makes Mountaineer Country the place she has called home for nearly 40 years.

Everyone knows that Morgantown is the home of West Virginia University – the mecca for Mountaineer fans and alumni alike. Tourists, who we like to refer to as “guests,” are attracted to Mountaineer Country for a variety of reasons. Most people think that hundreds of thousands of football fans are the key to our city's success. However, football weekends make up less than two percent of our annual lodging numbers. What causes the greater Morgantown area to continue to experience double-digit percentage increases in hotel occupancy and demand? Let me share with you some of the reasons that Greater Morgantown is, and has been recognized nationally as, an attractive destination as well as a great place to live and work.

Frankly, I'm convinced our success is the combination of several things – our location, amenities and people. Guests visit the area to have a great experience and that is exactly what they get. The greater Morgantown area is a destination that attracts individual guests as well as large and small groups. We find that our variety of options and our Mountaineer hospitality is what keeps our guests coming back for MORE!

Location is key. Being just a few short hours from the largest segment of the country's population, while also being situated along major interstate highways I-79 and I-68, makes the area easily accessible. And the university, with all its corresponding activities, naturally provides an abundance of activity for the entire Mountaineer Country Tourism Region, which includes Monongalia, Preston, Marion, Harrison, Taylor, Barbour and Doddridge Counties.

Fortunately, our amenities are numerous. Our tourism economy currently supports more than 33 properties and hundreds of restaurants and bars, and the numbers continue to grow as Morgantown is regularly recognized as “the tastiest town.” Whether you are seeking the arts in a museum, on a public street, or a live performance; sports in the form of an organized run, a game at the Monongalia County Ballpark, or an adventure in the great outdoors; or attending a conference at one of our many meeting locations, we have all of the bases covered and MORE!

Outdoor adventurers have dozens of options of trails for hiking, rock climbing, and kicking



Morgantown, West Virginia



Coopers Rock State Forest, located in Bruceton Mills, is approximately 13 miles from Morgantown.

back to enjoy the beautiful landscape. We also have multiple options for boating, fishing and other activities on and around the Monongahela River. The **TourMountaineerCountry.com** regional events calendar is full of special events and activities to entice our guests to stay just one more day to share in the local experiences.

Finally, it's the people in Mountaineer Country who are our hospitality industry's "secret sauce." The best example of this can be found by taking a walk through the WVU Medicine parking lot before a WVU home football game. It is hard to get through the lot without being offered food and beverages or being welcomed by our Goodwill City Ambassadors. In addition, we are blessed to have so many wonderful people working together to make the Mountaineer Country Tourism Region one of the best destinations in West Virginia. The work that we are collaboratively producing is resulting in consistent growth in our tourism economy, which leads to more amenities for those of us who are fortunate to call this our home.

All of this makes our job at the Greater Morgantown Convention and Visitors Bureau that much easier. We strategically take all information and use it to target and engage with our audiences. Our goal is "one more night, one more dollar." Fortunately, more than 20 years ago, Monongalia and Preston Counties combined resources and have been working together ever since. Together, we can more effectively and efficiently provide a much larger comprehensive marketing program. The evidence shows that we continue to engage, convince and convert our potential guests. Almost every time you come back to visit, you will find MORE! new and exciting things to enjoy. So please visit us soon and find out why we believe it's a great time to experience Mountaineer Country! ♡