

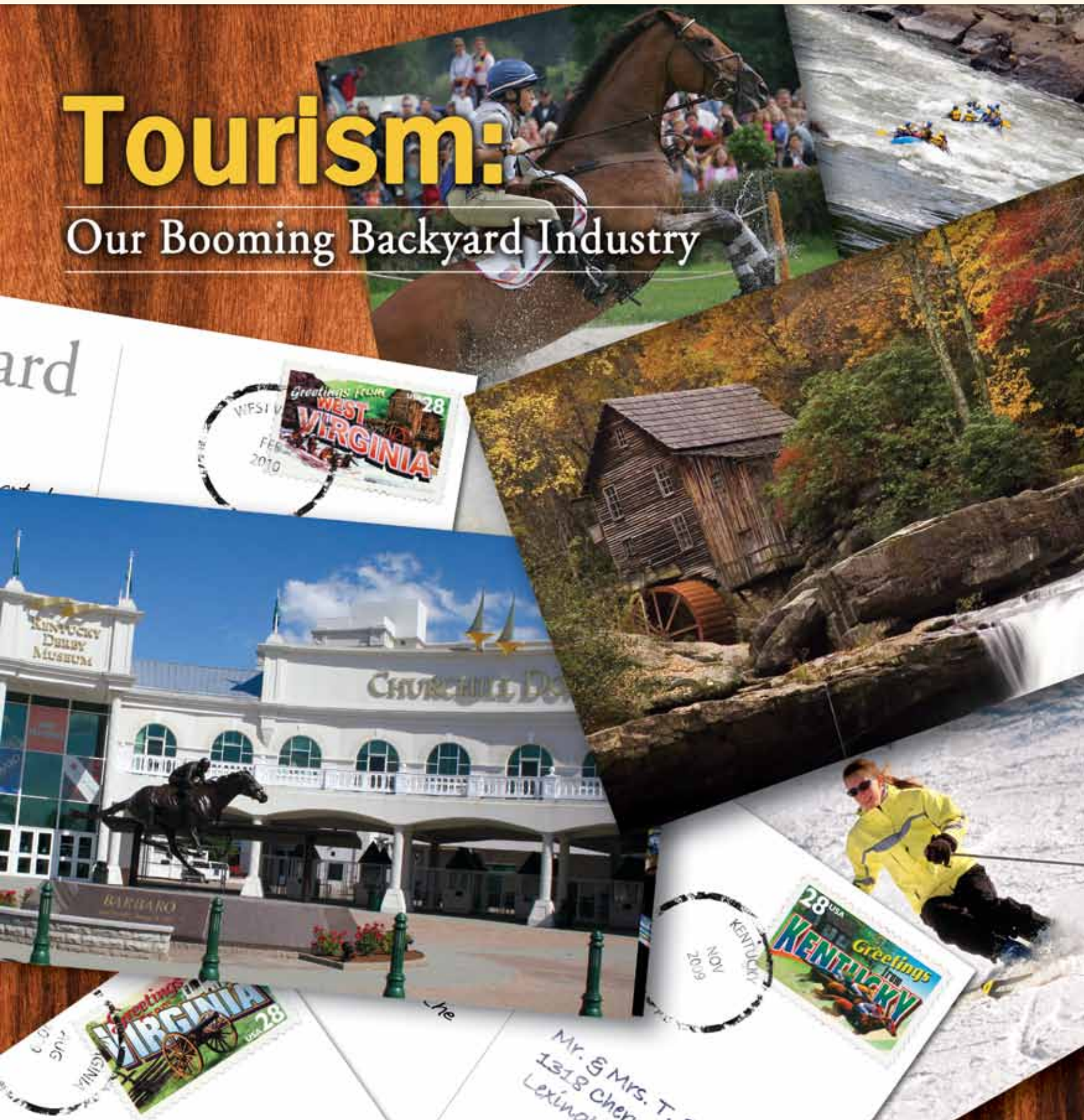


VIEWS & VISIONS

A publication of Bowles Rice McDavid Graff & Love LLP

Spring 2010

Tourism: Our Booming Backyard Industry



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Tourism: Our Booming Backyard Industry

Thomas A. Heywood
Bowles Rice McDavid Graff & Love LLP



FROM OUR
MANAGING
PARTNER

Tom Heywood is Managing Partner of Bowles Rice and a former chief of staff to the Honorable Gaston Caperton, Governor of the State of West Virginia. He has significant experience in health care, corporate, finance and commercial law, and is recognized as one of the "Best Lawyers in America."

Mr. Heywood is active in the community and in various West Virginia business and trade associations. He serves on the boards of many charitable organizations, including Vision Shared, Imagine West Virginia, Discover the Real West Virginia Foundation, Thomas Memorial Hospital, West Virginia University Hospitals, the Clay Center and the Kanawha County Library Foundation.

Mr. Heywood has recently been recognized for his many contributions to the legal profession and the community by being named a Fellow of the American Bar Association and a recipient of the 2010 "Who's Who in West Virginia Business" award.

As the population of the planet surges from six and a half to nine billion people over the next 35 years or so, the beauty and natural resources of our region will come to be valued as never before. Many already see and understand this value, and are laying the groundwork for West Virginia's golden age.

In this edition of *Views & Visions*, we focus on an industry whose leaders are helping us lay that groundwork – tourism. Once regarded by many as a mere footnote to the economy, tourism today is one of our fastest growing industries. Tourism holds the promise of attracting and retaining the "Creative Class," to use the term coined by Dr. Richard Florida, and thereby unlocking even greater opportunity and prosperity for our region in years to come.

The remarkable beauty of our region is reflected in the pages that follow. This beauty has long been known to all of us who call Kentucky, West Virginia and Virginia home. Thanks to the growth in tourism, the beauty of our land and the quality of our lives are becoming known to people across the world. This exposure will attract more and more people and investment in the years to come.

Our recreational amenities also serve as a constant source of joy, peace and renewal for those who take to the hills. Recreation truly helps each of us re-create and rediscover ourselves in ways that are too numerous to mention, and brings a quality and zest to our lives that is undeniable.

History, culture, state parks, biking, skiing, fairs and festivals, all-terrain vehicles, white water rafting, shopping, zip-lines, music, the performing arts, motocross, gaming, golf, hiking and much more – wow! This is what

we have at our doorstep, each and every day. This edition of *Views & Visions* includes articles by accomplished and successful leaders and entrepreneurs in all of these activities and others, and we hope that you enjoy learning more about all that our region has to offer.

Two exciting projects featured in this edition demonstrate how powerful a force our natural resources can be – the 2010 World Equestrian Games in Lexington, Kentucky, and the new Bechtel High Adventure Boy Scout Camp in Fayette County, West Virginia. Both of these opportunities spring from the natural amenities that are around us every day. Each will create a huge and lasting legacy for our families, communities and region.

After reading the articles in the pages that follow, I have renewed my commitment to take better advantage of all that we have. I also better understand all that we can be in the years ahead. I hope that these articles also inspire you to see our region in a new light, and to undertake new ways to re-create yourself.

I look forward to seeing each of you soon at one of the many venues featured in this edition, and to working with you to realize the incredible future that is unfolding in our booming backyard industry. ♡



Fairs and Festivals: Vibrant Contributors to West Virginia's Economy

The Honorable Gus R. Douglass, Commissioner of Agriculture
State of West Virginia

Gus R. Douglass was elected to his eleventh, four-year term as West Virginia's Commissioner of Agriculture in November 2008. He is the senior Commissioner of Agriculture in the United States. In addition to his position as Commissioner of Agriculture, he and his son operate a 540-acre beef cattle farm in Mason County, West Virginia.

He served as state and national president of the Future Farmers of America (FFA), and later helped to organize – and served as first president of – the National FFA Alumni Association.

Commissioner Douglass has served as president of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture and the Southern Association of State Departments of Agriculture, and was chairman of the Southern Regional Committee for Food and Agriculture under President Jimmy Carter. He twice served as president of the Southern United States Trade Association and chaired the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases four times.

In 2006, West Virginia State University renamed its land-grant programs as the Gus R. Douglass Institute, in honor of Commissioner Douglass' dedication to education, research and Extension Service outreach.

In 1957, when Agriculture Commissioner John T. Johnson hired me as assistant commissioner of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA), I had no way of foreseeing the challenges and rewards my first assignment would bring.

Even at that time, fairs and festivals were a major interest of the WVDA, and a substantial budget was in place to support them. The focus, however, was primarily to encourage farmer and homemaker participation in agricultural events.

I saw an opportunity to broaden the scope of the numerous fairs and festivals throughout the state. I encouraged organizers to approach their events from a business standpoint, expand them so that they would appeal to urban and rural

populations and include youth groups, such as 4-H, FFA and the Future Homemakers of America.


These suggestions were readily adopted by many events, and the first meeting of the West Virginia Association of Fairs and Festivals (WVAFF) was soon convened with about 20 members attending. Then-Congressman Arch Moore was the keynote speaker. Today, after many years and much hard work, nearly every county in the state is represented in the WVAFF. More than 200 fairs and festivals – and more recently, equine events – dot the state map, and the WVAFF boasts 130 member events. Each January, the WVAFF brings about 1,500 visitors to Charleston for its annual convention, during which a “queen of queens” is selected to reign over the State Fair of West Virginia for the coming year.

Entertaining more than 200,000 visitors annually, the State Fair remains West Virginia's anchor event. It maintains a strong agricultural component, drawing the best in livestock and farm-related exhibits. It also has showcased some of West Virginia's best musical talent, including Kathy Mattea and Brad Paisley. Who knows what homegrown talent may find a launching pad at one of our fairs and festivals in the future? Local events are doing their part as well, providing numerous opportunities for community participation and allowing our growing urban populations to connect to the source of their food supply. Nearly all of these events are operated by volunteers who devote countless hours of work purely out of community pride. I consider this a testament to the selfless character of our state's citizens.

It also is interesting to note that, in this time of collapsing state budgets, West Virginia is one of four states that has avoided a major meltdown.



Hundreds of area school children attend the Pumpkin Festival in Milton, West Virginia



Entertaining more than 200,000 visitors annually, the State Fair remains West Virginia's anchor event. It maintains a strong agricultural component, drawing the best in livestock and farm-related exhibits. It also has showcased some of West Virginia's best musical talent, including Kathy Mattea and Brad Paisley.

The Ohio County Festival—along with other events throughout the state—feature home canning and fresh produce contests

One common denominator among the solvent states? Stable agricultural communities that contribute consistently to the economy.

For example, a study of the State Fair showed that its economic impact in Greenbrier County was the equivalent of 95 full-time jobs. Similarly, a study of the Mountain State Forest Festival identified \$11.2 million in direct spending associated with that event.

Over the years, WVDA has provided funding to help events develop permanent grounds and facilities, especially facilities that benefit youth programs and that can be utilized on a year-round basis for other purposes. Looking at the returns we have seen in terms of tourism dollars, community development and educational programming for our youth, I consider this use of taxpayer money an excellent investment in the future of our state.

In addition to fairs and festivals, individual farms also are beginning to draw tourism

dollars. From corn mazes to pick-your-own operations to wineries, West Virginia farms are a growing segment of the overall tourism industry in the Mountain State. Besides operating as stand-alone attractions, they encourage vacationers to add extra days to their stays in West Virginia. The 2007 USDA Census of Agriculture has documented nearly \$1 million in annual agritourism farm revenue in West Virginia, not including bed and breakfasts, campgrounds, wineries or fairs and festivals.

While they are here, visitors also can be introduced to some of the many value-added food products manufactured by some 400 agribusinesses in the state. These businesses generate \$100 million worth of economic impact for the state each year and provide an additional market for West Virginia Grown produce. As the nation's leader in percentage of family-owned and -operated farms, West Virginia's agricultural producers have a greater flexibility to meet local demand, compared to other areas. ▽

WVDA publishes directories of equine events and specialty food producers.

Visit www.wvagriculture.org, or call 304-558-3708, to receive one. Visit www.wvfairsandfestivals.org for an event directory.



What Tourism Means to West Virginia

Betty B. Carver, Commissioner
West Virginia Division of Tourism

Betty Carver is commissioner of the West Virginia Division of Tourism which oversees the marketing, advertising, public information and communications efforts for the state's tourism industry.

Since her appointment in 2003, Ms. Carver has combined her government experience and passion for West Virginia to aggressively market and enhance the image of the state.

Prior positions include bureau chief of the Bureau of Commerce and deputy commissioner and director of community relations for the Division of Tourism. She also worked for former West Virginia Governors Gaston Caperton and Jay Rockefeller.

Ms. Carver represents West Virginia on the Appalachian Regional Commission's Executive Council for Tourism Development and the U.S. Travel Association. She is a board member of Travel South U.S.A., the West Virginia Hospitality Travel Association and the Tourism Committee of the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce.

She also serves as a board member for the Appalachian Children's Chorus.

For most of us, tourism in West Virginia summons thoughts of mountains, rivers, parks, ski slopes, hiking and biking trails and other recreational activities. But travel and tourism in West Virginia represents much more than just the adventure-packed itineraries that help our state flourish.

Tourism also means economic and community development, job creation and determined cultivation for future growth. It enhances our image and strengthens our brand. It evokes feelings of nostalgia, tells the story of our past and is the key to our future. Above all, it signifies our connection to the rest of the world.

West Virginia has all the benefits without all the hassles. Consumers want an escape from busy, demanding schedules; they want to be stimulated and inspired. Our combination of small-town charm and big city amenities makes for unique and stress-free getaways, and creates experiences that emotionally connect travelers to the state.

Last year, West Virginia's travel and tourism industry had a \$4.38 billion impact on our state's economy and employed 44,000 people. In addition, \$544 million in state tax revenues were collected. The majority of the money generated from tourism stays within our local communities and provides support for our Main Streets

and downtowns. This revenue enables us to improve and sustain our storefronts, greenspaces, shopping districts and other attractions that help West Virginia entice new and returning visitors.

Increased interest in our state and communities also provides a positive impact on the quality of life of our people. As communities begin to thrive, we see new attitudes about the towns we call home. Community activities and events

that attract out-of-state visitors also encourage local participation and generate excitement. As the community becomes more desirable and self-sustaining, economic development opportunities start to grow.

The success of West Virginia's tourism industry also has produced educational opportunities for our youth and college students. The West Virginia Department of Education's "ProStart" program is a two-year curriculum designed to

teach high school students the skills needed for a career in the restaurant and food service industry. In addition, West Virginia University is in the process of developing certificate and degree programs for students pursuing hospitality- and tourism-management careers. Programs like these target an interest in our youth and prepare them as our tourism leaders of tomorrow.

Tourism also is a way for us to celebrate our heritage. West Virginia's tradition and culture are rare assets that represent the many facets of



The Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine



Shopping in downtown Fairmont, West Virginia

who we are. Visitors can experience the many aspects of West Virginia through museums, cultural libraries, performance halls, historical sites and tours.

West Virginia was born of the Civil War and, as a result, has a fascinating history. We don't just tell our story, we relive it. Spectators are known to drive for miles to watch as actors immerse themselves in re-enactments and performances that bring West Virginia's history to life. Attractions such as Cass Scenic Railroad State Park, the Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine and the Oil and Gas Museum tell the story of what used to be and remind visitors of the importance of our natural resources to the state and the nation.

Our culture and heritage also can be experienced through our music. Here, we blend traditional culture with innovation. We have everything from the time-honored sounds of the Vandalia Festival and the progressive tunes of Mountain

Stage, to classical compositions played by the Wheeling Symphony Orchestra.

Travel and tourism in West Virginia also mean convenience. First, and probably the most beneficial, we are a four-season tourist destination, which means we have something that attracts visitors all year long. Winter, spring, summer or fall, tourism offers travelers everything from pristine ski conditions and whitewater trips down the Gauley and New Rivers, to fall foliage tours and golfing on world-renowned courses.

Secondly, we are within an overnight drive to more than half of the United States' population. Due to this proximity, we are in a position to capture the limited travel dollar.

West Virginia also has the convenience of simply being known for its world-class recreation and hospitality. And because of these identifiable characteristics, business

leaders and others have recently formed new partnerships that will positively influence West Virginia's future.

One example of a new partnership is expected to create 80 permanent jobs and 1,000 seasonal jobs. In 2009, the Boy Scouts of America chose Fayette County as its home for a new high-adventure base camp and National Jamboree. The base is expected to host up to 50,000 scout visitors per year and bring in an estimated \$10 million. Another new event, The Greenbrier Classic – the PGA TOUR's most recent addition to its FedExCup Series – will garner international attention and draw thousands to West Virginia.

As mentioned and represented above, tourism is an economic development tool for West Virginia. While we do not often recognize what we have in our own backyard, the tourism industry does recognize what people want. By listening and capitalizing on their desires, we are meeting their specific needs.

For instance, in response to the demand for suggested motorcycle tours, we created a web site specifically for those interested in exploring the Mountain State by motorcycle. With full support from our governor, who is a motorcycle enthusiast, www.wvmountainrider.com created an opportunity for riders to locate scenic drives and share their own stories, and continues to provide the tourism industry with another marketing tool. Because we listened to our visitors, we are better equipped for future requests and initiatives.

If you've experienced West Virginia in the past but haven't had the chance to reconnect, I encourage you to take another look. If you've never had the pleasure of visiting us, what are you waiting for? Visit our web site, www.wvtourism.com, and start planning your next getaway today. We look forward to welcoming new and old friends alike and to showcasing the best of West Virginia. ♡



Kentucky Welcomes The World

Jamie Link, Chief Executive Officer
World Games 2010 Foundation

Jamie Link joined the World Games 2010 Foundation staff in January 2009 as chief executive officer.

He previously served as Deputy Secretary of the Kentucky Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet since December 2007, and prior to that spent several months as the deputy executive director of the Kentucky Horse Park.

As Deputy Secretary, he served as an ex officio member of the World Games 2010 Foundation board of directors and had been involved in the ongoing construction projects at the Kentucky Horse Park and major vendor selections related to the World Games.

Mr. Link is a 1985 graduate of the University of Kentucky, where he received a degree in accounting. He has spent the majority of his career working with the Kentucky Department of Parks and the Kentucky Finance and Administration Cabinet in various positions, and has extensive experience in accounting, budgeting, human resources, procurement, capital construction and tourism management.

From September 25 through October 10, 2010, Kentucky will welcome hundreds of thousands of visitors from around the world to Horse Country.

The Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games is the world's most prestigious equestrian competition, featuring the best horses and riders on Earth, competing for world championships in eight equestrian sports.

The Games have never before been held outside of Europe, but this fall, Lexington's Kentucky

Horse Park – with 1200-plus acres of rolling bluegrass landscape and state-of-the-art competition venues – will serve as the Games' first host site in the United States.

With tickets already sold in nearly 50 countries and in all 50 U.S. states, company is certainly coming! The World Games 2010 Foundation, the city of Lexington and the Commonwealth of Kentucky are hard at work to welcome the thousands of international guests who will visit the state across each of the 16 days of the event.

Approximately 600,000 tickets are available for purchase, including reserved seats for opening ceremonies, more than 40 competition sessions across the eight equestrian disciplines and a wide variety of hospitality packages for individuals, corporations and civic groups.

General admission tickets are available beginning in the spring and include many family-friendly

**For more information about the
2010 Games, including how to get
tickets, go to the official website:
www.alltechfeigames.com**



Photo credit: Bob Langrish

2006 World Equestrian Games Driving Competition




Photo credit: Bob Langrish

2006 World Equestrian Games
Reining competition

options on the grounds of the Kentucky Horse Park, including: The Equine Village, featuring educational activities and equine-themed entertainment; the Kentucky Experience, which will showcase the state's tourism regions, food, crafts and culture; the 2010 Trade Show, featuring nearly 300 retail boutiques; and the Alltech Experience Pavilion, featuring cultural exhibits, food, drinks and music, courtesy of the Games' first title sponsor.

In addition, the Kentucky Horse Park's International Museum of the Horse will offer a ticketed exhibition entitled "A Gift from the Desert," exploring the history and culture of the Arabian breed.

And when visitors leave the grounds of the 2010 Games, a multitude of entertainment, tourism and dining options will await them, including concerts with Alltech's Fortnight Festival, entertainment with Spotlight Lexington in the city's downtown, and tourism destinations throughout the state.

For 16 days in 2010, Kentucky will welcome the world. So join in, and become a resident of Horse Country! 

The Smartest Most Stupid Decision I Have Ever Made...

By Dr. T. Pearse Lyons

On my travels around the world, the most prevalent question I receive is always "Why did Alltech become the \$10 million title sponsor of the World Equestrian Games?"

The answer is quite simple. Alltech is an animal health and nutrition company, and we are sponsoring the only global, championship event celebrating animals performing at their peak. For 30 years, Alltech has had a passion for excellence in performance through natural nutritional products. But only two percent of Alltech's business is equine, and only one percent of the company's business is in Kentucky. Why then did we place a \$10 million bet on the World Equestrian Games? One simple word: **branding**.

The New York Times referred to the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games as "the largest sporting event to come to the U.S. since the 2002 Winter Olympic Games." NBC Sports agreed, and made television history when it committed to more than six hours of primetime coverage over three weekends. Viewership is anticipated to be more than 460 million...a worldwide television audience *five times* that of the Super Bowl.

We all know and understand our prized Kentucky Derby, but what exactly are the World Equestrian Games? Like the



Dr. T. Pearse Lyons

Olympics, the World Equestrian Games are held every four years and are the world championships for eight equestrian disciplines. Previous host cities include Stockholm, The Hague, Rome, Jerez and Aachen. And, now you can add Lexington to that list. On their first venture outside of Europe, these Games are being held in *our* Bluegrass.

On September 25 the world will be watching as 600 athletes and 700 horses, representing the very pinnacle of equestrian sport from more than 60 countries, convene at our Kentucky Horse Park for 16 days of competition.

I've said that Alltech's sponsorship of the World Equestrian Games was the smartest most stupid thing I have ever done because

we could have been the title sponsor for much less than \$10 million – the Games had never before had a title sponsor. Do I regret having spent \$10 million as the title sponsor of the Games?

Not for a moment.

We've seen our company grow tremendously since we stepped up as the title sponsor. We've reached around the world, partnering with more than 60 global companies for the Alltech Games and included the entire state of Kentucky in on the excitement of the Alltech Games through an entertainment-centered countdown we've called the Alltech Fortnight Festival. Suffice it to say that I consider title sponsorship of the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games to be the single best decision I've made in my career.

Dr. T. Pearse Lyons is the founder and president of Alltech, a global animal health company that employs more than 1,900 people and has a presence in 120 countries around the world. He received his bachelor's degree from the National University of Ireland in Dublin and pursued his master's and doctoral degrees at the University of Birmingham, England. Dr. Lyons later worked as a biochemist before founding Alltech in 1980. Today, the company is a global leader, boasting group sales of more than \$500 million.



The Summit: Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve

Frank Nils Jorgensen, Partner
Bright Enterprises

Frank Nils Jorgensen, like his Eagle Scout brothers, joined the Boy Scouts at age 12 and participated in several life-altering Scouting experiences during his youth, including a staff position at age 17 at the Northern European Scout Jamboree held at Lillehammer, Norway.

A graduate of Dartmouth College, Mr. Jorgensen spent 14 years in business in the Boston area before moving to West Virginia in 1987 as president of Bright of America, beginning a 22-year partnership with Bill Bright. He currently serves as vice chairman of the West Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association (WVHTA), as well as the legislative chairman.

When two of his sons joined the Boy Scouts in the early 1990s, ultimately becoming Eagle Scouts, Mr. Jorgensen resumed his own involvement in Scouting. He served in a variety of capacities, from den leader to district commissioner, and is now on the Council Executive Board as vice president of administration and chair of the Buckskin Council's 100th Anniversary Committee. He is a scoutmaster for the 2010 National Scout Jamboree and a founding member of the task force that successfully brought The Summit: Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve to West Virginia. He recently received the Boy Scouts of America's prestigious Silver Beaver Award, given to a registered adult leader who has made an impact on the lives of youth through service given within a BSA local council.

On November 18, 2009, during a ceremony at the Glen Jean (West Virginia) Armory, Lauren Bechtel Dachs, President of The Bechtel Family Foundation, and Stephen D. Bechtel, Jr., made the largest donation in Scouting history (\$50 million) for the new permanent National Jamboree and High Adventure Camp, to be named The Summit: Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve. The 10,600 acre reclaimed mine site in Fayette and Raleigh Counties will become the premier destination of Scouts throughout the United States. The projected investment is likely to exceed \$300 million.

Mr. Bechtel, owner of Bechtel Corporation, became an Eagle Scout in 1940 and has earned the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award and the Silver Buffalo Award. His uncle, Kenneth K. Bechtel, served as National President of the Boy Scouts of America from 1956 to 1959.

Positive Image for West Virginia

Perhaps the most important value of this project will be the positive image of West Virginia that will be generated as thousands of Scouts every year come to The Summit and develop fond memories of a great experience that will last a lifetime. Scouts will return home, so excited by their adventure that other family members will make a similar trip to West Virginia. These same Scouts also will return as adults, with their families.

Wayne Brock, Deputy Chief Scout Executive, shares this opinion, saying, "I can guarantee you that, a few years after the high adventure camp opens, the rest of America will know that there is a West Virginia."

Competitive Selection Process

Over 80 applications, from sites in 28 states, were submitted in a competitive selection process. The Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Scouting Center contained many conditions. One was access to a large regional airport. The RFP contained a map of the Eastern USA in which the New River Gorge area was blocked out (nearly the only blocked-out area on the map) as not meeting that criteria! We turned that into

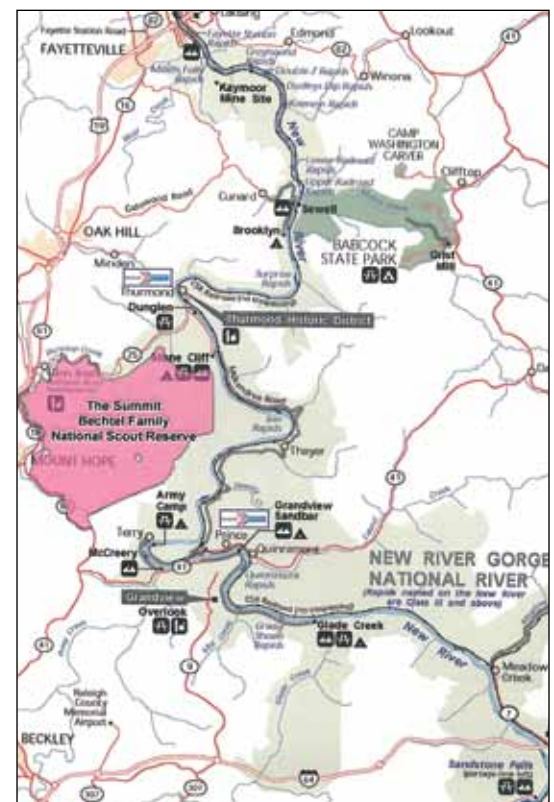
a positive by putting a focus on how this "Wild and Wonderful" location had Amtrak service, interstates and corridor highways – and proactive Yeager and Beckley Airports.

Five Miles Along The New River Gorge National River

The Summit will share a five-mile boundary with The New River Gorge National River. Don Striker, superintendent of the River, said the cooperation between Scouting and the National Park Service (NPS) is important. It is anticipated that, as thousands of Scouts participate in high adventure activities at this site, they will continue to visit other national parks as adults.

How You Can Get Involved With Scouting and This Project

The best way to get involved with Scouting is to support the Buckskin Council, the organization



The Summit's 10,600 acres (shown in pink) share a five-mile boundary with the New River Gorge National River

The Summit: Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve 100 Year Vision



that administers Scouting in 22 West Virginia counties, from Lewisburg to Beckley to Charleston, including the project site.

Jeff Purdy, Council Executive, serves on an Advisory Board to the Chief Scout of the United States, Bob Mazzuca. Call Jeff Purdy at the Charleston office (304) 340-3663, as he can suggest hundreds of ways adults can be helpful to Scouting.

To find out more about The Summit: Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve, go to www.4CEDA.org. The 4-C Economic Development Authority is serving as the clearing house for information and job postings for this exciting new facility. Trinity Works, a real estate development company, has been hired to develop this world-class facility.

(continued on p. 66)

100 Year Vision Key

● National Scout Jamboree

Every four years, starting in 2013, The National Scout Jamboree at this site will camp over 40,000 Scouts for ten days and attract 200,000 to 300,000 visitors. The Jamboree site may expand to 60,000 or more Scouts. The World Jamboree might be held here in 2019 or later.

● National High Adventure Base

For Scouts 14 and up, this base will offer whitewater rafting, rock climbing, mountain biking, caving and more. Expect 5,000 Scouts per week, or 50,000 per summer.

★ Center for Leadership Excellence

Offers leadership training to adults using Scouting principles.

■ Order of the Arrow Camp

The OA was founded in 1915 at the National Honor Society of the Boy Scouts. In 2008, in one of the largest conservation efforts by the Boy Scouts, 3,500 OA members converged on five national forests to work on various conservation projects in cooperation with The National Forest Service. The OA would help build trails at this facility.

▲ National Summer Camp

For Scouts age 11 and up, Summer Camp would have a focus on earning merit badges and offer a wide variety of outdoor adventures. Expect another 5,000 Scouts per week, or 50,000 per summer.



The New Frugality: What it Means for Regional Tourism

Neil Mortine, President and Chief Executive Officer
Fahlgren, Inc.

Neil Mortine is president and chief executive officer of Fahlgren Inc., a communications holding company consisting of Fahlgren Mortine Public Relations and Fahlgren Advertising. He has more than 30 years of corporate communications and brand marketing management experience, and he also serves as President of Fahlgren Mortine.

He was named to the Smart Business Power 100 in 2007 and has been recognized by the Central Ohio Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America with the Walt Seifert Award for Outstanding Service to the Public Relations Student Society of America.

Actively involved in his community, he serves as a board member for several organizations, including the Ohio Historical Society, Columbus Symphony Orchestra and Franklin Park Conservatory Friends of the Conservatory.

The last time I traveled to West Virginia was in the fall, when the mountainsides were adorned in reds and yellows and the sky was vibrant blue, streaked with wispy clouds. I was travelling on business, but I remember staring at the leaves, thinking back on my childhood in rural eastern Ohio (Newcomerstown). The scenic drive evoked fond memories – just as vivid as the leaves whizzing by.

As the CEO of Fahlgren, Inc., one of the Midwest's largest marketing agencies, my career takes me to all parts of the country. During these long drives, frequent flights and overnights, I find myself thinking ahead about 2010 and what's to come. Oftentimes, I think about specific trends in the travel industry.

Our agency, which was founded in Parkersburg and still maintains a significant presence in the state, has a practice area devoted to tourism, and it has been fascinating to monitor how economic conditions are impacting travel behavior in the United States and throughout our region. For the past 10 years, we have served as agency of record for the Ohio Tourism Division, so it is

essential for us to know what is driving change and impacting behavior in our own backyard, as well as our neighbor's.

Every day, we see more evidence that visitors are staying closer to home or "trading down" from expensive vacations to more practical getaways. This is consistent with last April's *Time* magazine cover story about "The New Frugality." The article contends that consumers have become more focused on practicality and more discriminating about value – sentiments that are likely to remain long after the recovery.

It is not very often that you read an optimistic perspective on our economic situation, but there may be a silver lining when it comes to travel. For states like ours – Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky and others – where accessibility, proximity and affordability reign supreme, the new frugality can work to our advantage with the right marketing strategy in place.

Take a look at some of the trends impacting travel behavior today.

Americans Will Travel More in 2010

Among the 3,000 U.S. travelers responding to a TripAdvisor survey, 41 percent indicated they plan to spend more on leisure travel in 2010 than they did in 2009, with 92 percent planning to take two or more leisure trips during the year. The survey indicates that while many Americans will hit the road, they will likely be frugal and seek the best deals.

Our region has many choices for budget-conscious Americans seeking a respite from the world. It costs very little, for example, to partake of the breathtaking views while biking or hiking in our state parks and national forests. Travelers can re-live history or tour our state capitals for the price of a tank of fuel.



Higher Airfares, Fewer Airfare Deals

The Los Angeles Times reported that even though prices may drop at the pump, they will escalate at the ticket counter. Travelers will likely encounter higher airfares in 2010 and higher fees. George Hobica, founder of Airfarewatchdog.com, predicts Americans will fork over fees for booking, boarding and even babies. These costs will be on top of existing fees for food, beverages and luggage.

A staycation, which became the buzzword during the recession, may still be a viable alternative for many families. During a staycation, individuals and families spend their vacation close to home – usually within their state's perimeter or perhaps within a one-day drive. Similar to Ohio, West Virginia is located within 500 miles of 49 percent of the U.S. population and presents many possibilities for vacationers who do not want to invest in expensive tickets or deal with increasing hassles.

A Craving for Adventure

Sure, a certain percentage of our nation's workers have lost their jobs. But even those individuals may be interested in something

different or a change in scenery. A tourism piece in *USA Today* predicts that travel marketers will likely target people who lost their jobs but have money tucked away by pitching adventures that will help them release a little tension and re-evaluate their lives.

As for adventure trips, my daughters would say that whitewater rafting on the New River Gorge is at the top of their list of favorites. For my wife, Christine, and me, adventure is roaming little-known back roads to sample the local culture and discover new places. Regardless of how you define adventure, it can be found in endless supply here in our region.

Camping's Growing Popularity

The wild economy has rekindled interest in outdoor camping, with the pastime's popularity growing 7.4 percent between 2007 and 2008. According to an article on CNN.com, many Americans consider it chic to sleep outside in a tent. Camping especially appeals to Americans interested in getting back to basics and enjoying what nature has to offer.

Our region is truly a camper's paradise. With state and national parks, KOA campgrounds and other privately owned facilities, campers may hike, boat, swim, fish, golf or ride horses or bikes – or they may just enjoy the fresh air and stunning scenery. Campers often can stay a week in a campground for the price they would pay for a night or two in a hotel.

Attracting American Tourists

With so many varied opportunities, how do states like ours attract American travelers and keep residents' vacation dollars within the state? Communication will be key – and especially online communication. Even seniors who were once reluctant to use computers are searching out destinations and travel packages and making arrangements online.

Americans will continue to seek deals and cost-cutting opportunities in 2010. So while there is no doubt the economy in 2010 will continue to be wild, it might just turn out to be wonderful, too, from a tourism perspective. ♪



The Glade Creek Grist Mill, located in Babcock State Park



Exciting Growth for Charles Town Races & Slots

Albert T. Britton, General Manager
Charles Town Races & Slots

Mr. Britton, a certified public accountant, brings over 25 years of gaming industry experience to the Charles Town property. Prior to joining PNGI, he steadily ascended the ranks at the Claridge Casino Hotel in Atlantic City, New Jersey, serving in various management positions, including finance, operations, marketing and administration. He was eventually named president and chief operating officer, a position he held from 1996 through 2001.

He also spent a brief time with Harrah's Showboat Casino Hotel in Atlantic City, where he was responsible for property level leadership, implementation and oversight of Harrah's corporate Customer Satisfaction Assurance Initiative.

Mr. Britton is a member of the board of governors of Blue Ridge Community and Technical College and a member of the board of directors of United Way of the Eastern Panhandle.

Charles Town Races & Slots (CTRS) is entering upon a very exciting time of growth for our company. In December of 2009, the people of Jefferson County, West Virginia, with a 59 percent majority, voted to permit table games as part of our entertainment mix.

**For more information on
Charles Town Races & Slots,
visit our website:
www.ctownraces.com**

For those of you who may be unaware, CTRS opened for business in September of 1997, after the voters of Jefferson County voted to permit the addition of video lottery terminals to the racetrack, which had closed for a short period of time due to declining business and financial problems. Since that time, we have grown from a facility that had 220 video lottery terminals and 176 live racing days and daily purses averaging \$21,000 per day to a facility that has 235 live

racing days, daily purses averaging \$170,000 per day, over 5,000 slot machines and a full service, 153-room hotel with meeting space.

CTRS has a very positive economic impact on Jefferson County. The local share of video lottery dollars going to the county and the five municipalities has totaled nearly \$38 million over the last 10 years, enabling funding for public safety, including a new state-of-the-art 911 computer-aided dispatch center; renovation of public buildings; libraries; the county commission's operating budget and parks and recreation.

CTRS's positive impact on tourism in Jefferson County was recently noted in a study performed by the Gateway New Economy Council, which found that Jefferson County has the largest tourism industry in the state. CTRS draws nearly 4.5 million of the 5 million tourists who visit Jefferson County each year, and 96 percent of our visitors come from out of state. The study also found that almost \$800 million is spent in Jefferson County by tourists, and about half of that is spent outside of CTRS. I point this out to demonstrate that, contrary to what some believe, our customers take advantage of (and spend substantially on) the many other tourist attractions and businesses located in our beautiful county. In addition, over \$1 million was returned to Jefferson County as tourism grants for the joint marketing programs between tourism-based businesses and CTRS in 2008.

To make certain that our visitors learn about other businesses, tourist attractions and activities in Jefferson County, CTRS was recently pleased to add two informational kiosks. One is located at our main entrance in the valet parking lobby and one in the lobby of The Inn at Charles Town. Jefferson County businesses have been invited to provide advertising content for the kiosks, at no





Various interior views of Charles Town Races & Slots, Charles Town, West Virginia

charge, to promote what they have to offer. Business information, along with current events, will be updated quarterly.

For the first 10 years of our operation, CTRS enjoyed somewhat of a monopoly, as the surrounding states of Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania had no video lottery or casino facilities. However, in 2008 Pennsylvania passed legislation permitting video lottery terminals to be added to their racetracks. In 2009, Maryland also passed legislation permitting video lottery facilities, one of which will be located near the main artery between CTRS and our primary market, which includes Washington D.C., Baltimore and northern Virginia. As a result, table games were an absolute necessity to enable CTRS to meet this growing competition and preserve our market share. The West Virginia Lottery Commission projects that table games will not only generate approximately \$45 million annually in taxes and other assessments for the state, Jefferson County, our school system and municipalities, etc., but will also increase video lottery revenues by 13 percent.

CTRS looks forward to table games becoming operational in early July, along with a complete rebranding and name change. While our facility currently has the necessary floor space to add table games, an exciting interior makeover is planned. In addition, we will be adding a new lounge and entertainment venue, “Hollywood on the Roof,” and *Final Cut*, a gourmet steak house.

We are very excited and look forward to maintaining our position as an economic engine for Jefferson County and an integral and committed part of our community. ♡



West Virginia's State Parks: Special Places Where People and Nature Meet

Ken Caplinger, Chief of the Parks and Recreation Section
West Virginia Division of Natural Resources

Ken Caplinger has been with the State Parks System for 32 years and has served as Chief of the Parks and Recreation Section of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources since May 1, 2008. He is a life-long West Virginian, graduating from Mountaineer High School in Davis, West Virginia, and from West Virginia University with an undergraduate degree in parks and recreation, wildlands administration.

His parks career began at Watoga State Park, where he served as assistant superintendent from 1979 to 1984. He transferred to become assistant superintendent and, later, superintendent of Pipestem Resort State Park from 1984 to 1992. He became deputy chief of parks in Charleston in 1992, and assumed additional responsibilities as chief of operations in 1994. He has served two stints as acting chief in recent years, the first from late 2000 to early 2001, and the second from January 2006 to when he accepted his current post.

The West Virginia State Parks System includes 35 state parks, recreational facilities on eight state forests, five wildlife management areas, the Greenbrier River Trail and the North Bend Rail Trail.

I recently saw the film “Up in the Air.” The main character’s constant corporate travel had caused disconnection from his roots, values and sense of self. On a trip home to attend his sister’s wedding, he rediscovers some of what he has lost. Among other things, his story made me think of the often-unappreciated value of West Virginia’s state parks.

The system was created 80 years ago. At parks like Holly River, Watoga and Babcock, we see the fourth or even fifth generations from the same families coming back annually. They usually stay in the same cabins. They reconnect with family traditions, while showing their children there is more to life than TV, video games and fast food. At Watoga’s Honeymoon Cabin, No. 34, families can read signatures inside a dining table drawer, written decades ago by their great grandparents while honeymooning in the same log cottage.



Blackwater Falls State Park, West Virginia

Such folks are anything but “Up in the Air.” They are rejoined to themselves, their history and the scenic and natural treasures of our state upon each return. Each year, many people discover our parks for the first time and begin their own shared family experience that may last for generations.

Such benefits will be increasingly important as society becomes more frenetic and pressured, as well as more culturally and ethnically diverse. Our parks must be ready to attract and cater to a more culturally and ethnically diverse U.S. population that will come to our state to live and visit. What better way to introduce and involve them in our societal fabric than for them to join in a tradition that has been important to generations of Americans and West Virginians?

In addition to great memories, wonderful vacations and preserving natural and cultural landmarks, parks stimulate the economies of rural areas through employment, tourism revenue and development of related businesses nearby. In addition to skiing and whitewater rafting, state parks are among the cornerstones of West Virginia tourism. They provide high quality, high-value vacations, as well as day-use recreation like swimming, picnicking, game courts, playgrounds, trails and golf. Of course, preservation of natural treasures, such as Blackwater Falls, Cathedral’s virgin hemlocks and the tumbling waters of Holly River, assures our continued enjoyment and that of our children and grandchildren.

Sadly, many state parks systems are threatened by fiscal woes. The national recession has caused extreme park budget cuts, service reductions and even closures in many states. Arizona state parks recently lost more than half of their funding. Only nine of 26 Arizona state parks will remain open until July. There is a possibility their entire



Shay #2, Cass Scenic Railroad State Park, West Virginia

system could be forced to close. California's parks also have been hit hard. Fortunately, through responsible management of finances and resources, West Virginia's state financial picture is much better, including the state park system.

On average, our system revenues cover 60 percent of park operating costs. This percentage is among the highest in the nation. A self-sufficiency enhancement program, supported by the Governor and Legislature, promises to make this mark even better. Construction of additional cabins at Blackwater Falls, more guest rooms and indoor recreation at Twin Falls, a major new campground at Little Beaver and a total renovation of the bathhouse at Berkeley Springs State Park are all underway. Our park managers are resourceful in managing their parks and budgets. A growing challenge is to generate even more operating capital through guest services, while facing major maintenance and equipment needs in a large and mature park system. These soon-to-be completed projects will help meet that challenge.

Private philanthropy also can help West Virginia's state parks avoid the misfortunes of Arizona's. In our own state, the Oglebay

Park Foundation in Wheeling provides a solid financial base for that local, and highly successful, park. Likewise, some states have successful, well-funded charitable foundations dedicated to support of their state parks.

In West Virginia, several local charitable foundations support individual parks. In addition, the West Virginia State Parks Foundation was chartered to support all of our great state parks. If you want to find out how you can support the park system in other ways, feel free to contact me at (304) 558-2764. I will put you in touch with Foundation President James Michael.

Legendary West Virginia State Parks Chief, Kermit McKeever, often recited a work by American poet Edwin Markham. Its brief, thought-provoking words relate a core value of parks and are worth remembering:

*We are blind until we see,
That in the human plan,
Nothing is worth the making,
If it does not make the man,
Why build these cities glorious,
If man unbuilted goes?
In vain we build the world, unless
The builder also grows.*

Visit your state parks. I'm sure you'll find something to treasure at each for its unique contribution to West Virginia's quality of life. Along with their many other benefits, they are special places where people and nature meet. To find out what's going on at your favorite park, visit www.wvstateparks.com or call 1-800-CALL WVA. ♡



Guests Can Choose “Mild to Wild” at Adventures on the Gorge

Paul Buechler, President and Chief Executive Officer
Adventures on the Gorge

Paul Buechler is president and CEO of Adventures on the Gorge. In 2008, he formed a group of investors that acquired majority ownerships in Class VI River Runners, Rivermen and Mountain River Tours, the companies that now operate as Adventures on the Gorge.

Mr. Buechler is a native of Pennsville, New Jersey. He graduated from West Virginia University in 1978 with a degree in accounting, and in 1984 he was admitted as a certified public accountant by the West Virginia Board of Accountancy.

He previously was an employee of Charleston-based McJunkin Corporation, where he held several financial executive positions during his 28-year career. Prior to leaving in 2008, he was vice president of finance, responsible for banking, credit, customer pricing, transportation and inventory management. He also led or assisted in more than 15 business acquisitions which made McJunkin Corporation the largest pipes, valves and fittings distribution operation in America, with more than 100 locations and an annual revenue of \$2 billion.

Mr. Buechler is active with the United Way and YWCA organizations in West Virginia.



In the 1980s, I spent some time as a whitewater rafting guide on the New and Gauley Rivers. Weekends on the rivers were full of camaraderie and fun as guides and guests enjoyed the great rivers and the great scenery. Whitewater rafting helped put the wild in “Wild and Wonderful West Virginia.”

Whitewater rafting continued to thrive through the mid-1990s. Since then, the numbers of guests and rafting companies have declined. Some outfitters recognized they had to change strategies to grow. They realized they were no longer a whitewater rafting industry but part of the outdoor adventure and recreation industry. The shift in thinking brings new vitality and enthusiasm to this area.

Adventures on the Gorge is a case in point.

In 2008, private investors acquired three of the top whitewater rafting companies on the New River Gorge. Our goal was to transform them from outfitters with a single product to an adventure resort with multiple adventure activities, amenities and lodging. Class VI River Runners, Mountain River and The Rivermen have been lively participants in the change from competitors to partners at Adventures on the Gorge.

We combined the companies on one campus to take advantage of synergies and leverage our assets, so that our 75,000 guests would have access to every option we offer. Class VI River Runners was located on the rim of the New River Gorge, ideal property for the

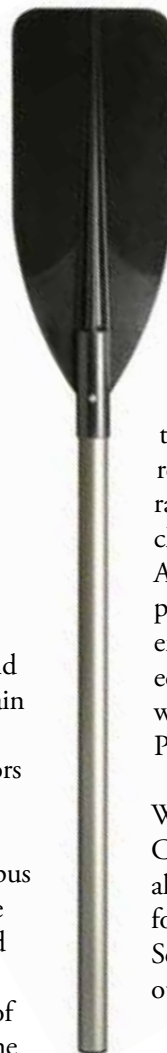
consolidated adventure resort. We purchased land contiguous to Class VI to build out the infrastructure and amenities.

Our company invested more than \$4 million in capital expenditures. We added a 5,700 square foot bathhouse and equipment building. We built a 9,200 square foot lodge with a store, check-in facility and bar. A new barbeque restaurant was added. We added 42 basic and deluxe cabins and a campground.

Our most exciting addition to date is TreeTops Canopy Tour, a world-class canopy tour/zip line course. Open since May 2009, the course was featured in *Popular Mechanics*, and in December was named one of the top ten canopy tours in the world. Our commitment to sustaining the endangered Eastern Hemlocks on the property was recently featured in *The Wall Street Journal*.

We now offer guests a host of choices: 76 cabins from rustic and basic to deluxe; three dining options, including a gourmet restaurant overlooking the gorge; whitewater rafting; kayaking; mountain biking; climbing/rappelling; horseback riding; ATV tours; paintball; hiking; and kids' programs. We have three bars and live entertainment twice a week. We have educational programs, some in partnership with the New River National River Park service.

We are a four-seasons resort. TreeTops Canopy Tour is a breathtaking adventure all year long. Our cabins are great getaways for November through March, our “Secret Season.” We help our guests arrange skiing outings at nearby Winterplace.





Adventures on the Gorge is still growing. We have started construction to expand our reservations office and add more deluxe cabins. This year, we will add an on-site mountain biking program, expand our kayak school, add an outfitter equipment store and offer pontoon boats to use on Summersville Lake. We are refurbishing an existing building into a conference center that will accommodate up to 150 people for team-building programs and small conferences.

And we haven't forgotten that it's the thrill of high adventure that lures some guests. We recently won the permit to conduct guided tours on the catwalk underneath the 876-foot high New River Gorge Bridge.

We are designing a spectacular water feature/pool for our guests to enjoy when they just want to hang out with family and friends. Our customer surveys show this is a priority for people staying three to seven days at our resort.

At Adventures on the Gorge, we are dedicated to adding a world-class high adventure product every year. Our goal is to offer guests more than 20 adventure activities, from "mild to wild." Food and beverage, lodging and amenities will expand to meet our guests' needs.



Only 11 companies run commercial rafting trips on the New and Gauley Rivers today. Further consolidations will occur in 2010. To compete in the coming years, companies will have to make major investments to expand into full service adventure resorts or become boutique niche businesses.

We believe the inherent beauty of the New River Gorge and Fayetteville make our area and resort the place to be. The Boy Scouts have announced construction of The Summit, a \$200+ million high



adventure center, which will have a significant impact on the area for many years to come. Developers are building homes on the rim of the Gorge. A creative class of artisan and business entrepreneurs is discovering our neighborhood.

Adventures on the Gorge will always focus on providing a premier whitewater rafting experience, but we've changed to a world-class adventure resort, catering to guests with diverse recreational tastes, budgets and leisure time. We welcome you to visit and enjoy "our slice of heaven." ▾



Treasures Abound in Kentucky State Parks

Gerry van der Meer, Commissioner
Kentucky State Parks

Gerry van der Meer has served as the commissioner of Kentucky State Parks since January 2008.

During his 35-year career in the hospitality industry, he previously served as general manager of the Crowne Plaza Campbell House Inn in Lexington, Kentucky, was general manager of the Hilton Suites of Lexington Green, and worked in management positions for hotels in Colorado and Massachusetts.

Mr. van der Meer has been active in several civic organizations in Lexington, including the United Way and Rotary, and was chairman of the board for the YMCA of Central Kentucky. He received the Garner B. Hamson Hotelier of the Year Award in 2003 from the Kentucky Hotel Lodging Association.

While growing up in Washington, D.C., his backyard playground was an alley, but his family's sojourns to nearby Rock Creek Park and the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia helped kindle a passion and enthusiasm for wildlife and our country's natural wonders.

When I go to work, I sometimes feel like I'm that kid in the candy shop – so many great things to choose from and only so much time to get it done.

As commissioner of the Kentucky State Park system, I do get to enjoy many treasures of our park system. I spend a lot of time urging other people to take advantage of the great opportunities we offer – hiking, camping, wildlife viewing, golf, boating – and the list goes on.

With 85 years of state parks in Kentucky, we have developed quite a list of activities in our 52 parks. Our parks play an important role for the state's tourism industry, attracting a significant number of visitors from within the state as well as neighboring states.

We have 17 resort parks that have lodges, restaurants, seasonal programming and many other amenities. Most of them have cabins and

cottages as well. Throughout the year these parks offer special activities – overnight hikes and canoe trips, arts and crafts displays, hikes led by naturalists and elk- and eagle-watching tours.

The Kentucky State Parks also operate 31 campgrounds with 2,600 sites. Most all have water and electric hookups and can accommodate RVs. Most of our campgrounds are open April through October. We do take reservations via the Internet.

If your game is golf, then we have a course for you. We have 18 courses across the state that offer excellent play. We also offer golf packages called “Tee’s and Zee’s” that combine overnight stays, meals, and golf. Four of our 18-hole courses – Grayson Lake, Pine Mountain, Dale Hollow and Yatesville Lake – have received national awards from Golf Digest as “Best New Affordable Public Courses.”



Federal Hill at My Old Kentucky Home State Park, Bardstown, Kentucky



Some of our most popular programs are about animals. Each fall and winter, three parks in Eastern Kentucky offer elk-watching tours. These animals were re-introduced to the state and the herd now numbers more than 11,000. In the west and southern part of the state, we have parks offering bird-watching weekends during the winter months. These weekends focus primarily on bald eagles that winter along the large lakes, as well as the thousands of sandhill cranes in their seasonal migrations.

Throughout the year, our parks offer a variety of nature programming. During 2010, John James Audubon State Park at Henderson will be celebrating the bicentennial of Audubon's arrival at Henderson with various events. If you are interested in birding and wildlife art, I encourage you to visit this park, which includes a museum with a notable collection of art from this gifted artist.



Our parks have more than 250 miles of hiking trails. Even better, they are all free because Kentucky's park system does not charge an admission fee. These trails make for great outdoor exercise and the parks are glad to provide them. In a time where more focus is being given to child obesity and attention deficit disorders, our state parks fill an important role in stemming such disorders.

We have a variety of trails, from a short one-mile trek to others that exceed 10 miles. Some of our trails will accommodate cyclists, and we have trails and campgrounds specifically for horseback riding as well. A few of our trails are even underground. We offer cave tours at Carter Caves near Olive Hill that give guests a glimpse of underground life. Another trail takes you on top of Natural Bridge, where the view is spectacular, and Cumberland Falls State Resort Park provides many trails that provide views of this spectacular natural attraction.



Most of our parks have a lake or stream that offers fishing and boating. Many of our parks have marinas where you can rent boats for fishing or pleasure.

Besides our nature and recreation duties, the park system also cares for several historic sites. These include mansions, such as My Old Kentucky Home at Bardstown, and pioneer sites, such as Fort Boonesborough near Lexington and Old Fort Harrod. These parks offer interpreters who can tell you about Kentucky history during your visit.

I invite you to visit us during 2010. For more information and to make reservations for lodging or camping, visit www.parks.ky.gov.

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From top: Carter Caves, Greenbo Lake State Resort Park, Eagle Ridge Golf Course at Yatesville Lake State Park and John James Audubon State Park



Fostering an Interest in Our Past and Curiosity About Today

Randall Reid-Smith, Commissioner
West Virginia Division of Culture and History

Randall Reid-Smith was appointed commissioner of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History in 2006 and has oversight responsibilities for the West Virginia Commission on the Arts, the state Archives and History Commission, Capitol Building Commission and Records Management and Preservation Board.

He administers the Arts, Archives and History, Historic Preservation and Museums Sections of the Division of Culture and History for the state of West Virginia. The Museums Section includes the West Virginia State Museum at the Culture Center in Charleston, Independence Hall in Wheeling, Grave Creek Mound Archaeological Complex in Moundsville and several other sites.

Since the mid-1980s Commissioner Reid-Smith has enjoyed an international career as an operatic tenor and won numerous competitions at state and regional levels. He has taught private voice lessons and master classes at the university level at colleges around the country.

He received a Masters of Music from Indiana University and a Bachelor of Music from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Most recently, Commissioner Reid-Smith was awarded an honorary doctorate of Music from Glenville State University.



The West Virginia Culture Center in Charleston, West Virginia

It has been said that all tourism is cultural tourism and that people travel for experiences that give them a glimpse of the diversity and character of the places they visit. We see this every day at the West Virginia Division of Culture and History.

Visitors come to the West Virginia State Museum in Charleston to explore the past and to West Virginia Independence Hall in Wheeling to relive Civil War history and the birth of our state. People tour Grave Creek Mound Archaeological Complex in Moundsville to learn about prehistoric cultures and see a nationally recognized collection that is a Save America's Treasures project.

They visit the Archives and History Library in Charleston to research personal histories. They attend the Vandalia and String Band festivals to connect with their Appalachian heritage.

Knowing this, we challenge ourselves at Culture and History, a division of the Department of Education and the Arts, to showcase our state's diversity and focus on West Virginia's heritage, arts and recreation. We draw our guests in with historic and contemporary stories of the extraordinary and the ordinary that entice them to explore our state.

The Culture Center, strategically set at the State Capitol, is the state's premier welcome center and the front door to the Capitol Complex, emphasizing our creative culture and interesting heritage. Every day, we introduce guests to the state's vibrant communities and commitment to quality of life.

By fostering an interest in our past and curiosity about today, Culture and History encourages people to discover the land, people and culture that make West Virginia a great place to travel.

The West Virginia State Museum in the Culture Center is a case in point. Opened on West Virginia Day (June 20) in 2009, the museum had more than 60,000 guests in its first six months. They included business leaders from around the world, school groups, families and out-of-state travelers. They visited the museum expecting to learn about the state's past. They left having discovered there is so much more to see and do in West Virginia.

That is no accident. In the museum, “Hidden Treasures” messages offer suggestions for places to go and enjoy an authentic first-hand look at subjects mentioned in the museum. “Want to Know More” messages encourage guests to read books written by West Virginians. Videos and narratives tell the real-life stories of everyday people and help visitors understand that our heritage is about more than our famous residents and well-known places.

In our North Connections Room, we have a West Virginia reading library, complete with books from children’s titles to research. We include contemporary magazines for guests to read as well. It is a pleasure to walk through the room and see parents reading to their children or adults copying titles of books they would like to read. People are encouraged to take the magazines home and read more about what is going on in our state today. We hope this inspires them to travel throughout West Virginia.

With exhibits that celebrate the best of our state and acknowledge its challenges, we introduce visitors to our culture of hospitality, our traditional ethic of quality craftsmanship and our resilient character.

The same is true for the changing exhibits and juried arts competitions in the Great Hall that visitors enter before they go to the museum. The exhibits showcase our state’s diversity, from whitewater rafting to the history of our state police to our glass heritage, because we know this is a perfect springboard for enticing people to travel more around the state.

Our efforts do not stop with the Museum or exhibits in the Great Hall. At the Culture Center, we offer progressive research services in our Archives and History Section, the repository for West Virginia history. Through personal and online visits, people can research personal histories and business topics. Our state-of-the-art vital records service is second to none; the Records Management and Preservation Board works with all 55 counties. Our Archives and History staff offers programs to help people make better use of the archives collections. We continually update our online research materials so that historians and researchers have ready access to resources that would otherwise be inaccessible.

The Arts Section works with artists, arts organizations, schools and community

groups around the state to foster an environment where the arts play a valued role in cultural, educational and economic development. The granting opportunities are diverse, with opportunities for professional development, arts education, community programs, and cultural facilities and capital resources.

The State Historic Preservation Office concentrates on preservation and protection of our state’s prehistoric and historic structures, objects and sites. The preservation of historic and prehistoric properties can help stabilize neighborhoods, stimulate private investments, provide affordable housing, revitalize downtowns, attract tourists and enhance community pride. Again, an active grants program supports the work going on around the state.

By fostering an interest in our past and curiosity about today, the Division of Culture and History encourages people to discover the land, people and culture that make West Virginia a great place to travel.

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A geological exhibit at The West Virginia State Museum



Morgantown's Wharf District: Investment on the Waterfront

Parry G. Petroplus, President
Petroplus and Associates, Inc.

Parry G. Petroplus is president of Petroplus and Associates Inc., a 30-year old, nationally recognized commercial real estate firm headquartered in Morgantown, West Virginia. He received a bachelor's degree in business administration from West Virginia University in 1973.

In 1994, he and partners, Mike Puskar and Steve Lorenze, formed Platinum Properties, LLC, a real estate development company. His portfolio of development entities consists of office building, shopping center, parking garage, business park and hospitality properties throughout West Virginia.

An active member of the greater Morgantown community, Mr. Petroplus has been involved with many community and statewide organizations, including the board of directors of Centra Bank, West Virginia; Linsly School board of trustees; West Virginia University Alumni Association, The Foundation of Monongalia General Hospital's board of trustees; West Virginia Roundtable; Morgantown Area Chamber of Commerce; West Virginia University Board of Governors and the International Council of Shopping Centers.

His many awards include Who's Who in West Virginia Business, Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year, the Greater Morgantown Convention and Visitors Bureau Edith Barill Award, the Association of Builders and Contractors Excellence In Construction Award and West Virginia Small Business Person of the Year and West Virginia Tourism Person of the Year honors.

Throughout the nation, communities are working to revitalize and reclaim former industrial spaces along waterfronts and railways for development opportunities. While this proposition presents opportunities for both public and private development, community engagement is paramount to ensuring success of these efforts. This is something we know to be true in Morgantown.

Since 1998, partners including the City of Morgantown, the Monongalia County Commission, the Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Morgantown, private investors and the West Virginia University Foundation have collectively been involved in the redevelopment of the space now known as the Wharf District. In just 12 years, the initiative has evolved into a walkable waterfront with a series of destinations along the way.

Planning

The Project for Public Spaces (PPS), founded in 1975, is a non-profit organization dedicated to the creation and sustainability of public spaces. Among the project areas PPS targets, waterfront revitalization and redevelopment are a primary consideration. The group has published a series of articles based on creating successful waterfront destinations, pitfalls to avoid and, of course, the imperative role of a public/private partnership.

Among the issues the PPS notes for consideration is the importance of making public goals the primary objective. This was certainly a driving force in the investment made in the Wharf District in Morgantown. The rejuvenation of the waterfront began with the installation of the six-mile Caperton Trail and the Hazel Ruby-McQuain Riverfront Park, including three acres adjacent to the trail and along the Monongahela River and featuring a boat ramp, amphitheater, restored train depot and green space.



In the immediate years following those investments, the Wharf saw businesses and restaurants open along the trail and draw visitors and locals alike to the area. It was the first vital step to ensuring the future successes and growth for this area's waterfront destination.

Progress

The construction of the WVU Foundation facilities at One Waterfront Place served as a catalyst for the revitalization effort of the now burgeoning Wharf District. This was made possible when the WVU Foundation agreed to relocate its offices from the Suncrest area to the Wharf District and be the pioneers of this initiative. With that commitment, the idea of "build it and they will come" rang true.

Since 2001, when the WVU Foundation opened its doors in the Wharf, the area has seen the construction and rehabilitation of buildings in the area, marking the Wharf District a unique destination in the fastest growing city in the state. In just nine years, the Wharf District has seen the explosion of investment and development, while maintaining the public accessibility on the Caperton Trail and green spaces. Also in 2001, the Waterfront Place Parking Garage was completed and the four-story, 705-stall facility is strategically located to serve the Foundation and adjacent Wharf office buildings.

In 2002, the 150 Clay Street office complex opened its doors. The facility boasts 48,000 square feet of office space and six stories.



Renderings of the banquet and performance settings at the Morgantown Event Center

In 2003, the Waterfront Place Hotel was completed and opened. Originally opened under a national brand flagship, the property transitioned to an independent boutique hotel in July 2007 and offers 205 guest rooms and luxury condominiums as private residences.

In 2007, the Upper Mon River Center was opened. Funded by the Monongalia County Commission and the West Virginia Economic Development Grant Committee, the Center offers restaurant space, houses the WVU Women's Crew Team and the Community Rowing Association, and provides accessibility to the Monongahela River.

In 2008, the eight-story Marina Tower office building was opened and houses significant businesses and government offices in a total of 95,000 square feet of office space.

Potential

One definition many people have of being "visionary" is the ability of a person or group to see resounding success in something where that success does not



currently exist or does not seem evident. This vision has carried the focus of citizens of Morgantown, its government and private investors for more than a decade. Adding to the activity in Morgantown's Wharf District is the construction of the Morgantown Event Center, which will be completed in April 2010. Offering more than 30,000 square feet of meeting, convention, banquet, trade show and entertainment space, the facility will be the second largest such conference facility in the entire state of West Virginia, behind only The Greenbrier.

The architectural layout features an open-space design, complemented by a high ceiling and providing ideal acoustics. The Center includes state-of-the-art lighting, sound reinforcement, design and audio-visual support, with flexible seating arrangements which can be tailored to group specifications.

Paradigm

All told, in just a dozen years, the successes in the Wharf District are countless. These are just a sampling of those investments, as these projects have been a significant

influence on the purchase, completion and rehabilitation of other businesses in the area as well. As the Wharf District has evolved, the model we have followed will be one we use as a template for our future – a model that has been driven by our local community and, thus, maximizes the potential of the area. It is a model embraced by local residents and well-regarded by visitors.

History has shown us many times that there are opportunities to achieve more collectively than we can achieve individually. In an area that was blighted and unproductive, we now see activity, economic development and tax revenue generation.

As we see intelligent and well-planned growth in the Wharf District, our partnerships remind us that opportunities remain countless. Like any good team, the strength may very well be in its numbers. ▽



Horses, Bourbon and Lexington!

David Lord, President
Lexington Convention & Visitors Bureau

David Lord is president of the Lexington Convention & Visitors Bureau. Born and raised in Beaumont, Texas, he graduated from the University of Texas with a degree in pre-law.

After careers in restaurant management and real estate, Mr. Lord began working in the convention and visitor bureau (CVB) business in 1980 in Ft. Worth, Texas. He then was asked to help establish a new CVB in Austin, Texas. Most recently, he served as executive director of the Tulsa, Oklahoma Convention & Visitors Bureau and was senior vice president of the Tulsa Chamber of Commerce for seven years.

As president of the Lexington CVB, Mr. Lord manages a full-time staff of 18. The Bureau's primary responsibility is to make money for Lexington by bringing more visitors, group tours, meetings and conventions to the city.

When Mr. Lord is not inviting folks to come to Lexington, he spends his free time with his family. He enjoys camping, fishing and exploring and studying Kentucky history.

Located at the heart of Central Kentucky's scenic Bluegrass Region, Lexington is known around the world for producing world-class racehorses and fine bourbon. The limestone rock just under the surface of those famed rolling hills might just be the secret ingredient for both.

If you love horses, you already know Lexington as the center of the Thoroughbred horse industry. If you love bourbon, you probably know it was born of the same land that has nurtured so many premium racehorses. Lexington's love affair with horses and bourbon has a long and colorful history. Both industries continue to make the Bluegrass Region a place of beauty and intrigue.

The rich pastures of Central Kentucky are where the top racehorses are bred, born, trained, officially registered, bought and sold, retired to stud and buried. Take a drive in the country past some of the region's horse farms and you might

catch a glimpse of a future Derby winner. With advance planning, you can meet previous Derby champions at a number of visitor-friendly farms.

Many opportunities exist for a close encounter with Lexington's beloved horses at the Kentucky Horse Park. Founded in 1978, the park operates as a working farm and competition facility. The horse is showcased through daily equine presentations, horse-drawn tours, horseback riding, two outstanding museums, a movie presentation and special events throughout the year.

This year, from September 25 to October 10, the Kentucky Horse Park will host the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games, the largest sporting event ever held in Kentucky and the first World Equestrian Games to take place outside of Europe.



Photo credit: Jeff Rogers

A spring afternoon offers the perfect opportunity to sightsee around the historic areas of downtown Lexington



Photo credit: Gene Burch

Lexington is also home to picturesque Keeneland Race Course, a National Historic Landmark. Keeneland hosts two race meets annually, in April and October, in addition to several Thoroughbred auctions that draw international buyers and price tags that often exceed the million-dollar mark.

When one region produces so many world-class race horses – there must be something in the water! In fact, the limestone shelf that underlies the lush pastures of the Bluegrass Region serves as a natural filter, providing the pure water necessary for our premium bourbons and a rich source of minerals for the growing bones of Thoroughbred yearlings.

No trip to Lexington would be complete without a visit to one of the bourbon distilleries nestled along the banks of sparkling streams in the countryside. Time-honored methods developed in the early 19th century are still used today. Four of the eight distilleries on the Kentucky Bourbon Trail are just 30 minutes from Lexington. Woodford Reserve, Buffalo Trace, Wild Turkey and



Photo credit: Lee Thomas

Four Roses offer tours where tantalizing aromas follow you from the fermenting tanks to the warehouses, where the bourbon rests until its proper age.

Centrally located at the junction of Interstates 75 and 64, Lexington is the perfect driving destination. By air, arriving in Lexington at Blue Grass Airport is accessible and economical. Connoisseurs the world over know Kentucky as the birthplace of bourbon and fine horses and Lexington is at the heart of it all! ♡

Above: The sun rises on a foggy spring morning in the Bluegrass

Below: The Bluegrass Region is home to four unique bourbon distilleries. Visitors on a tour at Woodford Reserve feel the heat produced by the fermentation process

All photos provided for this article are courtesy of the Lexington Convention and Visitors Bureau.



Heritage Farm: A Window to Our Past, A Doorway to our Future

A. Michael Perry, Co-Founder
Heritage Farm Museum and Village

A. Michael Perry has been a leader in the West Virginia business, education and health communities throughout his career. He guided Key Centurion Bancshares, West Virginia's first billion dollar banking organization, through a number of transitions in its growth toward becoming Banc One West Virginia Corporation, later becoming Bank One, West Virginia, NA, for which he was chairman and CEO before retiring in 2001.

Mr. Perry received his bachelor's degree from Marshall University and graduated from the West Virginia University College of Law (first in his class and Order of the Coif).

Before joining First Huntington National Bank (now Bank One) in 1981, he was a partner with the law firm of Huddleston, Bolen, Beatty, Porter and Copen. He has served as chairman of the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce, the West Virginia Bankers Association and the University System of West Virginia Board of Trustees and as co-chairman of West Virginia Celebration 2000 and Advantage Valley.

Mr. Perry serves on the boards of many business, civic and charitable organizations and has received numerous awards and honors.

He and his wife, Henriella, are the co-founders of the Heritage Farm Museum and Village, a 500-acre museum and retreat in Huntington which consists of 16 reconstructed log and other buildings, and is dedicated to West Virginia's Appalachian ancestors.

People come to Heritage Farm for a wide variety of reasons. Some come to reminisce about the past, either to recall days of their youth or relive the stories of their parents or grandparents. Others yearn for the good old days of a supposedly slower, calmer way of life. A sense of history compels others. An insatiable thirst for knowledge and understanding, as well as a wonderful sense of curiosity brings others. Some come to be entertained and, perhaps, for others it is a sense of adventure and experiencing something different.

Our motto is "Study the Past to gain an Appreciation of the Present and Plan for the Future." Thus, we hope some people come with an anticipation of learning something that will prove beneficial to them in the future. Why would looking at a collection of thousands of tools, implements and accessories of yesteryear help us today, or even in the future? What lessons could we, as individuals or companies, learn from the past?

When we realize that over 2,600 different companies have made automobiles in the United States and perhaps only two or three are left, or countless number of washing machine

manufacturers have existed and very few have survived, there is much we can gain from determining what they did right, as well as wrong. Why did some survive while most failed? Do these lessons only apply to companies, or do they have application to individuals, families and other organizations as well?

We believe these examples and lessons from the past teach us the need to adapt and learn to deal with change – all types of change. Those who adapted to changes in methods of transportation and communication and other technological changes survived, and a few even prospered, while those that did not adapt failed and ultimately went out of business.

At Heritage Farm Museum & Village you will be able to interact with life as it was in Appalachia from the 1800s through the early 1900s in award-winning exhibits that include over 20 buildings. We are proud to have been named a Prime Appalachian

Destination by *National Geographic Traveler*. Heritage Farm consists of five different museums: Progress; Transportation; Country Store; Industry and our Heritage Museum, as well as farm animals and an area for hands-on activities for children.



A woodworking display in the Industry Museum



The Country Store Museum at Heritage Farm

There also are five beautiful homes (four log) for overnight accommodations, a log church for weddings, and three large meeting facilities, as well as blacksmith and broom shops and a one-room school house. There are over 500 acres and many miles of walking and hiking trails. The Farm is a great place not only to tour but for overnight getaways, family reunions, retreats and corporate strategic planning meetings. Come spend an hour, a day or a week. We are generally open every day but Sunday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., with the last guided tour beginning at 1:30. Escape from the frantic pace of today's world and relax in the tranquil beauty of God's creation. Gain a new sense of history and an appreciation of how fortunate we are to be living today, and leave with an excitement about the future.

Our primary purpose is not to merely preserve and display the many artifacts of our Appalachian ancestors. We also show

our school children and other guests from across the country and around the world how these industrious and creative people, who crossed the rugged mountains into what is today southern West Virginia with few tools and supplies, were able to build their own homes and provide food and clothing for their families, notwithstanding unbelievable hardships

for their own futures if they are willing to work and persevere, as did their ancestors.

Come and see for yourselves. Leave with a renewed sense of pride and a determination to continue to make West Virginia the best place possible to live, work and raise a family. ♪

**For more information,
visit the Heritage Farm
Museum website at:
www.heritagefarmmuseum.com**

and challenges. We should be immensely proud of them and our rich heritage and never let the national media or so-called comedians make fun of it. We want our children to feel their ancestors' blood running through their veins and realize that they also can dream big dreams and provide



Competing with Twitter, Facebook and Wii

Rudy Henley, Asset Manager and Developer
Stonewall Resort State Park

Rudy Henley is asset manager and developer of Stonewall Resort State Park and responsible for all aspects of operation, development and finance, including reporting to the three stakeholder groups: the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the state of West Virginia and bondholders of the public-private enterprise. Stonewall Resort includes a 200-unit lodge and conference center, an Arnold Palmer signature golf course, 384-slip marina and other commercial and recreational amenities.

Mr. Henley served a similar role in the development and operation of both the \$12 million Alan B. Mollohan Innovation and Incubation Center and Silver Creek Ski Resort. He was partner in charge of the planning and development of the West Virginia University Research Park and provided consulting services for the Dow Research Park in South Charleston; United Hospital Center in Clarksburg; and Phase 2 development of the I-79 Technology Park in Fairmont.

He is co-founder of McCabe-Henley Limited Partnership, now West Virginia Commercial LLC, and a founding member and general partner of Mountaineer Capital, a licensed SBIC providing venture capital investment to companies in West Virginia and the surrounding region. A graduate of West Virginia University, he has been involved in commercial and investment real estate brokerage and development in West Virginia for over 30 years.

Over the last several decades, West Virginia's offerings for outdoor recreation, business meetings and general tourism and travel have increased substantially. During that time, the multiple benefits of tourism and travel to West Virginia's economy have been discussed at length by industry and government officials. Today one might wonder about the future of the industry. Full-time and instant connectivity and access to entertainment have taken social interaction to a new level, arguably competing for the time and money available for leisure travel, business meetings and outdoor or destination recreation. However, recent studies indicate that the need to experience new adventures, create memories, meet face to face, build new relationships and other factors are as vital as ever and illustrate the importance of travel and tourism to an overall sense of well-being.

While outdoor experiences, successful meetings or just a leisure getaway provide great value and contribute to the measured economic effect and

importance of travel and tourism, it is important to note a related value of travel and tourism that is not ordinarily measured. An increasing number of observers and analysts of economic activity argue that diverse communities with access to authentic cultural, entertainment and

**For more information on
Stonewall Resort State Park,
visit the website:
www.stonewallresort.com**

recreational activities are important elements in building and sustaining a skilled workforce in a knowledge-based economy. As West Virginia strives to improve its economy, build 21st century jobs and healthy lifestyles, retain its bright and energetic young citizens and attract new residents and businesses, many of the benefits provided by the state's travel and tourism industry should be considered in terms of their contribution to the overall image and, indeed, ability of the state to support and compete for economic success.

As part of that recognition of the industry impact, it is important to note the interaction of private business with government agencies in the ongoing effort to provide activities, facilities, programs and events. Most major attractions in the state have an ongoing and essential interaction with a variety of federal, state and local agencies that are critical to the particular attraction. The ski industry relies on national weather data to predict conditions and schedule snowmaking, depends on state highway crews to keep roads open and uses state tourism matching grants to effectively market its offerings. Meeting facilities, such as the new Morgantown Municipal Theater and the



Bridgeport conference center, are financed in part by public finance programs. The state-funded Hatfield-McCoy trail system in southern West Virginia has been successful in creating a new tourism industry in that part of the state. The whitewater industry depends on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to regulate traffic and water flow on the state's rivers in a manner that enhances the recreational use potential. Traditional outdoor recreation activities, such as hunting and fishing, are regulated and supported by a number of state and federal agencies. Access to public lands and waters for a variety of activities requires significant government funding for maintenance and oversight. Given the extent of interaction between private business and government agencies to provide a diverse and robust tourism and travel industry, it is important for government and industry officials to maintain an active dialogue on the benefits of a positive working relationship and challenges that inhibit opportunities to expand the impact on the state's economy.

Stonewall Resort State Park represents one of the more involved interrelationships between government agencies and the private business sector. The lake and initial recreation facilities were developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps leases the land for the park to the state of West Virginia. Through a unique public-private partnership and federal legislation, the state was relieved of its share of recreation development costs in exchange for attracting private finance to build agreed-upon lodging and recreation facilities. While the relationship between federal, state and private finance presents unusual business issues, these stakeholders – along with local citizen groups, local elected officials and other interested parties – have found a means to work together toward the shared goals of enhancing Stonewall Resort State Park amenities and facilities in a manner beneficial to all the stakeholders. As the efforts to increase Stonewall's capacity proceed, project supporters are hopeful that the interactions with government

agencies and local interests can provide insight into means and methods to achieve more efficient relationships with government agencies.

The travel and tourism business is very competitive regionally and nationally. In today's world, some of the competition comes from the passive activities afforded by constant connectivity and access to entertainment. Industry and government participants need to work together to identify and implement policies, programs and processes that can serve to reinforce the attractiveness and value of the experiences the industry offers and work to maximize the appeal of its attractions. The benefits of such cooperative efforts will play a major role in the state's efforts to stabilize its economy, augment its quality of life and compete for the 21st century workforce. ▽



Stonewall Resort State Park



Growing the Market at Winterplace Ski Resort

William T. Bright, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Bright Enterprises

William T. (Bill) Bright is a life-long resident of Summersville, West Virginia. In 1960, while a senior at West Virginia University, he and his brother started a greeting card and stationery company called Bright of America with an initial investment of \$500. By the late 1980s, the company had grown to as many as 1,000 employees and \$20 million in sales.

In 1976 Mr. Bright started a coal production company, which grew to be the largest independent coal company in West Virginia. In 1992, soon after selling Bright of America and Bright Coal Group, he found exciting new opportunities for investment, purchasing Winterplace Ski Resort and, the following year, Glade Springs Resort.

Today, Mr. Bright is chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Bright Enterprises, which, in addition to Winterplace and Glade Springs, consists of more than 20 businesses, including timber and coal properties, natural gas, venture capital investments and various real estate holdings.

He is a recipient of *The State Journal's* Who's Who in Business Lifetime Achievement Award and was elected to the West Virginia University Business Hall of Fame. He is a member of the board of directors of the West Virginia Roundtable and the City of Hope Hospital and is on the board of advisors for the Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center at WVU Medical Center. He is a past chairman and current vice chairman of the West Virginia State Tourism Commission.

Winterplace Ski Resort is in the top 10 ski resorts in the nation with regard to the percentage of beginners who take lessons to learn to ski and snowboard. We are growing the national snow sports industry at Winterplace for the long-term benefit of everyone.

Growth of the Industry

In December 1971, West Virginia's first commercial ski area opened in the Canaan Valley area. There are now five ski resort destinations (Canaan, Snowshoe, Oglebay, Timberline and Winterplace) that produce over 800,000 skier visits each year, from mid-November to early April.

Economic Impact

The estimated economic impact of West Virginia's ski industry is in excess of \$250 million each year and provides peak seasonal employment of more than 5,000 people. Winterplace partners with many hotel and motel companies in Raleigh, Fayette and Mercer

**Winterplace Ski Resort
is conveniently located just
off I-77, between Beckley and
Bluefield, West Virginia.**

**For more information, visit
www.winterplace.com.**

Counties to cross-market ski trips with lodging. We promote a weekday stay-and-ski-free package with our lodging partners, and that has expanded weekday business for all.

Importance of a First-Class Teaching Area

Several years ago we decided to build a new state-of-the-art teaching area at Winterplace

WINTERPLACE

that is one of the largest in the mid-Atlantic – over 3-plus acres! We installed two new *SUPER CARPET™* surface lifts that work like the moving walkways at airports – you stand on the walkway as it moves you safely and smoothly to the top of the teaching area.

Next we constructed “the perfect learn to ski and snowboard slope,” a slope that is between five and 10 percent, which is ideal for beginners. (Expert slopes can be as steep as 35 to 55 percent!)

Our instructors are Professional Ski and Snowboard Instructors of America (PSIA)-trained to make learning to ski and snowboard fun for all. We provide a guarantee that everyone will learn, or they can take the class again for free. Governor Manchin, in recognition of the ski industry's importance to West Virginia, and in recognition of the outstanding teaching programs at all West Virginia resorts, proclaimed January 2010 “Learn a Snow Sport Month.”

Snowtubing Expands the Market Even More

At Winterplace, we constructed one of the largest snowtubing parks in our region. What pleasantly surprised us was the number of people who come just to snowtube and not ski. Most West Virginia ski areas now have tubing parks.

Snowmaking – The Key to Success

The single largest expense for a ski resort is the cost to build, operate and maintain a first-class snowmaking system. The technological improvements in snowmaking machines continues. Since we acquired Winterplace in 1992, we have built the highest snowmaking



The snowtubing park at Winterplace



The SUPER CARPET™ helps skiers move safely and smoothly to the top of the teaching area

capacity per acre in the southeast, with 100 percent of all trails covered. We now have the ability to pump about 7,000 gallons of water per minute to make snow. This is equivalent to 10,000,000 gallons in a 24-hour period, which can cover 50 acres with one foot of snow.

New Trends in Snowmaking Automation

We are now adding the latest in fully automated snowguns that can be turned on and off from a remote computer. Each snowgun has an onboard weather station that monitors ambient air temperature

and humidity and adjusts the quality and quantity of snow, based on these variables. These new automated snowguns can be turned on very quickly to take advantage of short windows of cold snowmaking temperatures. We typically start making snow when we have a 28-degree wet bulb temperature, which is the combination of ambient air temperature and humidity.

Fun is the Key

Of all of my investments, Winterplace is by far the most fun. My entire family enjoys snow sports and, just like learning to ride a bicycle, you never forget the skill.

It is one of the few sports where multi-generations can participate for a lifetime. I am proud to have been a part of the impressive growth in the West Virginia ski industry. ❧



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Our Newest Partners

Bowles Rice is pleased to announce the addition of five new partners to the firm. They are: Aaron C. Boone and Richard S. Boothby in the firm's Parkersburg, West Virginia office; Patrick E. Clark and Robert L. Hogan in the Charleston, West Virginia office; and Ashley P. Hardesty in the Morgantown, West Virginia office.

Aaron Boone, who joined Bowles Rice in 2005, has extensive experience in litigation and insurance defense.

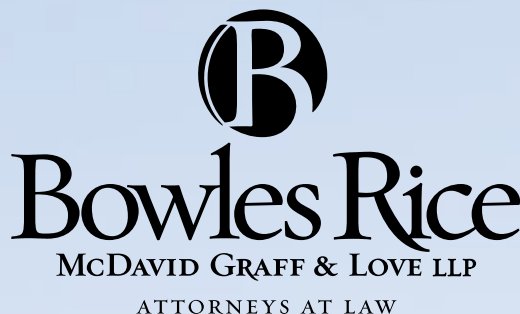
Richard Boothby is a member of the firm's Education Law Group and focuses his practice in litigation and labor and employment issues.

Patrick Clark counsels businesses in a range of industries, including finance and health care, on transactional, regulatory and litigation matters.

Ashley Hardesty joined Bowles Rice in 2003. She is experienced in the areas of litigation, labor and employment and insurance defense.

An experienced litigator, Robert Hogan joined Bowles Rice in 2008. He focuses his practice on complex litigation, products liability and professional liability.

Bowles Rice is a regional, full-service law firm with 120 lawyers and seven offices in West Virginia, Kentucky and Virginia.





Shall We Gather at the River, the Beautiful, the Beautiful River...

Ricklin Brown, Partner
Bowles Rice McDavid Graff & Love LLP

Ricklin Brown is a partner in the Charleston office of Bowles Rice and concentrates his practice in labor and employment law. He is the senior partner in, and has served as chairman of the firm's Labor and Employment Practice Group.

For more than 35 years, Rick has represented management and employers in various private industries including construction, manufacturing, automotive, mining, food service, health care and banking, as well as public entities in all facets of labor and employment relations law. He was the first management representative in West Virginia to be elected as a Fellow to the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers.

Rick received his law degree from West Virginia University College of Law in 1975, where he was a member of the Moot Court Team and the Order of Barristers. He earned his bachelor of arts degree from West Virginia University in 1968. He is an Eagle Scout and served in the United States Army, Special Forces, attaining the rank of Captain (1968-1972). Mr. Brown is a Vietnam Veteran.

He is listed in the "Best Lawyers in America" published by Woodward/White, "America's Leading Business Lawyers," published by Chambers USA and the 2007 and 2008 editions of West Virginia Super Lawyers. He is rated as an "AV" lawyer by his peers in Martindale-Hubbell.

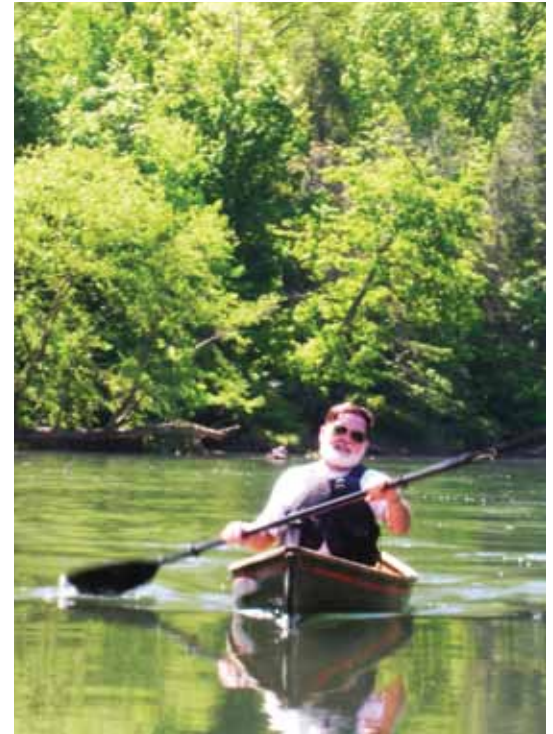
"I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."

— Henry David Thoreau
Walden (1854)

I am the sixth generation of my family to be born and live in what is now West Virginia. I know and appreciate the many benefits this state has to offer, as well as its abundant beauty. For me, the Greenbrier River is the center of everything that humans look for when they try to define the inexplicable draw of this state. Years ago my wife and I bought a log cabin in the Big Bend of the Greenbrier River, near Talcott. We wanted a place where our children and their children could observe and appreciate nature. To understand there were other ways that our ancestors had of doing things. It was built of chestnut logs and had survived many seasons of high water until the big flood of 1996 swept it off its foundation and did irreparable damage to the land itself.

**Over three-fourths of the
watershed is a limestone cavern
system which supports fine
trout fishing, cave exploration,
hiking, biking, camping
and much, much more.**

We were bowed, but not broken. So, we salvaged the irreplaceable logs and began looking for another location. We were fortunate to find land and another small cabin, this time in the Droop Mountain bend of the river, above Renick. With the help of a local craftsman, we moved the logs



Rick Brown canoeing on the Greenbrier River

and added onto the existing cabin – no small feat since the property was accessible only by boat. Why the attraction? Why go to the trouble? Well, Thoreau pretty much nailed it. The beauty, simplicity and essential facts of life that he was seeking, we found on the Greenbrier River.

The Greenbrier is the longest (173 miles) untamed (un-dammed) river east of the Mississippi. The Delaware Indians named it O-ne-pa-ke, "the Dark Path." It begins in northern Pocahontas County and drains an area of 1,656 square miles. It ends at the New River in Hinton and provides the New River with 30 percent of its water volume thereafter. It flows through the Monongahela National Forest and is paralleled for 77 miles by the Greenbrier River Trail, running from Cass to north Caldwell. Over three-fourths of the watershed is a limestone cavern system which supports fine

trout fishing, cave exploration, hiking, biking, camping and much, much more.

We were extremely lucky. Little did we know in 1996 that our cabin would be one of the only man-made structures included in the recently-designated 6,000 acre federal Spice Run Wilderness Area in the Monongahela National Forest. The “Mon” is a tremendous wild federal preserve that covers over 110,000 acres in West Virginia.

What’s the allure? “In wilderness is the preservation of the world,” Thoreau famously wrote. After a bad week of ridiculous deadlines or the human hassles imposed by city life, I can find solace sitting on the front porch of our cabin, watching black bears cross the river or listening to flocks of geese. Deer, beavers and ducks are regular residents. When you spot a Great Blue Heron take flight from your front yard, you are lifted to a higher plane. A river is more than a source of

life for fish and wildlife. It is much like a campfire. A person can sit and watch the water flow for hours at a time and, despite its remoteness, never feel lonely. My family has spent many hours in canoes, boats and inner tubes, often without seeing another soul. Yet, the solitude brings comfort, not loneliness.

If you are religious, the river can be a spiritual place. If you seek occasional solitude, it can be peaceful and restorative. The recreational activities it offers are many and varied, enough to entertain all but the most jaded. Six state parks or forests are a short hike away. Check out [www.visitwv.com] and [www.lowergreenbrierriver.org] for information and a list too extensive to include here.

As we approach the warmer months, I find myself gazing out the window and thinking of the river. It is a nugget of sanity in an often troubled world, a place where nature reveals its simple plan of existence

and resilience. I count among my happiest moments those spent in a canoe letting the Greenbrier guide me. It is always sure to get where it wants to go and, in its own good time.

“Eventually, all things merge into one, and a river runs through it. The river was cut by the world’s greatest flood and runs over rocks from the basement of time. ... I am haunted by waters.”

– Norman MacLean,
A River Runs Through It (1976) ♡



Rick’s log cabin, located in the Droop Mountain Bend of the Greenbrier River above Renick, West Virginia



Ten Years of Success: How the Hatfield-McCoy Trail System is Reinventing Southern West Virginia

Jeffrey T. Lusk, Executive Director
Hatfield-McCoy Regional Recreation Authority

Jeffrey T. Lusk is currently the executive director of the Hatfield-McCoy Regional Recreation Authority. He previously served as the executive director of the Wyoming County Economic Development Authority for 11 years.

Mr. Lusk earned a master's degree in public administration from Marshall University. He also has undergraduate degrees from Penn State University and the West Virginia University Institute of Technology. He is a Certified Economic Developer; a Certified Community Developer; and an Economic Development Financing Professional.

He serves on several community boards and authorities, as well as co-chairing the entrepreneurship development committee of Vision Shared.

Ten years ago, the West Virginia Legislature created the Hatfield-McCoy Trail System to generate economic development through tourism in nine southern West Virginia counties. There was an idea – a dream, if you will – that the coalfields of our state could reinvent themselves as a grown-up playground, a place where people who appreciate the great outdoors, family adventure and a little mud could come and have a lot of fun. Along the way, the riders inevitably would spend money and provide investment in our state.

What started as a dream in 2000 became a successful reality and has had a powerful and positive impact on local economies and the quality of life in southern West Virginia. We currently operate six systems, representing approximately 500 miles of trails. Each system is open 365 days a year to ATVs, dirt bikes, utility terrain vehicles (UTVs), mountain bikes, horses, and hikers. Many of the trail systems also offer

community connecting trails that allow visitors to access “ATV-friendly towns” and experience the charm of southern West Virginia.

**For more information on the
Hatfield-McCoy Trail System,
visit the website at:
www.trailsheaven.com**

Riding the Hatfield-McCoy Trails is also one of the best vacation bargains in the eastern United States. For \$50 (only \$26.50 for West Virginia residents) we offer unlimited access to hundreds of miles of trail for an entire year. In difficult economic times, everyone is looking for vacation value. The compelling thing for West Virginia is this – bargains for individuals are translating into tremendous tourism revenue for our state. In July 2009, *The Wall Street Journal* highlighted ATV trails and their development as economic drivers nationwide. Hatfield-McCoy was referenced as one of the biggest ATV networks in the country, and it was estimated that consumers spend about \$10 million per year for lodging, permits, meals, machine repairs and fuel when visiting the trail system.

The Hatfield-McCoy Trail System also began as a strategic dream – it was designed as a true economic development project and not as merely a few locations where local ATV riders can hit the trail. Last year, over 80 percent of our riders came from outside of West Virginia, and our total permit sales have increased in each of the past nine years. The West Virginia trails experiment brought our state well over \$1 million in rider permit sales in 2009! True to our history, we always view our activities through the lens of entrepreneurship. For example, the town of Gilbert is a role model for





ATV-based tourism development. They have a population of only 450 people, but have welcomed eight new lodging businesses since becoming connected to the trail system. In fact, we have seen over 40 new lodging providers open along the system since the inception of the Hatfield-McCoy Trails.

Today, West Virginia is an industry leader in ATV tourism. The original authorizing legislation for our trail system directed cooperation with Kentucky and Virginia in developing a super-regional system, and I am thrilled with the beginnings of similar projects in these neighboring states. I anticipate that by working in collaboration with others, West Virginia will prosper even more through the development of thousands of miles of trails for the common benefit of a super-trail region.

We are pleased with our achievement arc, but are never content to rest with today's success. We believe in planning for the future, and we are looking at plans to double our miles of trail. I am incredibly proud of the Hatfield-McCoy Trail System's first decade of economic development success, and I envision the next 10 years bringing increasing prosperity and positive development to southern West Virginia.

Come ride with us in 2010! ♡



True Louisville Originals

James T. Wood, President and Chief Executive Officer
Louisville Convention & Visitors Bureau

James T. Wood began his 39-year hospitality career as a pots-and-pans washer. He later advanced through several positions over 11 years with the Marriott Corporation, before joining the Tampa Bay Convention & Visitors Bureau as its vice president of convention sales and marketing. Between 1999 and 2001, he coordinated Tampa's bids for the Super Bowl, NCAA Men's Final Four and NHL All-Star Game.

In 1999 Mr. Wood became the president & CEO of the Providence Warwick (Rhode Island) Convention & Visitors Bureau, where he developed two new events: the Federal Hill Stroll, a restaurant event featuring 30-plus restaurants and businesses; and the Jack O' Lantern Spectacular, which now draws nearly 100,000 people annually.

In 2000 The Providence Journal selected him as one of the 25 Top New Leaders for a New Century, and he received the Mary Brennan Award Tourism Award from the Rhode Island Tourism and Hospitality Association.

In 2003 Mr. Wood became the president & CEO of the Louisville Convention & Visitors Bureau, which has an annual operating budget of \$13.9 million and a staff of 58 employees. He serves on the boards of several tourism-related organizations in the greater Louisville area and leads the effort to bring multiple industry shows to Louisville.

The Kentucky Derby may put this city in the international spotlight, but the famous horse race isn't all Louisville has to offer. Nestled on the banks of the Ohio River, this vibrant city combines southern hospitality with big city amenities, a cosmopolitan riverfront district, a diverse art scene and a growing foodie reputation with two Restaurant Rows. Sports lovers should make a stop at the Louisville Slugger Museum; thrill-seekers, take a ride on one of the world's longest stand-up coasters at Kentucky Kingdom. History lovers can sip mint juleps on a river cruise aboard the Belle of Louisville, a National Historic Landmark.

Key Attractions

Boxing fans have certainly heard Muhammad Ali proclaim Louisville as "the greatest city in the world." And that's just one of the many reasons he chose his hometown as the site for his living legacy. The **Muhammad Ali Center**, near Sixth & Main Streets along the city's Museum Row,

Louisville

CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

offers an unparalleled experience chronicling the journey of an extraordinary man. You'll be knocked out by the story it tells.

Visitors don't have to be fans of America's favorite pastime to appreciate the enormity of the world's largest bat marking the entrance to another one-of-a-kind attraction, the **Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory**. The museum tour begins with an inspiring look at the sport of baseball and its heroes in "The Heart of the Game" film, followed by a tour of the factory where the official bat of Major League Baseball is made. A celebrated American tradition more than 120 years old, every visitor leaves with their very own miniature Louisville Slugger.



Photo credit: Reed Palmer

The first turn at Churchill Downs



Photo credit: James Moses

The Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory

The **Frazier International History Museum** opened its doors to worldwide acclaim, largely due to its unique partnership with the Royal Armouries of Great Britain. Visitors are treated to an array of arms, artifacts, stories and interpretations that span 1,000 years of European and U.S. history. Live interpretations of some of America's most colorful historical figures, from Annie Oakley to Wild Bill Hickok, are performed daily. See Teddy Roosevelt's legendary "Big Stick," General Custer's rifle and Geronimo's bow.

These are just a few of the museums housed on Louisville's **Museum Row** and nestled in the city's thriving theatre district. North, south, east or west – Louisville offers a wealth of attractions and historic architecture. Check out the downtown East Market district, Frankfort Avenue and Highlands neighborhoods for enclaves of boutiques, dining and entertainment options galore. At night the city comes alive, anchored by downtown's Fourth Street Live! entertainment district.

A visit to the "Derby City" would not be complete without a tour of the **Kentucky Derby Museum**, located at the main entrance to legendary **Churchill Downs** racetrack. At the soon-to-be renovated



The Muhammad Ali Center

Museum, visitors can experience the power and speed of three-year-old Thoroughbreds as they compete in the "fastest two minutes in sports." Start with the 360-degree, high-definition "The Greatest Race," which takes you behind the scenes from dawn to dusk on Derby Day. Explore the exhibits to capture the pride, tradition and excitement that is the Kentucky Derby!

Dining

Louisville offers a unique blend of regional cuisine, blending the best of southern favorites with the tradition of midwestern ease. You'll find southern favorites, like the Colonel's famous fried chicken, and local favorites, like the hot brown, Benedictine and derby pie. And you know you're in the gateway to Bourbon Country when America's only native spirit shows up on menu items from appetizers to desserts.

Bourbon Country

Louisville's distilling history dates back to the early 1800s. Before Prohibition, over 50 distilleries, barrel warehouses and bottling plants were concentrated along Main Street, in a district known as "Whiskey Row." Today, you'll find offices of international brands, world-class bourbon bars and the start of bourbon tours along Main Street, as

well as nine museums in the six-block historic neighborhood that is now Museum Row.

You can start at the Louisville Visitor Center to get a sneak preview of the distilleries, pick up a map of the Bourbon Trail, buy Just Add Bourbon merchandise and plan your Bourbon Country adventure with the help of travel counselors who have traveled the route.

The Urban Bourbon Trail Passport (available at the Visitors' Center) provides places to be validated by each of the restaurants and bars on the trail. Note: There is no time limit for completion. Visit each location, make a purchase, and get the Passport stamped. When it's full, go back to the Visitors' Center (or mail it in) for a special t-shirt.

Louisville is ready to make your trip a memorable one, so add on a few extra days to your itinerary and take advantage of all the one-of-a-kind experiences the city of Louisville can offer. You'll find more information on hotels, restaurants and attractions at the Louisville Convention & Visitors Bureau's website: www.gotolouisville.com, as well as a free Visitors' Guide. ▽



MAPP Promotes the Growth of Tourism in West Virginia

Oshel B. Craig, Chairman
West Virginia Tourism Commission

In addition to serving as chairman of the West Virginia Tourism Commission, Oshel Craig is the owner and chief executive officer of Better Foods, Inc. In that capacity, he operates two successful food franchise chains in West Virginia and surrounding states, Gino's Pizza and Tudor's Biscuit World. He also owns Craig Real Estate, Inc. and Mountain State Properties, Inc.

In 1980, Mr. Craig was elected to the West Virginia State Senate, where he served as chair of the Senate Finance Committee during his 22 years in office.

He is active in several civic organizations and is a member of the board of directors of City National Bank.

In 2003, he was named to Marshall University's Lewis College of Business Hall of Fame.

The 1995 West Virginia Legislature created the Matching Advertising Partnership Program (MAPP) as a tool to promote tourism and the image of West Virginia. The program's funding comes from a portion of the net terminal income from video lottery.

MAPP is administered by the Division of Tourism and is managed by the Tourism Commission, an 11-member board appointed by the Governor. The legislation requires that the board be comprised of from one to three individuals from each congressional district, a member of a Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) and a representative of a CVB, the Secretary of Transportation, the Director of Natural Resources, seven individuals from the private sector, one from the Council for Community and Economic Development and one from the public sector.



Motorcycle touring through the hills of West Virginia

An Investment/Reimbursement Process

MAPP provides a 50 percent reimbursement of tourism promotions. The participating entity has to first fund and pay for 100 percent of the cost of the tourism promotion. Then, the entity submits copies of cancelled checks that funded 100 percent of the promotion, along with actual

samples of the promotion, to the Division of Tourism. After a few weeks of review by the Division, a check for one-half of the cost of the promotion is sent as a reimbursement.

We feel this method of reimbursement encourages those who participate to plan the very best and most successful promotions, since they have to

fund 100 percent up front, and then get back only one-half of the cost. In addition, the entity has to submit tracking results so as to avoid repeating promotions that are unsuccessful. Both outside auditors and state auditors review all reimbursements. Audits are required and are paid for by the entity receiving the reimbursement. In addition, the Division of Tourism also does formal audits.

How Successful Has The Program Been?

In the year 2000, tourism spending in West Virginia was \$2.4 billion dollars and employed 35,000 individuals. State

revenue from tourism was \$278.9 million. Using 2000 as the base year, tax data through 2008 indicate that there has been a significant increase in tourism spending and revenues.

If tourism spending had remained steady between 2000 and 2008, West Virginia would have

received a total of \$2.231 billion in tax revenue (\$278.9 million x 8 years). Instead, steady growth in tourism revenues generated a total of \$3.862 billion in tax revenues – providing an additional \$1.631 billion – over the eight-year period.

Thus, the return on investment (ROI) during this period, with MAPP providing 50 percent reimbursements for tourism-related promotions, was a remarkable 1,775 percent over the eight years, or an average of 221 percent per year!

The Total West Virginia Tourism Industry For 2008

In 2008, the tourism industry grew to \$4.382 billion per year, employed 44,000 individuals and contributed \$591,000,000 in state and local taxes! Without MAPP, we would not have experienced this amount of growth. It is one of the most successful programs to promote tourism in West Virginia and will continue to have a positive impact in the years to come. ▽

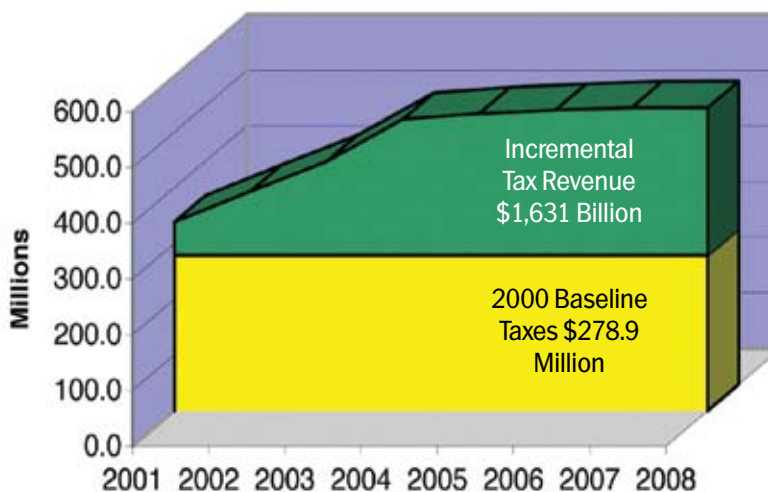
Acknowledgement: A special thank you to Frostline Consulting LLC for gathering much of the data contained in this article.

West Virginia Direct Travel Impacts 2000-2008

	Spending (Billions)	Employment (Thousands)	Gov't Revenue (Millions)		
			Local	State	Total
2000	\$ 2400	35.0	\$ 18.0	\$ 278.9	\$ 296.9
2001	\$ 2663	37.3	\$ 21.0	\$ 338.6	\$ 359.6
2002	\$ 2953	39.7	\$ 24.4	\$ 393.8	\$ 418.2
2003	\$ 3268	41.5	\$ 27.1	\$ 447.2	\$ 474.3
2004	\$ 3501	41.8	\$ 30.3	\$ 523.0	\$ 553.3
2005	\$ 3746	43.2	\$ 32.1	\$ 533.1	\$ 565.2
2006	\$ 3976	43.8	\$ 35.0	\$ 539.2	\$ 574.2
2007	\$ 4086	43.7	\$ 37.2	\$ 543.5	\$ 580.7
2008	\$ 4382	44.0	\$ 47.2	\$ 543.8	\$ 591.0

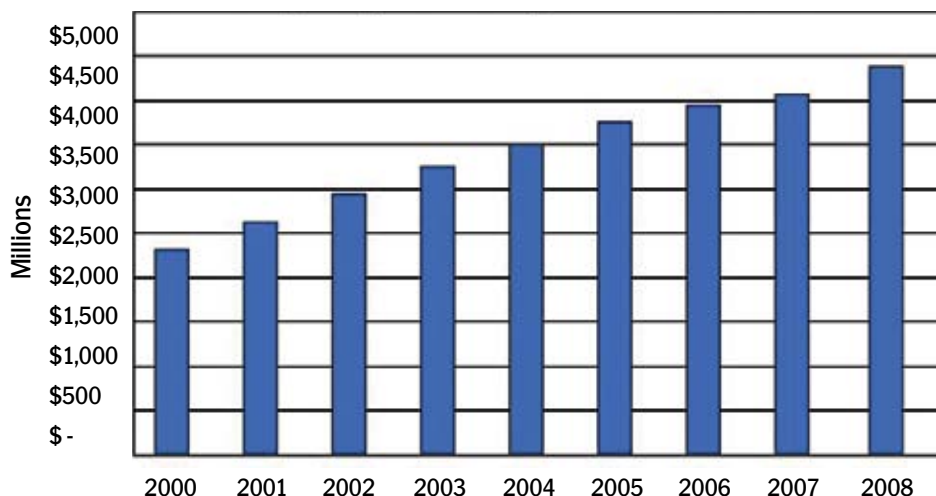
Spending includes passenger air transportation. Employment includes payroll employees and proprietors. Government revenue includes the state share of racetrack video lottery and wagering, local hotel/motel taxes, state sales and income taxes, and the gasoline tax. Property taxes are not included. Local government revenue increase in 2008 is a primary result of an increase in the hotel occupancy tax (from 3% to 6% made effective Jan. 1, 2008) by various municipalities.

WV Incremental Tax Revenue 2001-2008



With 2000 as the base year, the cumulative increase in tax revenue through 2008 is \$1,631 billion. The Return On Investment (ROI) on the 50% matching reimbursement was 1,775% over 8 years, or 222% per year.

Tourism spending in West Virginia from 2000 to 2008





West Virginia's Gaming Industry, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

Daniel K. Adkins, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer
Hartman & Tyner, Inc.

Daniel K. Adkins is the vice-president and chief operating officer of Hartman & Tyner, Inc. of Southfield, Michigan. For the past 23 years, Mr. Adkins has successfully managed Hartman and Tyner's racing interests in Michigan, Minnesota, Florida and West Virginia. Additionally, he oversees the real estate management and development division of Hartman and Tyner, Inc.

He began his career with Hartman & Tyner in 1987, after a 16-year career in management with Scientific Games, the largest supplier of pari-mutuel & lottery systems equipment in the world. During his tenure with Scientific Games, (at the time Autotote, Ltd.), he held the title of northern district manager and was responsible for the oversight, training, installation and operation of Totalisator systems at tracks and frontons across the country.

His professional background includes electronics engineering and tandem systems engineering and management. He also is known for his involvement in legislative affairs for the company in West Virginia, Florida and Michigan.

Mr. Adkins has a 20-year commitment to youth sports. He has managed summer baseball and softball teams, traveling five years in a row around the country to compete in USSSA national baseball championships. He is actively involved with many charitable and civic organizations.



It's a pretty sure bet that, by now, most West Virginians know there is casino gambling in the state. I would be reluctant to wager, however, that most West Virginians are aware of how the gaming industry evolved in the state or, more importantly, what an important economic role the industry has upon the state. Pari-mutuel wagering, betting on horse and dog racing, has been around West Virginia for many decades. I, myself, began my career as a "money runner" at Waterford Park – now Mountaineer Park – in Chester, West Virginia, back in the early 1970s. At that time, the racing industry was vibrant and employed thousands in West Virginia and surrounding states.

By the early 1990s, the racing industry was struggling, faced with competition from state lotteries and other forms of entertainment. In 1994, West Virginia became a pioneer in the racing industry by becoming the first state to permit video lottery terminals at its tracks. These

machines were very limited in scope and only allowed the play of three lottery games: keno, video poker and video blackjack.

This West Virginia-born program was so successful that several states followed the lead of West Virginia and the term "Racino" was born. Today, slot machines or full casinos are offered at racing facilities in 12 states, and the number is growing. The economic impact of the West Virginia model is great. The facilities provide over 7,000 direct jobs and a countless number of indirect jobs. On average, state revenues from these facilities top \$400 million annually, and the positive economic impact on the respective surrounding communities is incalculable. And, when the Mardi Gras Hotel opens at Tri-State Casino and Resort in Cross Lanes this summer, we will join Mountaineer Casino Racetrack and Resort in Newell, the Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming Center, and Charles Town Races and Slots as the state's fourth, full casino resort, offering all amenities. The Greenbrier, in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, is now a gaming destination, as well.

As successful as this program sounds – and it is – the industry is facing perhaps its biggest obstacle since 1994: competition from surrounding states. Pennsylvania entered the market in 2006 with Racinos and stand-alone slot facilities and recently, the Pennsylvania Legislature passed a bill to allow their facilities to become full casinos, competing directly with West Virginia facilities. Worse yet, the Pennsylvania bill requires a 14 percent tax, compared to the 35 percent tax in West Virginia. This will allow these facilities to out-market and out-build us. In addition, Ohio



passed a bill in 2009, allowing four casinos within the state, and the Ohio Legislature is considering allowing slot machines at the seven Ohio racing facilities.

West Virginia cannot afford to lose the jobs, revenue and other economic benefits our facilities provide to this new competition from neighboring states. It will be a challenge that will require the cooperation of the facilities, the West Virginia Legislature, the Lottery Commission and our employees to overcome. But just as we did in 1994, by becoming the innovator of this new, emerging industry, I am certain that West Virginia is up to the task. We will need to pursue capital investments, cooperation between West Virginia casinos and other statewide tourist attractions, new technology in the gaming industry and strategic, yet clever, marketing – all necessary tools not just to preserve this industry, but to continue its growth.

It will be an interesting and competitive battle ahead and I, for one, am looking forward to the challenge.

Stay tuned... ▽



The Main Floor, Tri-State Casino and Resort



The High Roller Room, Tri-State Casino and Resort



The Mardi Gras Hotel at Tri-State Casino and Resort in Cross Lanes, West Virginia



Mountain State Riders

Davey Coombs, Founder and Publisher
Racer X Illustrated

Davey Coombs is the founder and publisher of *Racer X Illustrated* and *Road Racer X*, magazines devoted to motorcycle racing all over the world. Both are based in Morgantown, West Virginia, where Mr. Coombs was born and where his company, Filter Publications, is based.

Mr. Coombs has been a motocross enthusiast his entire life, having grown up working at his family's motocross races. He is a graduate of West Virginia University and, after a brief career as a racer, began his publishing career.

He also is the author of *MX: The Way of the Motocrosser* and *American Motocross Illustrated*.

West Virginia has long been known as a destination for outdoor types interested in everything from hunting to hiking to whitewater rafting. Given our state's diverse, often mountainous, terrain, it should come as no surprise that West Virginia has become a popular destination for motorcycle and ATV riders as well.

One of the most popular destinations is the Hatfield-McCoy Trail System, which ranks among the best-organized public trail systems in the country. Developed by the West Virginia Legislature to help generate tourism in the southern part of the state, while also promoting safe, sensible riding, the Hatfield-McCoy Trails stretch some 600 miles through nine counties. The system's six main trails are open 365 days a year to dirt bikes and utility and all-terrain vehicles with valid trail permits, as well as hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders. There are nearby hotels, restaurants, vehicle rentals and more. With plans to extend the recreational trails in the next few years already in the works, the

area will continue to prosper as more riders and their families come to enjoy the exciting trails and their scenic beauty.

While the Hatfield-McCoy Trail System is the perfect destination for any level of off-road rider, it is not a place to compete in – or see – an actual race; the best place to do that might just be the Snowshoe Mountain Ski Resort. Each summer, the Pocahontas County facility opens its 11,000 acres of forest and ski runs for a one-weekend-only, off-road motorcycle and ATV race known as the Motorcycle USA Grand National Cross Country race. The event attracts nearly 1,200 competitors and more than 5,000 spectators. Combined, they fill the resort's lodging and surrounding hotels, bringing visitors from some 30 states on what would be an otherwise slow summer weekend at the resort.

"Snowshoe Mountain is proud to host the GNCC and return the premier off-road motorcycle racing series back to its roots in West Virginia," says Ron Cadrette, the vice





Scenes from the Motorcycle USA Grand National Cross Country race at Snowshoe Mountain Resort, West Virginia

president of lodging at the resort, which will host this year's event on June 26-27. "The race weekend delivers over 1,500 room nights and approximately \$1 million to the community. In addition, the national broadcast on Versus Network is a great platform to showcase our state's natural beauty, as well as the Snowshoe Mountain Resort."

Motorcyclists whose riding preferences are focused on the streets should head north to Monongalia County on July 22-25, 2010. That's when the city of Morgantown opens its arms to thousands of riding enthusiasts for MountainFest Motorcycle Rally, the fastest-growing rally in the country. This popular event, founded in 2004 and based at Mylan Park, brings street-bike cruisers from all over the country to participate in a weekend of riding, camaraderie, music and more. According to Cliff Sutherland, one of the event's

directors and an owner of nearby Triple S Harley-Davidson, MountainFest attracts upward of 60,000 riders, filling the area's hotels and restaurants at a level matched only by West Virginia University football games or graduation weekend. Proceeds from the event go to maintain Mylan Park, a state-of-the-art venue for special events and community-related facilities.

"Everyone behind MountainFest is proud that this rally has contributed more than a quarter-million dollars to Mylan Park," says Sutherland. The proceeds helped earn Mylan Park the 2008 West Virginia Division of Tourism Community Development Award, and with such well-known musical acts as Creedence Clearwater Revival and the Charlie Daniels Band expected to entertain riders and spectators at this summer's event, the contribution to Mylan Park will continue to grow.

As a lifelong rider and a Morgantown native myself, I am proud to remind my fellow two- and four-wheeled enthusiasts that our state has long been considered a welcome destination for responsible riders of both motorcycles and ATVs. It's all part of what makes West Virginia both wild and wonderful. ♡



Bourbon Tourism on a Roll

Eric Gregory, President
Kentucky Distillers' Association

Eric Gregory, president of the Kentucky Distillers' Association, is a veteran communicator with more than 20 years of experience in governmental affairs, marketing, journalism and strategic public relations.

As KDA President, Gregory oversees all aspects of the 130-year-old association that promotes, protects and represents the Commonwealth's signature bourbon and distilled spirits industry, including the famous Kentucky Bourbon Trail®.

Kentucky's historic distilleries produce 95 percent of the world's bourbon, a rich heritage that dates back more than 200 years. Today, bourbon is America's official native spirit, a leading export and a growing symbol of Kentucky craftsmanship and tradition.

Gregory joined the KDA in 2008 after seven years as governmental affairs manager at East Kentucky Power Cooperative. He previously served as vice president of public affairs for Preston-Osborne, a prominent Lexington public relations, marketing and research firm.

A native of Henderson, Kentucky, and a graduate of the University of Kentucky, Mr. Gregory began his career as an award-winning journalist for the Lexington Herald-Leader. He also served as a reporter and editor at the Honolulu Advertiser, and has been nominated twice for the Pulitzer Prize.

With a rich history dating back 200 years, bourbon has long been a proud symbol of Kentucky craftsmanship and a signature industry that pours millions of dollars into the Bluegrass economy. But the early distillers probably would not have predicted that Bourbon would become a major tourism draw.

The Kentucky Bourbon Trail®, which showcases six of the state's legendary distilleries, is one of the Commonwealth's most famous and fastest-growing tourism attractions. Created in 1999 by the Kentucky Distillers' Association (KDA), the Kentucky Bourbon Trail® allows visitors to experience first-hand the fine art and craft of America's only native spirit. Members include Four Roses and Wild Turkey in Lawrenceburg, Heaven Hill in Bardstown, Jim Beam in Clermont, Maker's Mark in Loretto and Woodford Reserve in Versailles.

More than 1.5 million people have visited distilleries in the last five years, including 350,000 in 2008 alone. Attendance has never decreased in its history and more people are visiting all distilleries than ever before.



In 2007, the KDA created a "Passport" program that rewards tourists who visit all distilleries on the Kentucky Bourbon Trail®. After their Passport is stamped at each distillery, it can be redeemed for a complimentary t-shirt. Last year, more than 3,000 people completed the Passport program – a 400 percent increase over 2008. And from the feedback, they're having the time of their lives.

"An excellent exploration on how quality bourbon is made," wrote Jonathan Towne of Colorado.

"This is one of the best vacations I have ever taken. I have already recommended it to several friends," reported Russell Duncan of South Carolina.

"The Kentucky Bourbon Trail kept us in Kentucky for two extra days. Just driving to the distillers through the country side was beautiful," said Vic Kazlowski of Illinois.

And Greg Longstaff of Washington said, "I was a Scotch drinker."

It's all part of an experience that is uniquely Kentucky, which produces 95 percent of the world's supply of bourbon. It's also a major boost and welcome news to local communities, where bourbon pilgrims are pumping much-needed revenue into local coffers.

Louisville is capitalizing on bourbon tourism through its "Bourbon Country" campaign to feature its bourbon bars, restaurants and nightlife.

Developers in Lexington are working on a public-private partnership to restore an entire "Distillery District" that promises to be a major arts and entertainment engine near downtown.

Each September, Bardstown celebrates Bourbon Heritage Month with the Kentucky Bourbon Festival, a booming, week-long gala that celebrates all things bourbon.



The new visitor's experience at Jim Beam in Bullitt County



The dipping line at Maker's Mark

Last fall, 11 tourism groups (including the KDA) joined forces to promote the bourbon lifestyle. Called "Team Bourbon," this groundbreaking coalition is launching a six-figure marketing campaign designed to attract visitors to Kentucky.

And to top it off, entrepreneurs are discovering niche markets to take advantage of the growing appeal of bourbon and the Kentucky Bourbon Trail®.

Bourbon tours, bourbon specialty food stores, bourbon restaurants, bourbon cooking schools, bourbon bars, bourbon magazines – all are products of a thriving, growing industry with worldwide appeal.

To gauge the industry's value, the Kentucky Distillers' Association recently released the first-ever study of bourbon's economic and tourism impact, conducted by Dr. Paul Coomes, a noted economist with the University of Louisville. Major findings include:

- Bourbon helps create nearly 10,000 Kentucky jobs with an annual payroll of \$442 million.
- Spirits production and consumption generates more than \$125 million in state and local taxes every year.
- Distillery employment grew by six percent over the last decade, which helped Kentucky weather the economic recession as other manufacturers shed 20 percent of their jobs.

- Production has increased by 75 percent since 1999 (455,078 barrels to 794,091 barrels in 2008), with more than 5 million barrels of bourbon and other whiskey gently aging in Bluegrass warehouses.

Kentucky hosts nearly half – 43 percent – of all distilling jobs in the United States.

With a high job multiplier of 3.29, distilling creates more spin-off jobs than other signature industries such as tobacco farming (1.267), horse farms (1.181) and coal mining (2.142).

Distilling ranks fourth out of 244 Kentucky manufacturing industries in total employment and job multiplier, behind automobiles, meatpacking and light trucks/utility vehicles.

Kentucky bourbon is the largest export category of all U.S. spirits, shipping 25 million proof gallons to 126 countries in 2008.


Kentucky taxes distilled spirits higher than any other open-market state except Alaska.

Local communities benefit greatly from distillery operations that generate \$9 million each year in taxes on aging barrels and property, creating essential funding for schools, libraries, fire departments and more.

To meet this growing success, several of Kentucky's distilleries are expanding operations:

- Wild Turkey is spending \$50 million to double its distilling and warehouse operations in Anderson County.
- Jim Beam is undergoing a \$17 million upgrade to its visitor's experience in Bullitt County and recently announced a \$28 million investment in its bottling facilities in Franklin County.
- Heaven Hill just spent \$4 million to expand its Bernheim Distillery in Louisville by 50 percent.
- And Maker's Mark has a new gift gallery and gourmet sandwich shop as part of \$3 million in improvements at its historic Marion County distillery.

All of this is solid proof that bourbon is undergoing an unprecedented revolution that is enhancing Kentucky's economic health and image around the world.

And – as millions of tourists are discovering – it can only be found in Kentucky. 

(The Kentucky Distillers' Association and its members ask that you please enjoy Bourbon responsibly, and never mix drinking and driving. Kentucky Bourbon Trail® is a registered trademark of the Kentucky Distillers' Association.)

The photos on this page were provided courtesy of the Kentucky Distillers' Association.



Cyclists Find a Great Ride in West Virginia

H. Craig Slaughter, Vice President
West Virginia Cycling Foundation

Craig Slaughter is executive director of the West Virginia Investment Management Board, the entity responsible for investing the state's monies, its defined benefit plans and workers' compensation funds. Mr. Slaughter has been responsible for the state's investment portfolio since leaving the practice of law in 1989. He has been instrumental in bringing the state's investment structure into the modern era.

A native of West Virginia, Mr. Slaughter created the Go-Mart Cycling Team in 1991, which won six amateur national cycling championships over the ensuing 12 years. He served as president of the Vandalia Velos Bicycle Club, was director of the Charleston Criterium bicycle race and is now vice president and a board member of the West Virginia Cycling Foundation.

He received his law degree from West Virginia University College of Law in 1986 and earned a bachelor's degree from Cornell University in 1979. He is a member of the National Association of State Investment Officers, National Association of Public Pension Attorneys and West Virginia State Bar. He serves as treasurer and board member of the West Virginia Land Trust.

I am sometimes amazed at the number of adults that ride bicycles for recreation and as a means to commute to work. If you are near my age and part of the baby boom generation, you know that adults simply did not ride bikes when we were growing up. In fact, I cannot recall ever seeing an adult on a bicycle until I became an adult myself! Now, however, as society has gained a greater appreciation of the long-term benefits of active recreation, cycling has become an engine for tourism, improved health and lifestyle enhancement in West Virginia and throughout our region.

Over the years, the outlets for cycling in West Virginia have grown in depth and breadth from the local club to world-class professional races. I think back to the early 1990s, when the K-Mart Classic brought professionals from Europe (the epicenter of cycling) to West Virginia, only to see them schooled by a young Lance Armstrong – who, of course, went on

**Cycling has become
an important part of the
mosaic that makes up the
popular view of West Virginia.
Whether you are a competitor,
recreational cyclist or a
commuter, there is a lot
to be excited about!**

to become one of the greatest cyclists of all time. I recall hearing Lance say at the time that the terrain in West Virginia was ideal for training. Although the K-Mart Classic did not survive,



Riders starting the descent into the Greenbrier River Valley during the Cheat Mountain Challenge at Snowshoe Mountain Resort

it focused the general public's attention on a sport that had already formed strong roots, giving it a needed boost.

There currently are options in West Virginia for all levels of cycling. For the competitive cyclist, there are the Appalachian Road Race series and the West Virginia Mountain Bike Association (WVMBA) racing series. For recreational cyclists, it is relatively easy to locate a nearby club where one can find like-minded people of all ages, be it the Mountain State Wheelers in my hometown of Charleston, the Appalachian Explorers' Mountain Bike Association in Martinsburg, or the Wheeling Area Bicycle Club in Wheeling, West Virginia. Virtually every town in West Virginia has a bike club. In addition, there are organized recreational rides, like the Cheat Mountain Challenge Century Ride at Snowshoe, that draw cyclists from as far



Photo credit: Jason Means

Riders begin the long 100-mile trek through the mountains of the Monongahela National Forest during the Cheat Mountain Challenge

away as Toronto, Canada, and Chicago, Illinois. Feedback on the Cheat Mountain Challenge only confirms what we have known all along – that West Virginia is populated with wonderful people, beautiful, quiet country roads and challenging terrain. Perfect for riding bicycles!

As much as cycling has grown in West Virginia, it is only the beginning. In 2003 the West Virginia Cycling Foundation, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, was created to encourage more people to make cycling part of a healthy lifestyle. The Foundation's mandate includes furthering cycling awareness and safety in communities throughout the state.

The Cheat Mountain Challenge Century Ride was one of the West Virginia Cycling Foundation's first initiatives. For the last

two years, the Cheat Mountain Challenge has helped provide an incentive for a program in Parkersburg, West Virginia, that successfully uses cycling to encourage at-risk kids to adopt healthier lifestyles. This was part of a bigger project, supported by the West Virginia Cycling Foundation, that had community cycling clubs working with the City of Parkersburg to develop infrastructure and transportation patterns to create safer environments for individuals to ride their bicycles for transportation or recreation. The program ultimately resulted in the establishment of a Bicycle Board, under the city's mayor, to formalize the cooperative arrangement.

More recently, the West Virginia Cycling Foundation has been working with the Alliance for Bicycling and Walking and officials at various levels of government to create a more cycling-friendly environment

throughout the state by making cycling a part of the transportation infrastructure planning process.

What was once an odd occurrence – adults on bikes – is now common. Cycling has become an important part of the mosaic that makes up the popular view of West Virginia. Whether you are a competitor, recreational cyclist or a commuter, there is a lot to be excited about! ♡



The Greenbrier Classic: Huge for West Virginia!

David Pope, Executive Committee
West Virginia Golf Association

David Pope is a Charleston businessman. He graduated from Morris Harvey College in 1973, with a B.A. in marketing and management. Founder and co-owner of Budget Tapes and Records in Charleston, he is on the executive committee of the West Virginia Golf Association, where he has served as chairman of the Championship Committee since 1999.

Mr. Pope is a member of the Regional Affairs Committee of the United States Golf Association and is the liaison between the USGA and WVGA. He is a member of the Kanawha County (West Virginia) Parks & Recreation Committee, where he serves on the golf and finance committee. He is an active member of Edgewood Country Club.

This summer will be an exciting time for golf in West Virginia as The Greenbrier Resort is preparing to host its first PGA TOUR FedEx Cup event, July 26 through August 1, 2010. News first broke of the event in August 2009, when Greenbrier owner Jim Justice joined Governor Joe Manchin, Greenbrier Pro Emeritus Tom Watson, and the PGA TOUR in announcing the event had been added to the 2010 FedEx Cup schedule. Players and fans alike can look forward to a week filled with nonstop excitement.

As July inches closer, speculation is swirling around which PGA TOUR heavyweights will be making it to the Mountain State to play in The Greenbrier Classic. And there is one question that is on everyone's mind: Will Tiger be there? With all the rumors surrounding the golfer's personal life, it's hard to tell if he will be playing in any tournaments at all this season. Maybe the \$6 million purse will tempt him. One thing is certain: 156 of the best golfers in the world will be there to play the oldest course on the PGA TOUR schedule, the Old White. The Greenbrier Classic promises a week filled with great golf, crowds of fans and a spotlight on West Virginia! Will you be there?

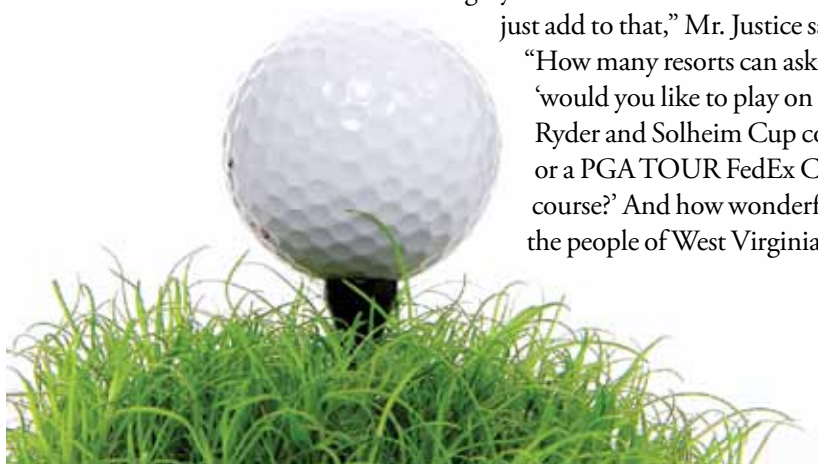
"The Greenbrier has such an incredible golf legacy and The Greenbrier Classic will just add to that," Mr. Justice said. "How many resorts can ask, 'would you like to play on our Ryder and Solheim Cup course or a PGA TOUR FedEx Cup course?' And how wonderful for the people of West Virginia to



welcome these players and their families. This is truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience for many people around here. Of course we want this to be a permanent stop on the TOUR and our goal is to make The Greenbrier Classic the best, the most exciting, the must-see, must-play event on the PGA TOUR."

Not only are West Virginians going to benefit from being able to see some of the greatest golf talents in the industry, the economic impact this event is going to have on the state should be tremendous. An estimated 50,000 tickets will be sold during the week, generating millions of dollars in revenue for West Virginia. This kind of showcase is sure to advertise West Virginia's natural beauty, enhance our national reputation for recreation and attract new fans to the game of golf.

With all the buzz surrounding The Greenbrier Classic, everyone wants to be as close to the action as possible. So what's the best way to do that? Be a volunteer! I know from personal experience that the best way to watch a golf tournament is inside the ropes. You get closer to the action and closer to the players when you work a tournament as a volunteer. There are plenty of ways to lend your time. You can be a sign bearer, a walking scorer, a marshal, a shuttle driver or work the registration desk. Each volunteer will purchase a Greenbrier Classic uniform for \$85, which includes a Polo™



brand golf shirt, pullover jacket and a hat. Volunteers also will attend a Greenbrier Ambassador Training Session. Benefits of volunteering for The Greenbrier Classic include: 50 percent off a companion pass, plus so much more. For more information, or to sign up to be a volunteer, visit www.thegreenbrierclassic.com.

“This event is a great opportunity for not only The Greenbrier, but for the members of the community as well,” said Tim McNeely, tournament director of The Greenbrier Classic. “More than 1,500 people are going to be needed to pull off The Greenbrier Classic. Volunteering is a great way to get the people of West Virginia involved in something that will be broadcast across the country.”

The weeklong experience promises to be a great time for anyone who attends. A special concert will take place on July 30. Along with the many other events

scheduled throughout the week, you can also enjoy the attractions of Greenbrier County as well.

Make your reservations, get your tickets, practice your golf clap, and plan to be there! And who knows, maybe Tiger will, too. The Greenbrier Classic will be coming to The Greenbrier Resort in White Sulphur Springs July 26 through August 1.

Badges for Charity

You can purchase a ticket and contribute to a local charity of your choice at the same time. The Greenbrier Classic's Badges for Charity program will give local nonprofit organizations 30 percent of the proceeds of each Weekly Badge sold for its benefit. The Badges for Charity program has more than 100 participating organizations, including the Alzheimer's Association (WV Chapter), Buckskin Council- Boy Scouts of America and the Hospice Foundation of West Virginia, just to name a few.

Since we're talking about the Badges for Charity, I would like to take this opportunity to make a pitch for the West Virginia Golf Foundation. As a West Virginia golfer, I know of the good work they do to promote and preserve the game of golf in the state. Under the direction of the West Virginia Golf Association, they conduct more than 80 amateur golf events each year, including the WV Amateur and WV Open. They also conduct various USGA Rules of Golf and Handicapping seminars, conduct course ratings to member clubs, and have the William C. Campbell Scholarship available for West Virginia students who are planning to attend college. Regardless of which charity you choose, the Badges for Charity program is a great way to be able to see The Greenbrier Classic and help out local communities at the same time. ♡



The Greenbrier's championship course, Old White



Kentucky Horse Park: Celebrating Man's Relationship with the Horse

John Nicholson, Executive Director
Kentucky Horse Park

A native of Winchester, Kentucky, John Nicholson has been executive director of the Kentucky Horse Park since June 1997. Prior to being appointed to this position, he was the Horse Park's deputy director. From 1994 to 1996 he was director of sales for the launch of the international equestrian trade show, Equitana USA. He began his association with the Kentucky Horse Park from 1991 to 1994, while serving as the Park's director of operations.

He is a former president of the Kentucky Horse Council and chairman of the Kentucky Horse Fair. He served on the board of directors of the Horse Industry Alliance, a national marketing council for the equine industry. He currently serves as president of the World Games 2010 Foundation.

The next time you drive down Interstate 75, cast a glance in the direction of the Kentucky Horse Park. If there is a prettier sight anywhere along the 1,786 miles of highway, it's hard for me to imagine what it would be, especially for those of us who are hopelessly lovesick for horses and land. It's what the world imagines when they think of Kentucky, the Horse Capital of the World: white fences outlining gently rolling pastures, dappled with ancient trees and grazing horses.

The Kentucky Horse Park is part working horse farm, part tourist attraction, part equine office park and part equine competition facility. It is an altogether happy clash of the bucolic and the urbane, where every field and building is dedicated to – and filled with – horses and the people who are devoted to them.

The purpose of the park is to celebrate man's relationship with the horse, and it is intrinsic to everything we do, from special equine

presentations to horse shows, museums, campground and the more than 30 equine organizations comprising our National Horse Center. Everything honors horses and the special bond that exists between horse and human.

I have had the privilege of seeing the effect that horses have on people of all ages, backgrounds, religions, political persuasions and socio-economic levels. Horses have an amazing ability to break through every barrier that exists between individuals and nations. Their beauty, strength, soulfulness and athleticism speak to something deep in all of our hearts and allow us to connect with them, and with other human beings who also appreciate them. That's why the Kentucky Horse Park is so important. Not only do we attract thousands of visitors to our Commonwealth each year, but new relationships and once-in-a-lifetime memories are formed here each day between the otherwise most disparate of people, and horses are the delightful conduit.



Photo credit: James Shambhu

The indoor arena at the Kentucky Horse Park



Photo credit: Jennifer Munson

Equestrian competition events at the Kentucky Horse Park



Photo credit: Jennifer Munson

Visitors can meet the horses after the Parade of Breeds

Nowhere else in the world is it possible for tourists to see so many different breeds of horses in one place – as many as 30 at one time – including the Thoroughbred, Kentucky's signature asset.

One of the park's many features is the International Museum of the Horse, a Smithsonian affiliate, which offers a visual record of the history of man's relationship with the horse through the centuries. In addition to our unparalleled permanent collection of equine artifacts, this year our museum will host an international blockbuster exhibition called "A Gift from the Desert: The Art, History and Culture of the Arabian Horse," which will be one of the most important cultural events in the country this year. It will be the first major exhibition in the world to explore the impact of the horse on Near Eastern civilization. We will have approximately 400 artifacts and works of art from lenders around the world, including the British Museum, Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It will be a unique opportunity for park visitors to see a collection that has never before been – and will never again be – brought under one roof. We expect several hundred thousand visitors to view this exhibition.

The highlight for most visitors is interacting with the real thing, the horses themselves. Touching a velvety nose, feeling a horse's warm breath on an arm, listening to the low, soft sound of a mare nickering to her foal, and watching these stupendous athletes are all experiences that create indelible memories and leave our out-of-state visitors with positive impressions of our Commonwealth.


Through most of the year, visitors also have the option of horseback riding on a scenic trail that winds through fields between fence rows. Often visitors experience their very first ride here – a ride that could be the start of a love affair with horses that will enrich the rest of their lives.

In addition, dozens of horse shows take place each year, featuring a variety of equine breeds and disciplines. Some of the best horses and their riders come to the park from around the world to compete in these shows, including numerous Olympic athletes.

Much of our focus is currently on preparations for the largest sporting event of any kind in the country, the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games in September.

Never before held outside of Europe, the Games are the world championships for eight equine disciplines. Nearly 1,000 horses – from as many as 60 countries – will gather at the park to participate in the absolute pinnacle of equestrian competition. Hundreds of thousands of first-time visitors will discover that the Horse Capital of the World is a great place to live, to work and to visit. More horse shows and businesses will move their events to Kentucky from other states to take advantage of our outstanding facilities and the breadth of equine resources available in this area.

Our horses, land, facilities and competitions are all wrapped up in a very pretty package of great ambiance and tied with a ribbon of southern hospitality. As the "jewel" of the Horse Capital of the World, the Kentucky Horse Park is sure to please every visitor.

For more information, visit our website at **KyHorsePark.com.** 



Oglebay Resort: Meeting the Needs of Today's Traveler

J. C. Douglas Dalby, President and Chief Executive Officer
Wheeling Park Commission

Douglas Dalby has served as president and chief executive officer of the Wheeling Park Commission for the past 11 years and has overall responsibilities for the management and operation of Oglebay Resort. Since first joining the Park Commission in 1971, he has advanced through a number of management positions.

Mr. Dalby is originally from Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. He received a bachelor of science degree from Cornell University.

He is a member of the boards of directors of The Ohio Valley Industrial and Business Development Corporation, Regional Economic Development Partnership, West Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association, Greenwood Cemetery Association, Easter Seals, United Way of the Upper Ohio Valley and Wheeling Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Oglebay Resort and Conference Center in Wheeling is one of West Virginia's top tourist attractions, and the resort continues to expand and grow to meet the needs of today's traveler. During the past decade Oglebay has invested millions of dollars into the expansion and renovation of facilities on its 1,700 acres to remain one of the state's foremost resorts.

In 2006, construction was completed on a new, \$15 million, 53-room sleeping wing at Oglebay's Wilson Lodge. This new wing added five suites, 24 king rooms and 24 double queen rooms. Just two years later, another 12,000-square foot, \$4 million addition was completed at the lodge. This latest addition houses the West Spa on the first level, six premium guest rooms on the second level and an outdoor patio on the top level. The new additions to Wilson Lodge have the same exterior architectural style as the existing lodge, but the interior of the new lodge rooms are larger than the existing rooms, and both the guest rooms and the spa feature updated

furnishings. Demand for these contemporary rooms and spa services continues to be strong, and the new additions to the lodge are being enjoyed by individual and family vacationers, as well as meeting and conference groups.

The renovation and remodeling of the existing 212 rooms at the Wilson Lodge was completed in 2007. This renovation project also included technology upgrades to lodge operations and meeting rooms and modifications to the lodge to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Renovation on the lobby of the lodge began in early 2010 and is expected to be completed by late spring.

Cottages also are highly-sought accommodations at Oglebay. Currently, there are 54 cottages at the resort, with two, four, six, or eight bedrooms. The Susan Wheeler Estate House is the newest addition to the cottage inventory at Oglebay. Completed last September, this 4,600-square foot facility is located in a private area overlooking the Speidel Golf Club at Oglebay. The comparable Palmer Estate House, completed in 2006, is located nearby.

Able to accommodate up to 30 people, three eight-bedroom premium cottages were added just below Wilson Lodge in 2007. The estate houses and premium cottages have been especially popular with large families, golf groups and executive retreats.

This decade of growth at Oglebay began with the opening of the Arnold Palmer-designed golf course in 2000. The newest course at Oglebay was designed to accommodate golfers on all skill levels and complements the existing championship course designed by the legendary Robert Trent Jones, Sr. These two courses, designed by premier golf architects, form the





The Arnold Palmer Designed Golf Course at the Speidel Golf Club



Wilson Lodge at Oglebay Resort & Conference Center in Wheeling, West Virginia

Bus Association's Top 100 International Events. In 2009, the show was named one of the top 10 best holiday light and tree shows by HotelsCombined.com, a leading hotel Internet search engine.

Each year new light displays are added and existing displays are moved or redesigned to keep the show fresh. Since 2008 all new displays at the show have been created with LED lights and the existing displays are being converted to LED. LED bulbs are much more environmentally friendly than traditional light bulbs, as they use 85 percent less energy and last five times longer. The Festival of Lights has become a holiday tradition for many families, and the popularity of the show makes Wilson Lodge as busy in December as it is in July.

Oglebay today is a beautifully landscaped resort, but its history of generous hospitality began more than 100 years ago when it was the summer estate of Cleveland industrialist and Ohio Valley native, Earl W. Oglebay. Mr. Oglebay's summer home is now a museum, and the gardens that surrounded the home in the early 1900s have been restored and are enjoyed annually by hundreds of thousands of visitors.

Oglebay is proud to be one of the major contributors to the tourist industry in the state of West Virginia. The state's continued accent on tourism has had a dynamic impact on Oglebay and the entire Wheeling area. ♡

Speidel Golf Club at Oglebay. The number of guests booking golf packages that include overnight accommodations and the opportunity to play both championship courses has increased annually since the Palmer Course opening.

The Winter Festival of Lights, a holiday light show presented at Oglebay in

November and December, continues to be as popular as when it started in 1985. The show has grown into one of the nation's largest light shows, covering more than 300 acres over a six-mile drive throughout the resort. The Winter Festival of Lights has been featured on the Travel Channel's "Most Extreme Christmas Celebrations" and listed in the American



Destination: Flatwoods, West Virginia

John Skidmore II, Vice President and Chief Executive Officer
John Skidmore Development, Inc.

As the vice president and chief executive officer of John Skidmore Development Inc., John Skidmore II leads strategic direction related to the Skidmore businesses at various locations, including the Flatwoods Factory Outlet Stores, Flatwoods Days Hotel and Conference Center, Mountain Lakes Amphitheater, Flatwoods RV Park and Sutton Inn, Clarksburg, West Virginia.

Mr. Skidmore's responsibilities include administrative management and review, including overall financial management, accounting, business development, legal issues and lease negotiations. A 1981 graduate of Braxton County High School, he graduated from Fairmont State College in 1985 and West Virginia University in 1987. He worked in local government in both Florida and North Carolina for 18 years, leaving his last position as budget director for Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, to return to West Virginia.

An Interstate stop or a destination?

The Flatwoods exit off of Interstate 79 in West Virginia, in the heart of West Virginia's "Mountain Lakes" Region, continues to transition to a destination for visitors. In 1978 my father, entrepreneur John Skidmore, and his wife, Virginia, opened the 30-room Sutton Lane Motel and Exxon gas station. It was the perfect stopping point between Charleston and Clarksburg and, for quite some time, the only stop. In 1979, the Skidmore Truck Stop opened on the west side of Interstate 79. Several fast food restaurants followed during the 1980s. The exit solidified its reputation as a convenient and friendly place to refuel both your body and your vehicle.

Beginning in 1990, the Skidmores took a giant leap with the construction and opening of a 201-room Days Inn Hotel and 13,000-square foot conference center. The facility's central location created statewide appeal, causing the conference business to flourish. The property

offered great service at a reasonable rate in a facility that delivered more to guests than they expected.

The 1990s also saw the Skidmores again moving west, across the interstate, to build the 102,000-square foot Flatwoods Factory Outlet Stores, featuring national retailers such as Tommy Hilfiger, Dress Barn, Corning, Leggs/Bali, Famous Footwear, Paper Factory, Rue21, Black and Decker, Bonworth and others. Couple that with the other niche retail stores of Bulk Food, Nanny's Primitives, Lost Road Candle, and the two West Virginia icons, Homer Laughlin China's "Everything Fiesta" and Fenton Glass, and a retail "must stop" location exists. Total sales reached nearly \$20 million for this location in 2009.

In 2004, the full amenity, 50-site Flatwoods **KOA Recreational Vehicle Park** opened, adjacent to the Days Hotel. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, paved roads with long gravel pull-thrus, a laundry facility, bathhouse and playground.



Mountain Lakes Amphitheater, Flatwoods, West Virginia

Today, West Virginians and others are trekking to the Flatwoods exit with plans to spend not just one night, but two or three days.



Flatwoods Factory Outlet Stores, Flatwoods, West Virginia

Within the park, the 2000-seat **Mountain Lakes Amphitheater** held its inaugural show in May of 2006. John Anderson, Randy Travis, Joe Diffie, several American Idol finalists and a host of other performers have entertained sell-out crowds during subsequent summer seasons.

Braxton County, with only 14,000 residents, undergoes a transformation on the day of a big concert, when an additional 2,000 people arrive to shop, eat and recreate. Needless to say, this has a very positive impact on our local economy – and the festive atmosphere created when 2,000 people come together on a gorgeous evening is phenomenal. Concert-goers often craft a package around a concert that includes an overnight stay in the Days Hotel or the fully-equipped camp site, enjoying hot-off-the-grill food at the Amphitheater or dining in the hotel's award-winning Visions restaurant. Our guests also have the option to do some shopping at West Virginia's only true outlet mall, visit one of our two beautiful county lakes, hit a few golf balls at the Foggy Bottom Golf Center or just relax while

enjoying a cold drink at one of the hotel pools while waiting for the show to begin.

Today, West Virginians and others are trekking to the Flatwoods exit with plans to spend not just one night, but two or three days. National retailers, who initially looked with skepticism at the area demographics of population and income, are marveling at the successful model. How does a Black and Decker store thrive in a county of Braxton's population? How does a 201-room hotel have this high of an occupancy rate? How does a county with a low median household income have a thriving, up-scale restaurant? How does an amphitheater in Flatwoods host the national talent of Randy Travis, John Anderson, Josh Turner and others?

Make no mistake, the Flatwoods exit has transformed from an Interstate stop to much more. Our website, **www.flatwoods.com** provides updates on activities and events. We invite you to make Flatwoods one of your destination stops this summer! ♡



Foggy Bottom Golf Center, Flatwoods, West Virginia

*For information about the 2010 event schedule at Mountain Lakes Amphitheater, visit our website: **mountainlakesamphitheater.com**.*



Building Small Businesses – One Artist at a Time

Sally N. Barton, Executive Director
Tamarack Foundation

As the first executive director of the nonprofit Tamarack Foundation, Sally Barton is responsible for developing the strategic initiatives to fulfill its mission and has directed efforts to raise \$3 million, benefiting West Virginia's artisan entrepreneurs.

She completed her undergraduate studies at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and earned a master's degree in business and organizational communication from West Virginia University.

Before joining the Tamarack Foundation, Ms. Barton worked in corporate development at Charleston Area Medical Center and served as the director of development for Charleston Area Medical Center Foundation.

Her numerous volunteer leadership positions have contributed to her expertise in utilizing strategic communication to build successful collaborations benefiting West Virginia's communities. She also serves on the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce's Tourism Committee and Economic Development Committee, the Boards of Directors for Leadership West Virginia and Arts Advocacy and on the marketing committees of the Clay Center and the West Virginia Chapter of Leave A Legacy.

In 2005, she was selected as one of West Virginia's Young Guns by *West Virginia Executive* magazine.

West Virginians love their art. If you don't realize that's so, strike up a conversation anywhere about local music, handcrafted art or cottage industry foods. It is an instant icebreaker and you are sure to learn about an up-and-coming musician, a new shop or someone's aunt who started a business.

Even people who are not artists or artisans know people who are. They will tell you about a must-see festival or the first time they "ran across" the work of a particular artist. They will give you directions so you can see for yourself what makes that artist special!

That pride of talent and enthusiasm for sharing, coupled with the natural hospitality of West Virginians, are some reasons that visitors seek out fairs, festivals, shops, museums and galleries, not just in metropolitan areas, but in small towns as well.

When those visitors find the work of an artist

that they really like, they find that West Virginia art is special because it is personal.

The shop owner where you purchase local art will tell you about the artist's childhood, or how he teaches art at the local community center. You might meet the artist as she hurries into the shop to drop off some pieces.

At the Tamarack Foundation, we are acutely aware of the positive impact our creative community has on visitors' perspectives about our state. Every day, at our headquarters in Charleston, the Artisan Resource Center in Beckley and at the seminars we host around the state, we hear stories from the artists with whom we work.

We know they have or are building loyal customer bases. We know they are eager to expand their horizons and experiment with new products.



Rose Dobbins, portrait artist, Greenbrier County



Matthew Thomas, furniture maker, Gilmer County



Jeff Fetty, metal smith, Roane County



Lindsay Philabaun, ceramic artist, Kanawha County

We are aware that those goals require hard work and a commitment to quality that doesn't always come easy. Many of our state's finest artists and artisans love their art, but struggle as small business owners and entrepreneurs trying to make a living doing what they do best – producing exceptional handcrafted works.

As a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing our artists and artisans with services that help them build their businesses, we are proud of their successes and excited that we can help them.

Our motto is simple: The Tamarack Foundation helps build small businesses in West Virginia – one artist at a time. Today, there are almost 2,000 small arts-based businesses in our state. They represent much of what is best about our state at shops and galleries; when they perform at local theaters and events; and when they are featured at juried fairs and festivals. At the Foundation, we take seriously the role we play in helping artists and artisans make the transition to small business owners. We share their excitement when they complete a business plan, develop a Web site or are accepted into a juried show. We are cognizant of the statewide impact we have on supporting this community and

proud that we have provided services to more than 1,400 of them in the past few years.

We realize this statewide responsibility requires more than the efforts of our small team. We have established an invaluable partnership with Mountain State University, where the Artisan Resource Center is located. The Foundation benefits from the location, and University students serve internships where they get hands-on experience.

Our partnership with Marshall University opened dialogue between art majors and Foundation-supported artisan entrepreneurs and resulted in a valuable economic impact study last year. The study showed that artisans whose work is sold at Tamarack in Beckley contributed \$18.6 million to the West Virginia economy, \$5.9 million in income and supported 236 jobs around the state during fiscal year 2007-2008. The study also concludes that Tamarack supports tourism and promotes a positive image of the state.

We are exploring options with other education facilities and arts centers that will allow us to reach artists and artisans who may not have the resources to travel to Charleston or Beckley.

Even as we make inroads in these areas, we realize that the positive impact that these creative entrepreneurs bring to the state can't stop with them. Through internship and mentoring programs, we encourage young people to hone their skills and join the creative arts community. We are bringing emerging artists together with established artists who can advise them as they open their new businesses.

It is imperative for this community that it continues to grow and that artists and artisans know their work is appreciated and valued in West Virginia. As they become more confident as business owners, they become business and community leaders. They are living proof that artists and artisans can come to West Virginia and make a living at their art or craft.

They expand the circle of residents and visitors who appreciate West Virginia art and that, in turn, helps keep our guests coming back to discover more of the West Virginia and West Virginia art they love. ♡

All photos provide for this article are credited to Harrison Shull.



Cultural Life is a Barometer of a Community's Economic Health

Larry Groce, Artistic Director and Host
Mountain Stage

Larry Groce is artistic director and host of Mountain Stage, the live performance music program produced by West Virginia Public Radio and distributed by National Public Radio. He co-founded the show in 1983 with Andy Ridenour and Francis Fisher.

Mountain Stage was the first national program to feature performances by Lyle Lovett, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Sheryl Crow, Alison Krauss, Phish, Counting Crows, Sarah McLachlan and other noted artists.

Before Mountain Stage, Larry was a singer-songwriter. The first of his 23 albums was released in 1969, shortly before he graduated magna cum laude from Principia College. In 1976, his song "Junk Food Junkie" became a top-ten hit and led to appearances on The Tonight Show, The Merv Griffin Show and American Bandstand. Between 1976 and 1990 Larry recorded nine albums for Walt Disney Records. He was nominated for a "Best Children's Album" Grammy in 1976.

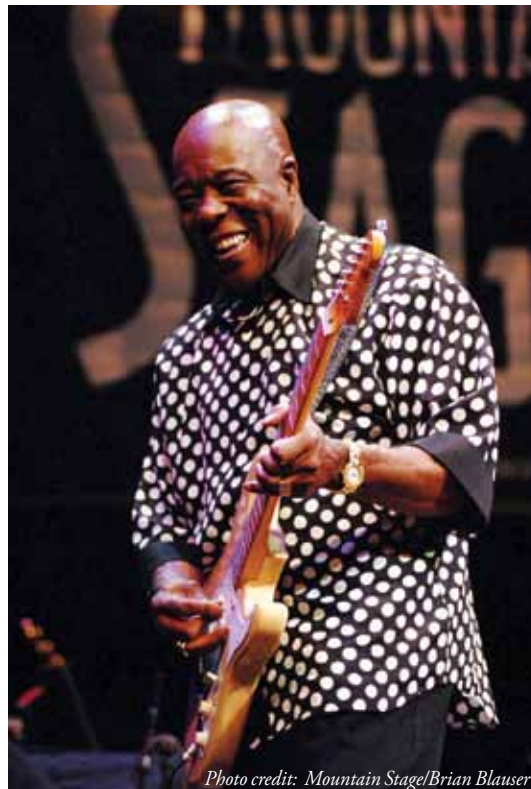
From 1972 to 1985 Larry was a National Endowment for the Arts "musician-in-residence" in 20 different states. In 1972, one of those residencies brought him to West Virginia.

Larry is executive director of FestivALL Charleston, a 10-day arts festival. In 2008, he was awarded the West Virginia Governor's Art Award for Leadership.

"...recreational, social and cultural opportunities in a community may be critical to the community's economic development efforts."

Daniel Guida of the Downtown Weirton Business Association, in a previous edition of *Views & Visions*, cited the following conclusion by Clemson University researchers. West Virginia community leaders ignore it at their peril:

"Quality of life" issues have transcended their reputations as pleasant, but not really important, factors in community economic development. New paradigms put them front and center in a brave new world where jobs are generated by educational institutions and intellectual properties rather than assembly lines and blast furnaces. The arts may not yet be a top priority in government and business circles, but at least they are no longer the Rodney Dangerfield of the Chamber of Commerce crowd."



Buddy Guy performing live on Mountain Stage



This is welcome news to artists and art lovers, both high- and low-brow. As artistic director of West Virginia Public Radio's *Mountain Stage* and FestivALL Charleston, I'm always concerned about the economic health of my city and state. My job is to produce and present radio shows, concerts and other performances. I know that without a robust economy, this will be impossible. But I also believe that without these radio shows, concerts and performances, a robust economy will be impossible. And I'm not alone in this belief.

The major sponsors of *Mountain Stage*—Chesapeake Energy, Spilman Thomas & Battle and The Charleston Marriott Town Center—understand that "cultural opportunities" are not window-dressing. They are willing to commit substantial funds in support of *Mountain Stage* because it has real value in creating a healthy business climate and it helps put our state and our town on the map.

The same is true for the numerous sponsors of FestivALL Charleston. Their support is not just hometown philanthropy or a need for local advertising. It is a calculated investment in an important community asset with economic development value that is being proven daily.

The State of West Virginia, The City of Charleston and Kanawha County also make very substantial and essential investments in *Mountain Stage* and FestivALL Charleston. They



Photo credit: Mountain Stage/Brian Blausen

Martina McBride performing live on Mountain Stage

do this because they understand our state, and its communities benefit far beyond the enjoyment and inspiration that comes naturally from arts, entertainment and recreation.

Cultural life is a barometer of the health of any community. It thrives in places that are growing and vibrant. Its absence is a warning to prospective entrepreneurs and investors to look elsewhere. It is also one of the few ways to establish or change the image of a place.

West Virginia suffers from a poor or non-existent image in the minds of many Americans, not to mention the rest of the world. Some folks know of our natural beauty, but more are familiar with stereotypes of poverty, exploitation or crazy hillbillies (the latter can sometimes work in our favor, but that's the subject of another essay). The state has tried to address this problem through advertising, which has helped somewhat, but what really shapes a public image is media coverage. That's why celebrities spend big money on publicists.

Arts, entertainment and recreation are media magnets. Regional, national and world print and electronic media often cover stories involving exciting, creative and unique arts and recreational events. Every time a person reads a piece about

the Appalachian String Band Festival or The Contemporary American Theater Festival or sees a photo essay about a West Virginia rafting company or enjoys the World's Strongest Man Competition from Charleston on ESPN or hears *Mountain Stage* on National Public Radio, a positive idea of West Virginia is introduced into his or her consciousness. That basic recognition is the first, and often the most difficult, step in economic development. You have to be in the race before you can win it.

So these "recreational, social and cultural opportunities" are community barometers, image builders and potential economic development tools. But they are much more than that. They are, in fact, economic development itself.

A recent economic impact study by Americans for the Arts, commissioned by FestivALL Charleston, the Charleston Convention and Visitor's Bureau, the Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences, the Charleston Area Alliance and Fund for the Arts, Charleston, produced some interesting statistics. According to the report, nonprofit art and culture:

"...generates \$44.8 million in local economic activity [in the greater Charleston region]. This spending

includes \$27.3 million by nonprofit arts and culture organizations and an additional \$17.5 million in event-related spending by their audiences. It supports 1,018 full-time equivalent jobs, generates \$27.2 million in household income to local residents, and delivers \$4 million in local and state government revenue."

Keep in mind these figures do not include for-profit arts and entertainment businesses such as art galleries, dance schools, pop concerts and radio and television stations. The arts – yes, even the nonprofit kind – pay a lot of rent and buy a lot of groceries.

Artists are explorers. They are often the first to settle dangerous territory. When you see neighborhoods that are turning around, you will find artists, musicians and dancers. Artists, like good art itself, are interesting and full of life. They attract attention. They can take simple, even meager, materials and transform them into beautiful and sometimes challenging works. They are the ultimate value adders.

So don't be surprised if an artist, actor, musician or dancer comes to your Rotary Club or city council meeting. Make them feel welcome. They may be the key to your community's economic future. ♡



A Rails-to-Trails Success Story

Kathleen Panek, Executive Director
West Virginia Rails-to-Trails Council

Kathleen Panek serves as the executive director of the West Virginia Rails-to-Trails Council. A native West Virginian, she spent several years in Illinois, where she saw the economic advantages of converting former rail lines into recreational trails.

Upon returning to her home state in 1996, she opened the start-up Gillum House Bed & Breakfast in Shinnston, located adjacent to a former rail line.

Ms. Panek is a former councilperson in the City of Shinnston, where she currently serves on the Planning & Zoning Commission, Building Commission, as a member of the Blueprint Community Team, ON TRAC Team, board member of the Shinnston Development Authority, as (unpaid) official Tourist Information Center and as City Clerk. She also is president of the Shinnston Area Council of Churches. She also is proud to be a member of the Shinnston Community Band.

A past president of Mountainstate Association of Bed & Breakfasts, she was spokesperson for MABB in getting fire code legislation changed to include bed-and-breakfast establishments. She has conducted aspiring innkeeper seminars in several states and has co-authored marketing tips for an international bed and breakfast directory newsletter.

West Virginia, *because* of its small size, truly is a land of opportunity. It has allowed me to open a business *and* become involved in my city, my county and my state.

When I was invited to write about trails and tourism in West Virginia, I decided to tell how blessed I am to have been given my home state as a reward for bringing up the children. After what I call a “24-year sentence in Illinois,” I got to come home to West Virginia. And from the moment I set foot in Shinnston, I knew I was home.

Knowing I wanted to open a bed and breakfast, as we stood in front of the old house we were considering – the former home of a B&O station manager – and saw what was obviously a rail bed, my husband and I smiled at each other and simultaneously said, “Rail-trail!”

We had seen the economic impact of a rail-trail in the communities along the Fox River in Illinois and knew the bed and breakfast we were about to create would reap the benefits of a rail-trail in such close proximity. I ultimately became involved in rail-trail and tourism, and I have been blessed to see, first-hand, how a city changes because of these two interconnected entities.

In 1995, Shinnston was a once-vital city that was starting to dry up. The late Sue Ann Miller, then a guidance counselor at Lincoln High School in Shinnston, recognized the value of rail-trail. She

began seeking grants to purchase the rail bed, with the City of Shinnston as the governmental body to sponsor and hold title to it. Once Shinnston acquired rail-trail through Sue’s efforts, she assigned me to attend West Virginia Rails-to-Trails Council (WVRTC) meetings as our group’s representative. I met rail-trail advocates from around the state at meetings and workshops. In 2004, following the death of Sue Ann Miller, Shinnston named the trailhead in her memory.

A few years later, I found myself as executive director of WVRTC, working with a wonderful group of people to publish – with the help of the advertising grants available through West Virginia Tourism – the brochure “Rail-Trails of West Virginia,” that contains a locator map of existing and proposed rail-trails with contact information and details about each trail.

I doubt the people of Shinnston had ever considered it a tourist destination, but the combination of a 17-mile scenic rail-trail adjacent to a bed and breakfast changed that. With the acquisition of property that had been a trash-laden parking area for trucks cleaned up, landscaped and turned into a trailhead, houses along the highway near the trailhead began to be spruced up.

Today, people from around the area and visitors from all over the USA come to Shinnston to ride the trail and experience the area. Tourism brings business to the restaurants, gas stations and shops. Shinnston has acquired a city park and a museum.





City of Shinnston Trail Head



A stretch of the rail-trail

In 2007, Shinnston was nominated and chosen as one of 10 Blueprint Communities in West Virginia. The Blueprint program is a revitalization training project of the Federal Home Loan Bank system, using a core group of volunteers to create and implement a strategic plan in their city. Shinnston had such a strong, dedicated team that they also were chosen for ON TRAC, a West Virginia program that is a precursor to Main Street.

The Shinnston City Council used this strong foundation to create a Shinnston Development Authority. The Shinnston Garden Club funded several beautification projects in the city, including a new landscaping of the trailhead. The park now has a walking trail around the perimeter. New businesses are locating in Shinnston. It is a city on the move because it has a city government that recognized the opportunity rail-trail and tourism provided as a “stepping stone” – and built on it.

West Virginia is a land of opportunity, and many cities and towns throughout the state are using tourism as one of the many “tools” available to prove it! ♡

The Summit: Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve

(continued from p. 11)

Bill Bright and Scouting in West Virginia

Not many know that in the late 1990s, the National Boy Scouts considered another site in West Virginia for a possible High Adventure Camp. Bill Bright, the founder of Bright of America in Summersville, was working on a project to develop a new ski area with 2,000 vertical feet, to be called Almost Heaven Mountain Resort in Randolph County. Bill Bright and Frank Jorgensen heard that the National Scouts were considering a High Adventure Camp in the Eastern United States and had considered sites in the mountains of North Carolina and Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

In July 1998, Frank and Bill met in Irvine, Texas, with Chief Scout Jere Ratcliffe, Don McChesney, head of

the Boy Scout Division for the United States, and others. Don McChesney was the past Buckskin Council Scout Executive in Charleston, West Virginia, and during his tenure, he and Bill Bright implemented the Scout Skiing Program at Winterplace Ski Resort that has since taught thousands of Scouts from the mid-Atlantic region how to ski.

During the Texas visit, the top leaders of the Boy Scouts recognized Bill Bright as the first person to ever buy advertising in Scouting Magazine in the 1960s. Bill Bright promoted greeting cards, placemats, GE light bulbs and first aid kits to be used by Scouts for fundraising. His company, Bright of America, provided fundraising for many types of youth groups, including Scouts.

During the discussions it was proposed that Almost Heaven Mountain Resort would focus on skiing during the winter, and during the summer the site would be a National Boy Scout High Adventure Camp. In February 1999, a group of National Scout Officials visited the

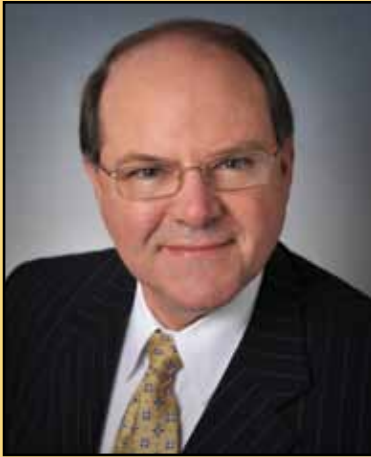
site to confirm the stunning views and the access to the 900,000 acres of the Monongahela Forest.

Discussions continued on this project for about a year. The Scouts appointed Bill Bright to the National Camp Inspection Team for an inspection of the 137,000-acre Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. This opportunity gave Bill a good view of what might be expected in West Virginia. Eventually, the Scouts decided to table this project until they were able to come up with multiple uses and a better vision of the project.

Fast forward to 2010 ... and the recent announcement of The Summit: Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve in West Virginia. ▼

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Gene W. Bailey, II
Charleston - Special Counsel

Gene has more than 25 years of legal experience and practices in the areas of Construction Law, Labor and Employment, Mine Safety and Health, Civil Litigation and Insurance Defense. A former State Judge Advocate for the West Virginia Air National Guard, he is a graduate of the United States Military Academy and served on active duty for nine years with the United States Army.



Carl L. Fletcher, Jr.
Charleston - Special Counsel

Carl has been practicing in the area of Commercial Litigation for more than 30 years, with a focus in Construction Law and Litigation and Mechanic's Liens. He regularly counsels his clients in related areas of business law, including preventative practices such as contract and document review, to avoid problems and costly litigation. He also is an experienced arbitrator and mediator.



Charles R. Hughes
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In addition to his work in Commercial Litigation and Transactions, Charles has significant experience in Construction Litigation and Mechanic's Liens. His work in Real Estate Law includes abstracting and producing title reports for residential, commercial and mineral-producing properties. He successfully represented individual and business clients before the West Virginia Office of Tax Appeals.



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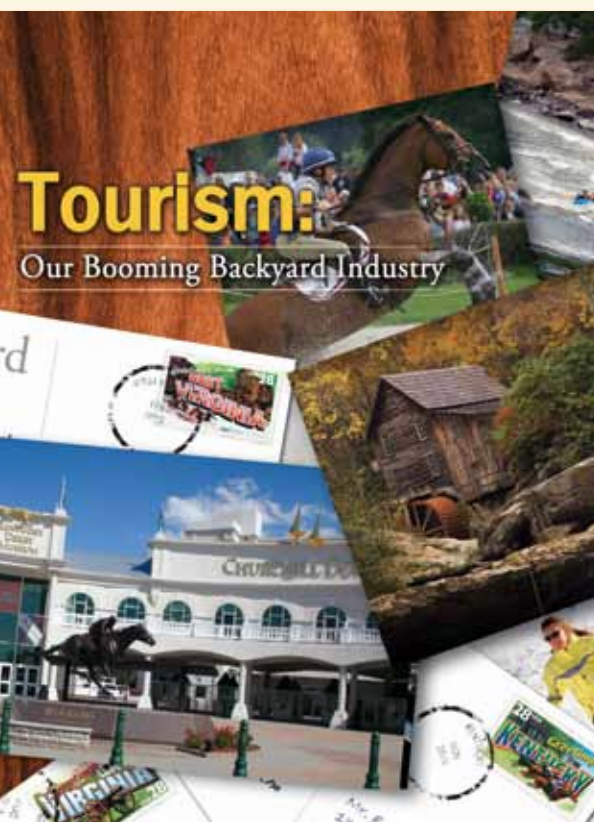
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