

## WEST VIRGINIA FACTS

West Virginia Day, June 20, became a legal State Holiday by Chapter 59, Acts of the Legislature, Regular Session, 1927.

**June 20, 1863** – 35<sup>th</sup> State admitted to the Union, and the only one to achieve statehood by Proclamation of the President (Abraham Lincoln)

**April 20, 1863** – President Lincoln signs a revised bill proclaiming West Virginia a state with the bill becoming effective 60 days later

**December 31, 1862** – President Lincoln signs the bill providing for the statehood of West Virginia on the condition that it gradually would abolish slavery

**April 3, 1862** – West Virginia voters ratify the State's first constitution. The State's current constitution was adopted in 1872.

**August 26, 1861** – the Wheeling Convention votes to form a new state from the territory of Virginia. The new state is to be called "*Kanawha*." Delegates later decide to rename the State "West Virginia."

**June 20, 1861** – feeling that the sitting Virginia government had acted illegally in seceding from the Union in 1861, the citizens of western Virginia, via the Wheeling Convention, organize the Restored Government of Virginia, and select Francis H. Pierpont as Governor.

**Charleston**, the State's largest city, became the capital of West Virginia in 1870. Wheeling was the original capital from 1863 to 1870.

West Virginia's nickname is "***The Mountain State***," and the state symbol is the "***Mountaineer***."

The State Motto is "***Montani Semper Liberi***" (Mountaineers Are Always Free).

The ***Black Bear*** (*Ursus americanus*) was selected as official State Animal by House Concurrent Resolution No. 6 on February 1973, following a poll of students, teachers and sportsmen conducted by the Department of Natural Resources in 1954-55. The only species of bear found in West Virginia, primarily in the eastern mountains of the State, the omnivorous mammal has a glossy black or dark brown coat and reaches an average maximum weight of 250 pounds.

The ***Eastern Cardinal*** (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) also known as the "redbird," was designated as the official State Bird by House Concurrent Resolution No. 12 on March 7, 1949. The songbird is a member of the finch family and is approximately eight inches long. The male cardinal is a rich scarlet with a mask and shading of black, while the young birds and female are a less brilliant color.

The ***Monarch Butterfly*** (*Danaus plexippus*), also known as the "milkweed butterfly," was designated as the official State Insect by Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 11, adopted by the Legislature on March 1, 1995. The orange and black insect dines on

milkweed as a caterpillar, sips nectar from flowers as a butterfly and, at summer's end, and migrates south to Mexico.

The **Brook Trout** (*Salvelinus fontinalis*), also known as the "speckled trout" or "squaretail," was designated as the official State Fish by House Concurrent Resolution in 1973, following a poll of sportsmen. The Brook Trout is a native West Virginia species. The brook trout is olive with lighter sides and a reddish belly (in males) and easily identified by the light colored edges of the lower fins.

The **Rhododendron Maximum**, also known as the "Big Laurel," was designated as the official State Flower by House Joint Resolution No. 19, adopted by the Legislature on January 29, 1903, following a recommendation made by the Governor and a vote of public school students. It is a shrub of the heath family and may be recognized by its large evergreen leaves and delicate pale pink or white bloom, mottled with either red or yellow flecks.

The **Sugar Maple** (*Acer Saccharum*) was designated as the official State Tree by House Concurrent Resolution No. 12 on March 7, 1949. This tree usually grows to heights of 70 to 120 feet, has a five-lobed leaf and produces small, wing-shaped pods. The sap from this tree is used to make maple syrup and maple sugar. Its wood, also called hard maple and rock maple, is primarily used in cabinet making. It has a five-lobed leaf and a small wing-shaped seedpod.

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

The land area of the State is 24,087 acres, while the total (land and water) area of the State is 24,231 acres. West Virginia is the tenth smallest state in total area.

The State's population as of December 1999 is estimated at 1,806,928 making it 36<sup>th</sup> in population density.

**Spruce Knob** (Pendleton County) is the highest point in the State, at 4,861 feet.

**Harpers Ferry** (Jefferson County) is the State's lowest point, at 240 feet.

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

**Monongahela Silt Loam** was designated as the official State Soil by Senate Concurrent Resolution on April 2, 1997. This soil (fine-loamy, mesic typic fragiudult) covers more than 100,000 acres in 42 counties throughout West Virginia, and is used extensively for crops, hay, pasture, woodland, housing and is prime farmland on slopes of three percent or less.

**Old Gold** and **Blue** were designated as the official State colors by Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 20 on March 8, 1963.

West Virginia has 55 counties and is bordered by five states: Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio.

- Mingo County is the youngest county, formed in 1895.
- Hampshire County is the oldest county, formed as part of Virginia in 1754.
- Hancock County has the smallest land area with 83 square miles.
- Randolph County is the largest county with 1,039 square miles.

**The Great Seal (Coat of Arms) of West Virginia** was designed by Joseph H. Debar of Doddridge County, who was chosen as a result of a Legislative Resolution. Prior to the adoption of this emblem as the official State Seal by Joint Resolution No. 20 on September 26, 1863, the private seal of our first Governor, Arthur I. Boreman, was used. The obverse side of the Great Seal is composed of the following details, as reported by Mr. Debar:

- The words "State of West Virginia" and the State's Latin motto, *Montani Semper Liberi*, inserted in the circumference of the Seal
- A large, ivy-draped rock in the center of the Seal, representing stability and continuance
- The State's date of admission to the Union, June 20, 1863, located on the face of the rock
- To the right of the rock, a farmer clothed in traditional hunting garb, peculiar to this region
  - His right arm rests on plow handles
  - His left arm supports a woodsman's ax, indicating that while the territory was partly cultivated, it was still in the process of being cleared of the original forest
  - At his right hand, a sheaf of wheat and a cornstalk, signifying agriculture
- To the left of the rock, a miner with a pick-ax on his shoulder
  - At his feet, barrels and lumps of minerals

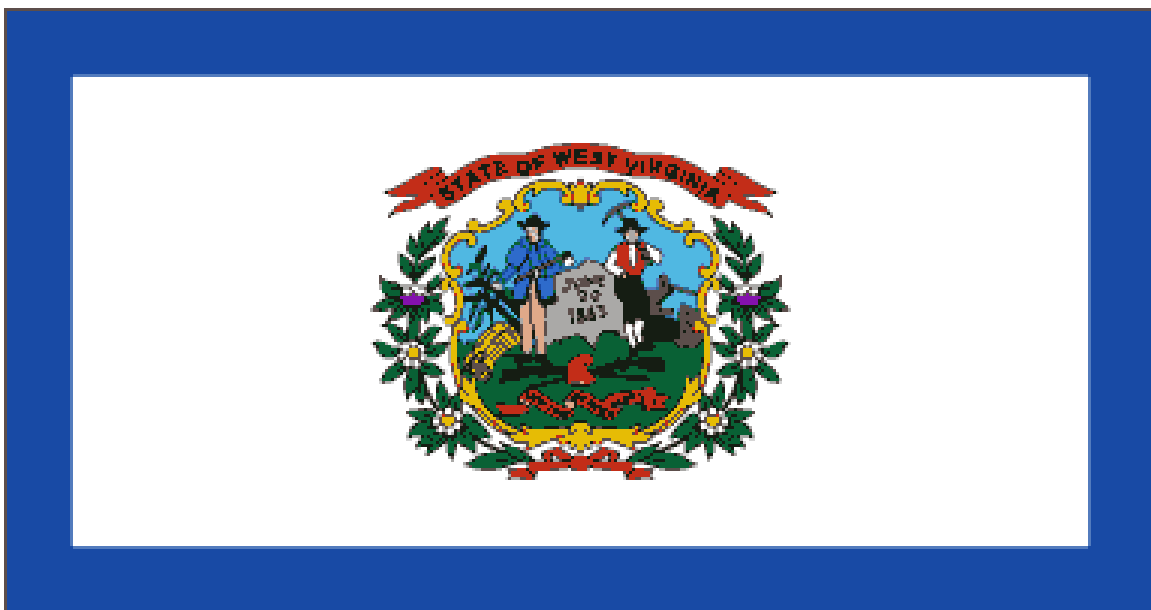
- On his left, an anvil, partly seen, on which rests a sledge hammer, typical of the mechanical arts, the whole indicating the principal pursuits and resources of the State
- In front of the rock and hunter, two hunter's rifles, crossed and surmounted at the place of contact by the Phrygian cap, the "Cap of Liberty," indicating that our freedom and liberty were won and will be maintained by the force of arms.

The Seal was designed and adopted with two sides, so it could be made into a medallion. Although the reverse side is rarely used, it is the Governor's official Seal. The following details may be found on the reverse side of the Great Seal:

- Encircling the Seal, a wreath of laurel and oak leaves, emblematic of valor and strength, with fruits and cereals, products of the State
- In the center of the Seal, a landscape, indicating the leading characteristics, productions and pursuits of the State at the time
  - In the distance, on the left of the Seal, a wooded mountain, and on the right, a cultivated slope with the log farmhouse peculiar to this region
  - On the side of the mountain, a representation of the viaduct on the line of the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad in Preston County, one of the great engineering feats of the time, with a train of cars about to pass over it.
- Near the center, a factory
  - In front, a river with boats
  - On the bank and to the right, nearer the foreground, a derrick and a shed, pertaining to the production of petroleum and salt
- In the foreground, a meadow with cattle and sheep feeding and resting
- Above the mountains, the sun emerging from the clouds, indicating that former obstacles to our prosperity were disappearing
- In the rays of the sun, the Latin motto ***Libertas E Fidelitate*** (Liberty (Freedom) from or because of Loyalty), indicating that our liberty and independence are the result of faithfulness to the Declaration and the National Constitution.



The design of the West Virginia's **State Flag** was officially designated by Senate Joint Resolution No. 18 on March 7, 1929. The State flag is white, bordered with blue, with the State Seal and State Motto in the center. Above the seal is a ribbon with the words "State of West Virginia." Below the seal is a wreath of rhododendron.



## WEST VIRGINIA STATE ROAD/HIGHWAY COMMISSIONERS 1919 to present

Name (political party)	County	Term of Office
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### Two-Member State Road Commission\*

A. Dennis Williams (R).....	Pocahontas .....	June 1, 1917 – February 20, 1919
Timothy S. Scanlon (D).....	Cabell.....	June 1, 1917 – June 30, 1919
Camden Page Fortney (R).....	Harrison .....	February 20, 1919 – May 31, 1921
Julius K. Monroe (D).....	Preston.....	July 1, 1919 – May 31, 1921

### Three-Member State Road Commission\*\*

Camden Page Fortney (R).....	Harrison .....	June 1, 1921 – March 31, 1933
Eston Byrne Stephenson (D).....	Kanawha .....	June 1, 1921 – May 31, 1925
Nelson Price Whitaker (R) .....	Ohio .....	June 1, 1921 – May 1, 1922
Charles E. Hiner (R) .....	Upshur .....	July 1, 1923 – May 1, 1927
Charles Ephriam McCoy (D).....	Kanawha .....	May 31, 1927 – May 31, 1931
Harvey March (R) .....	Wood .....	May 3, 1927 – May 31, 1929
Floyd Elmer Cunyningham (R) .....	McDowell .....	July 10, 1929 – May 17, 1931
Harold P. Tompkins (R) .....	Kanawha .....	May 29, 1931 – May 31, 1933
Harry Preston Henshaw (D).....	Berkeley .....	June 1, 1931 – July 15, 1933

### State Road/Highway Commissioner \*\*\*

Ernest Lawrence Bailey (D) .....	Mercer.....	July 15, 1933 – July 19, 1935
Burr Henry Simpson (D) .....	Upshur .....	August 23, 1935 – February 22, 1941
Ernest Lawrence Bailey (D) .....	Mercer.....	February 22, 1941 – January 31, 1946
E. L. Worthington (D).....	Greenbrier.....	February 1, 1946 – August 17, 1947
Ray Cavendish (D) .....	Fayette .....	August 18, 1947 – June 30, 1952
Harry Radcliffe (D).....	Summers.....	July 1, 1952 – September 19, 1952
H. Keith Griffith (D) .....	Tucker .....	September 23, 1952 – June 30, 1955
Burl A. Sawyers (D) .....	Greenbrier.....	July 1, 1955 – January 31, 1957
M. L. O'Neal (D).....	Kanawha .....	February 1, 1957 – April 7, 1957
Patrick C. Graney (R) .....	Fayette .....	April 9, 1957 – March 1, 1961
Burl A. Sawyers (D) .....	Greenbrier.....	March 2, 1961 – February 18, 1968
M. R. Hamill (D) .....	Tucker .....	February 19, 1968 – January 30, 1969
William S. Ritchie, Jr. (R).....	Jackson.....	January 31, 1969 – January 17, 1977
Joseph H. Jones (D).....	Kanawha .....	January 18, 1977 – September 24, 1977
Charles L. Miller (D).....	Kanawha .....	September 25, 1977 – June 22, 1984
Fred VanKirk (D).....	Kanawha .....	June 22, 1984 – February 17, 1985
William S. Ritchie, Jr. (R).....	Jackson.....	February 18, 1985 – January 16, 1989
Fred VanKirk (D).....	Kanawha .....	January 17, 1989 – August 31, 1997
Samuel H. Beverage .....	Cabell.....	September 1, 1997 – January 15, 2001
Fred VanKirk (D).....	Kanawha .....	January 16, 2001 - Present

**Notes:**

\* The 1917 Legislature replaced the State Road Bureau with a State Road Commission of two members appointed by the Governor with consent of the Senate for a term of four years. The Chairman was required to be a civil engineer and to have had some experience in road building. The other member was the secretary-treasurer of the Commission.

\*\* The 1921 Legislature established a State Road Commission of three salaried members, not more than two of whom could be of the same political party, appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate for a term of six years.

\*\*\* The 1933 Legislature created the office of State Road Commissioner, in whom was vested all powers and duties prescribed to the Commission, and a four-member Commission, to serve in an advisory capacity to the Commissioner. The State Road Commissioner and members of the State Road Commission appointed by the Governor, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, for a term of four years. The State Road Commissioner is a member of the State Road Commission. By act of the 1957 Legislature, the State Road Commission consists of seven members, appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate for terms of seven years.

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**WEST VIRGINIA DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS  
DISTRICT ENGINEERS**

<b>District</b>	<b>District Engineers</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Phone Number/ Fax Number</b>
1	John Dawson <a href="mailto:jdawson@dot.state.wv.us">jdawson@dot.state.wv.us</a>	1334 Smith Street Charleston, WV 25301-1492	304-558-3001 304-558-6391
2	Wilson Braley <a href="mailto:wbraley@dot.state.wv.us">wbraley@dot.state.wv.us</a>	Post Office Box 880 801 Madison Avenue Huntington, WV 25704-2550	304-528-5635 304-528-5614
3	James "Rusty" Roten <a href="mailto:rroten@dot.state.wv.us">rroten@dot.state.wv.us</a>	624 Depot Street Parkersburg, WV 26101-5279	304-420-4595 304-420-4682
4	Marvin Murphy <a href="mailto:mmurphy@dot.state.wv.us">mmurphy@dot.state.wv.us</a>	Post Office Box 4220 Clarksburg, WV 26302-4220	304-842-1500 304-842-1564
5	William Hartman <a href="mailto:bhartman@dot.state.wv.us">bhartman@dot.state.wv.us</a>	Post Office Box 99 Burlington, WV 26710-0099	304-289-3521 304-289-5085
6	Bob Whipp <a href="mailto:bwhipp@dot.state.wv.us">bwhipp@dot.state.wv.us</a>	#1 DOT Drive Moundsville, WV 26041-1605	304-843-4008 304-843-4085
7	Ron Smith <a href="mailto:rsmith@dot.state.wv.us">rsmith@dot.state.wv.us</a>	Drawer 1228 Weston, WV 226452-1228	304-269-0414 304-269-0422
8	Tom Staud <a href="mailto:tstaud@dot.state.wv.us">tstaud@dot.state.wv.us</a>	Post Office Box 1516 Elkins, WV 26241-1516	304-637-0220 304-637-0218
9	Jim Lagos <a href="mailto:jlagos@dot.state.wv.us">jlagos@dot.state.wv.us</a>	103 ½ Church Street Lewisburg, WV 24901	304-647-7450 304-647-7452
10	Bill Bennett <a href="mailto:bbennett@dot.state.wv.us">bbennett@dot.state.wv.us</a>	270 Hardwood Lane Princeton, WV 24740	304-487-5228 304-425-8287