

*A Community Profile*

# Pikeville and Pike County



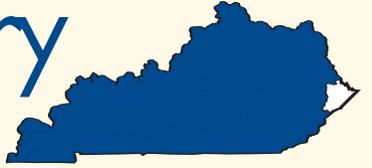
A Special Editorial  
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The Lane Report

**The new Eastern Kentucky Exposition Center  
is an impressive addition to downtown Pikeville.**

Photo by Stephanie Stiltner

# A Gem in Coal Country



Pikeville's status as a regional hub has brought the town big-city amenities

One of the Bluegrass State's most enduring – and unique – small cities is tucked into Kentucky's eastern corner in the heart of Pike County, where banking, energy, health care and education are fueling a local economy with as much promise as any comparably-sized community in the nation.

Pikeville, with a population around 6,000, has twice been named one of the 100 best small towns in America by Norm Crampton in his book, "The 100 Best Small Towns in America," for its blend of economic prowess and educational excellence. But as former Gov. Paul Patton noted, don't be fooled by the city's smallness.

Pikeville, county seat of Kentucky's largest county, also serves as Eastern Kentucky's cultural and economic epicenter, "and it's just the downtown section of a community of 70,000 or 80,000," said Patton, a Pikeville native. "It baffles people because you look at the banking institutions, the number of doctors, the medical school, the college, and you wonder how all that can be supported by such a small community. Well, the answer is that Pikeville draws people for a variety of reasons from all around Eastern Kentucky and parts of West Virginia. We've had a lot of courageous leaders who have made things happen in Pikeville. Pike County is demonstrating that it has made the transition from a region that was depressed to an area with a modern, diverse and thriving economy."

Long the largest player in Kentucky's coal industry, Pike County continues to lead the region and state in overall mine operations and coal production, according to

Courtesy of City of Pikeville



David Gooch, president of Pikeville-based Coal Operators and Associates. Data from 2002 showed that Pike County outpaced the 31 other Kentucky counties involved in coal production. Its underground operations recovered 20 million tons of coal that year, and its surface mining operations produced 12.5 million tons, representing nearly a quarter of the state's total mining capacity in 2002. The recent pressure on interna-

**Nestled in the Appalachian Mountains, Pikeville is a city with 6,000 residents in a county with a population of 67,000. Pikeville is the retail, economic, and cultural center for eastern Kentucky and southwest West Virginia and Virginia.**

tional oil production has helped bolster global demand in coal, and over the past couple of years, Pike County and Eastern Kentucky in general have benefited from higher coal prices.

The presence of coal naturally attracted banking partners to the region, with financial institutions and holding companies possessing several billions of dollars in assets, including the prestigious Community Trust Bank, Kentucky's largest bank holding company with nearly \$3 billion in assets.

Kitty White, executive director of the Pike County Chamber of Commerce, noted that the presence of prominent banking institutions, a commitment to partnership with county and city government, an eye toward positive economic development and a genuine concern for the region's residents – demonstrated by

## Labor Force Characteristics (Aug. 2004)

	Pike County	Labor Market Area
Civilian Labor Force	23,807	75,705
Employed	22,473	71,154
Unemployed	1,334	4,551
Unemployment Rate (%)	5.6	6.0

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

great educational and health care services – all have combined to make the quality of life in Pike County second to none.

“We have our challenges,” she said. Because of the mountainous terrain of the southern Appalachian range that dominates the skyline, “we lack all the housing we’d like to have. The answer to that is we are seeing new developments going on at the north end of Pikeville. We’d like to see more housing going in on the south end of the city as well. In some ways, Pike County has been slow to grab onto new developments across the state and the country. But that has allowed us to move at a slower pace and measure what we’re doing. We think the decisions we are making are the right ones for the overall benefit of the community.”

That tradition of dedicated leadership seeking proactive solutions goes back a long way in Pike County, including the intriguing project that was created by Pikeville’s former mayor and noted visionary, Dr. William C. Hambley: the Pikeville cut-through. “The cut-through, which rerouted the rail line and made way for the corridor highway that was envisioned in the 1960s, was one of the biggest engineering and earth-moving projects in the world, second only to the building of the Panama Canal,” said Phyllis Hunt, executive director of Pike County Tourism. The project, completed in 1987, allowed for the expansion of Pikeville College and the



Built in 1889 by the Presbyterian Church as the original home of Pikeville College, the Pikeville City Hall is featured on the National Registry of Historic places.

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Called “the eighth wonder of the world” by *The New York Times*, the Pikeville cut-through put an end to the city’s perennial flooding problems. It created a mile and a half-long channel through a mountain for the Big Sandy River bypassing downtown.

development of the Pikeville Medical Center and numerous other initiatives.

The same proactive drive led to the development of the best health care possible for a region that heretofore had been struggling to

attract doctors to Eastern Kentucky. In 1997, the Pikeville College School of Osteopathic Medicine was founded, creating the third medical school operating in the Bluegrass State after medical schools at the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville, according to Harold H. Smith, president of the college. Pikeville College, which has provided liberal arts post-secondary education to Eastern Kentucky for more than a century, remains the only small, liberal arts college in the nation with a medical school. And, importantly for the people of Eastern Kentucky, one of the

paramount goals of the medical school is to deliver primary care physicians to the region, a prospect it already has seen come to fruition in its first graduating classes. Putting Doctors of Osteopathy – a holistic medical discipline practiced by fully qualified physicians nationwide – into new medical practices in Eastern Kentucky has been at the forefront of the school’s agenda, according to Dr. John A. Strosnider, Pikeville College vice president and dean of the school of medicine.

Medical students in Pikeville have been able to take advantage of working and learning in clinical settings in one of the most modern health care facilities in Eastern Kentucky: the Pikeville Medical Center. A towering black building situated against the mountainside, the medical center was built not to be as good as other facilities across the country, “but to be better,” said Walter May, president of the board of directors of the hospital. “We set pretty high standards here, and we rank No. 1 in the nation in many ways. We’re trying hard to be in the center of excellence in Pike County, where health care has surpassed coal as the economic engine.”

Viewed as a whole, Pikeville provides a picture of a diverse area rich in history, family ties and pride in the region’s progress. That progress was highlighted recently by the grand opening of the city’s new Eastern Kentucky Exposition Center, now the pre-

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mier entertainment and meeting venue in that part of the commonwealth.

"There's always been this sense in Pikeville that if we wanted to get anything done, we'd have to do it ourselves," said the chamber's White. "Eastern Kentucky had been isolated for a long time until we got



**Former Governor Paul Patton makes his home in Pikeville. Governor Patton was Pike County Judge Executive from 1982 to 1991 before entering state office.**

the Mountain Parkway. So, up to that time, Pikeville established itself as the major marketplace for the region. We have the huge mining industry here. We have a federal courthouse here. We have important options for the arts, education, recreation. So Pikeville always has been a regional center. Add to that the cooperation that exists between business and gov-

ernment, the added infrastructure in roads and (telecommunications), the strong financial industry here with our banks, and you have a truly great place to live and work and raise a family." ■



Courtesy of City of Pikeville

**Built in 1888, the Pike County Courthouse was the scene of the Hatfield clan trials for the McCoy murders.**

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# Going Further

Pikeville College and its medical school are pushing the region ahead

**A** cornerstone of the progress in Pike County has been its center of higher education: Pikeville College. Founded more than a century ago, the college is a result of a Presbyterian Church outreach project that was ultimately the catalyst for launching nearly 300 small colleges throughout the Midwest and western United States.

Harold H. Smith, president of Pikeville College, noted that the institution was created in 1889 to give mountain youths in Eastern Kentucky and parts of West Virginia the opportunity to earn a college degree and study the liberal arts.

“Our students get a broad foundation or base” in classwork, he said. “From that broad base they can go further in the long run, which is what kids need as they are graduating from colleges today.”

Pikeville College has a renowned teacher education program, an important means for the school to have its students giving back to the community by helping

educate other youths in the region. Nursing students also have fared well at the college. In recent years, all graduates of the school’s two-year nursing program passed their state nursing boards, Smith said.

But the most exciting development at Pikeville College began to take shape in the mid-1990s with the establishment of the Pikeville College School of Osteopathic Medicine.



**Hal Smith is President of Pikeville College. A graduate and former administrator of Centre College in Danville, President Smith assumed office in 1997.**

“There has been a trend in medicine that has been problematic,” said Dr. John Strosnider, vice president and dean of the medical school. “Less than 20 percent of (medical school graduates) now do primary care work, and there is a tremendous need for them, especially in Eastern Kentucky. My feeling is that if we get kids from the hills, train them in the hills then they’ll stay in the hills and set up their practices here.”

Former Gov. Paul E. Patton, who is on the faculty at Pikeville College, noted that the Appalachian Regional Council, which helped fund the creation of the medical school, “regards the medical school as the best investment it’s ever made.” Priority for enrollment at PCSOM is given to students from Eastern Kentucky and the Appalachian region.

Pikeville College remains the only small liberal arts college with a medical school,

**The fabled “99 Steps” leading up the hill to Pikeville College has been a stairway to a better life through higher education for thousands of Appalachia youth.**

## Big Sandy Tech

**O**ne of the great educational boosts to Pikeville and Pike County came with the establishment of a Pikeville campus of the Big Sandy Community and Technical College.

“It has been an outstanding addition to the educational opportunities that you can now find in Pikeville,” former Gov. Paul E. Patton said.

Part of the statewide Kentucky Community and Technical College system, BSCTC not only provides excellent job training for youths in the region seeking the technical skills that will help them land new jobs, but the center provides an important incentive to attract new businesses to the region, according to Kitty White, executive director of the Pike County Chamber of Commerce. Offering a plethora of programs that range from community enhancement – like first-aid training – to job development for the coal and gas industries in Eastern Kentucky, BSCTC fills an important role for the ongoing educational programming in Pikeville.

“but it’s a model that educators across the country are looking at closely,” Smith said.

Students are enrolled in a four-year academic program, then serve one-year rotating internships and complete residency programs. Core rotation sites include the Pikeville Med-



## What is a Doctor of Osteopathy?

**D**octors of osteopathic medicine practice a discipline of treating the whole person instead of just treating specific symptoms, according to Dr. John Strosnider, vice president and dean of the Pikeville College School of Osteopathic Medicine. Strosnider, who is president elect of the American Osteopathic Association – a mirror organization for D.O.s to the American Medical Association – explained that osteopathic doctors are complete physicians, and like medical doctors, they are fully trained and licensed to prescribe medication and perform surgery.



**Dr. John Strosnider is Dean of the Pikeville College Medical School. Dr. Strosnider is president-elect of the American Osteopathic Association.**

Osteopathic doctors practice in all branches of medicine and surgery, from obstetrics to emergency medicine or geriatrics. But, Strosnider noted, D.O.s are trained to be generalists first and specialists second. He said most osteopathic doctors work in primary care, a critical need in Eastern Kentucky.

D.O.s are trained to understand how all the body’s systems are interconnected and how they affect the other parts, paying special attention to the musculoskeletal system and preventive health care. Those are important ingredients in the mountains, where diet, smoking and other lifestyle concerns often compound common medical problems.

Harold H. Smith, president of Pikeville College, said the approaches taken by doctors of osteopathy – who emphasize primary care and education – will help bolster lifestyles to a region of Kentucky that often has been near the bottom in terms of health and longevity.

ical Center, and medical facilities in Prestonsburg, Paintsville, Williamson and Martin, as well as sites in the Appalachian regions of Virginia and West Virginia.

“My hope in the long term is that we have 80 percent of our doctors working in primary care in Kentucky, and especially in Eastern Kentucky,” Strosnider said. ■

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## No Joke, Hillbilly Days Is Huge

The single largest tourist draw in Pikeville and Pike County is the annual Hillbilly Days, held every April to poke a little fun at a worn-out stereotype of Eastern Kentuckians. Founded by Shriners Grady Kinney and Howard Stratton in 1976, the three-day event has served as an important fundraiser for Shriners Children's Hospital in Lexington for nearly 30 years. In that time, Hillbilly Days has raised more than \$250,000 for the hospital while gaining national attention for the event.

During the third weekend in April, "mountain folk" dressed in bib overalls, floppy hats and the accoutrements of hill life gather with country music, dancing, crafts and home-cooking at center stage.

A joint effort of the city of Pikeville, the Pike County Fiscal Court, the Shriners Hillbilly Clan and the Pike County Chamber of Commerce, the festival is rated one of the top 10 annual events held in the South. It packs every hotel for miles around, according to Phyllis Hunt, director of Pike County Tourism. To accommodate visitors arriving in recreational vehicles, numerous sites throughout the city and surrounding area are converted into ad hoc campgrounds.

"It's a wonderful three days of music, clogging, a music contest, good food. You name it," Hunt said. "Everybody just has a great time."

Vendors line the streets of Pikeville's central business district, selling handmade crafts and souvenir trinkets, and virtually all forms of dancing that have been done in the mountains, including square dancing, "flat dancing" and clogging, are demonstrated at the courthouse square and Pikeville City Park.

"This is the kind of event that has a huge impact on the community," said Kitty White, executive director of the Pike County Chamber of Commerce. "People start coming into town a week in advance of the festival" to make sure they can get situated and find accommodations.

"I don't think anybody can overstate how big a deal Hillbilly Days has turned out to be," said Pike County Judge Executive Bill Deskins. "It is a great three-day event that does an awful lot of good for kids at the Shriners hospital."

# 'A Natural for Us'

## Touting tourism is a priority for Pike County

Nationwide, tourism is big business, pumping billions of dollars into local economies. In Pike County, the economic impact of tourism is taken very seriously by public- and private-sector planners.

Pike County Judge Executive. "The coal prices are good now, but you can't rely on coal to stay at the level it's at now. Tourism, given the beauty of our county, is a natural for us."

But perhaps because of an outdated view of Pikeville and its surrounding countryside



Photos courtesy of Pike County Tourism

"We have beautiful mountains with all kinds of outdoor activities, arts and crafts and plenty of recreational activities. And



**Bill Deskins is in his first term as Pike County Judge Executive. Judge Deskins previously served two terms as Pike County sheriff.**

with our new civic center, we have the capability to bring in all kinds of meetings and conventions," said Kitty White, executive director of the Pike County Chamber of Commerce. "Tourism is definitely being viewed in terms of economic development for the city and the county."

"There's no question that tourism is going to

be extremely important for economic development in years to come," said Bill Deskins,

**Thousands fill the streets of downtown Pikeville every April for "Hillbilly Days". Founded in 1976, the festival celebrates Appalachian culture while raising money for the Shriners' Hospital for Children in Lexington.**

– images of backwoods communities scraping by at the mercy of coal prices – potential guests often eschew the great beauty and history that serve as the backdrop for Pike County and its seat of government.

Phyllis Hunt, director of Pike County Tourism, noted that plenty of energy is being expended in getting the word out about Pikeville and the county as a great destination for visitors. Its attractions include:

The Breaks Interstate Park at the southeastern edge of the district, a 4,600-acre reservation at the largest canyon east of the Mississippi River, where Daniel Boone took his first steps into the Bluegrass State.

The U.S. 23 Country Music Highway, with five stops along the way like the Dils

Cemetery, a landmark from the Hatfield and McCoy feud of Civil War-era fame. The highway also offers hunting, fishing, hiking and camping at Fishtrap Lake State Park, and plenty of unique places to stop such as Stopover, Huddy, Coal Run Village and Majestic.



Whitewater kayaking is a popular outdoor sport on the Russell Fork River in Pike County.

Civil engineers and history buffs may be impressed with the Pikeville cut-through project that transformed the town from its narrow horseshoe-shape, creating new

## Life on the Hatfield-McCoy Trail

It's almost inconceivable that it all started over the ownership of a pig. But one of the most infamous feuds of all time – the 19th-century spat between the Hatfields and the McCoys – has captured the imagination of the nation and, indeed, the world, fostering an image of two clans taking pot shots at each other from the mountaintops of Pike County.

Bad blood between the clans had its roots in the Civil War, when Devil Anse Hatfield, leader of a group known as the Logan Wildcats, had a wounded Union soldier named Asa Harmon McCoy shot for his betrayal of the southern cause. The dispute over the ownership of a prized hog eventually led to an all-out war between the families between 1880 and 1882, culminating in the shooting of three McCoys returned to Kentucky from West Virginia by Devil Anse Hatfield in revenge for the death of Ellison Hatfield.

"It all happened here, in Pike County," said Phyllis Hunt, director of Pike County Tourism. "Traditionally, the Hatfields were mostly from West Virginia and the McCoys were in Pike County. But today you will see both names all over the region." And besides the family names, they left a legacy that has been for many years a fascination for visitors coming to the region.

"We do have an audio tape for a driving tour people can take," Hunt said. "Visitors can see Courthouse Square, where the Hatfield and McCoy trial was held. They can see the site of the last hanging in Pike County, over the killing of a McCoy. We have the old cemetery where five of the McCoy family members are buried, as are veterans from the French and Indian War and the Civil War."

Visitors taking the driving tour get a sense of the remote nature of the days when the feud was at its height, and at the same time they can enjoy the scenic drive through the winding byways of the eastern stretches of Pike County that make up the majority of the area where the feud took place.

Hunt noted that in the feud's waning days, Randolph McCoy and his wife, Sarah, moved away from the Tug River valley to Pikeville to get away from the Hatfields altogether. The McCoy house, at the corner of Main Street and Scott Ave., is one of about 10 prominent stops on the Hatfield-McCoy Feud tour.

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- Kayaking
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- Fishtrap Lake
- Breaks Interstate Park
- Pine Mountain Trail State Park

### Festivals & Events

- Hillbilly Days - April
- Apple Blossom Festival - May
- Heritage Days - Majestic - May
- Memorial Day Gospel Sing - May
- Mountain Top Lights - Nov. - Dec.

### Mountain Heritage

- Artist's Collaborative Theatre
- Dills Cemetery
- Pikeville Cut-Through
- Hatfield-McCoy Feud Driving Tour
- Historic Stone Coal Camp
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The beautiful and rugged Breaks Interstate Park is a popular destination for tourists from all across the southeast.

highway access and leveling land that has been used for commercial and public purposes.

One fascinating stop about 15 minutes outside Pikeville off U.S. 119 is the old village of Stone, a planned coal-company town that at one time was owned by automobile magnate Henry Ford. Ford, concerned about his assembly plants' access to reliable energy sources, decided that his best hedge against supply problems was to go right to the source: he purchased the town of Stone in 1924 from Pond Creek Mining Company, renamed the firm the Fordson Coal Company and added three headquarters buildings to the community that housed the company offices, a theater, YMCA, and company store.

Today, the Fordson buildings are being restored by a group that also offers tours. Many of the houses for workers and managers in the village's "camps" still are standing, and the magnificent two-story home where Ford stayed while visiting his coal company – complete with servants quarters – sits prominently at one end of the village.



**Franklin D. Justice, II is Mayor of Pikeville.**

**Schooled as a veteranarian, Mayor Justice has business interests in coal, restaurants and retail in Pike County.**

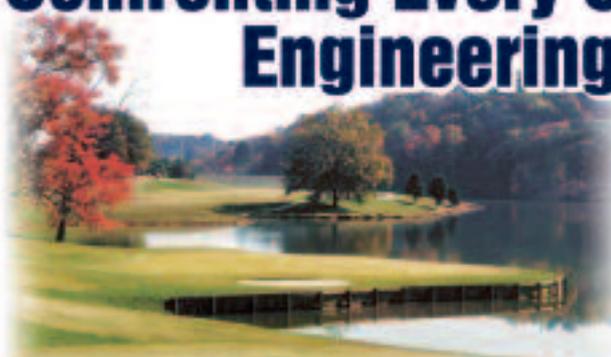
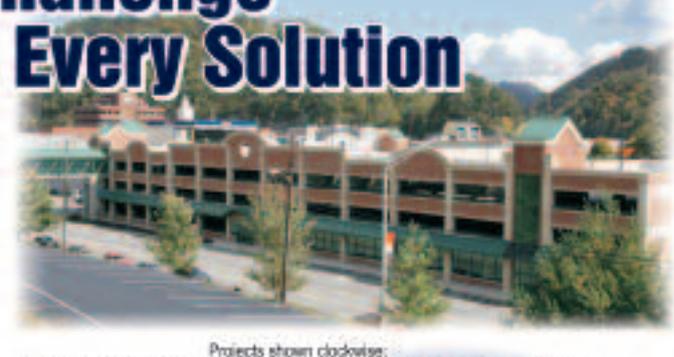
Pikeville College, with its intercollegiate sports programs and an inherent draw for students and parents from outside the immediate surroundings, also serves as a tourism magnet, pumping money into local coffers as people dine, travel, shop and browse the area.

To meet the demands of an expected influx of visitors in the near future, particularly in light of the October grand opening of the Eastern Kentucky Expo Center, city and county planners have had their sleeves rolled up and are working to add more hotel rooms to the city, including a new Hampton Inn and Holiday Inn Express.

"There is plenty of collaboration on tourism," White noted, adding that joint projects currently under way include an anticipated recreational vehicle park that will take advantage of visitors traveling into town on

one of three major highways that intersect in the heart of Pike County. "I think that things are falling into place with tourism. We're just now beginning to see a lot of the benefits of the planning that's been going on throughout the community." ■

# Confronting Every Challenge Engineering Every Solution

Projects shown clockwise:  
Clear Creek Golf Club, Bristol, Tennessee; Pikeville Parking Garage, Pikeville, KY;  
Limestone Mine and Slurry Storage, Eastern KY

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Crowds stream into the Eastern Kentucky Expo Center on October 16th to see the popular comedian "Larry the Cable Guy", the first public performance held in the new building.

## The Best of What's Around

Pikeville's expo center is positioned as Eastern Kentucky's premier venue

The notices read like a who's who of entertainment: First it was Larry the Cable Guy, then Paul Shafer Motorsports Monster Truck Fest, followed by the Broncs and Bulls World Challenge Rodeo. And that's all within a month of the grand opening of the Eastern Kentucky Expo

Center, a 126,000-square-foot entertainment and convention facility that is capped with a nearly 25,000-square-foot floor and concert seating for 7,000. The facility has been touted as the premier entertainment venue for Eastern Kentucky and this corner of a tristate market that includes Virginia and West Virginia.

The Expo Center is going to attract "souvenir shops, antique dealers, things that gear to our heritage," said Pikeville city manager Donovan Blackburn. "This is the kind of thing that is going to bring more and more people downtown, and that in turn is going to get more restaurants in and additional service-type facilities."



**Donovan Blackburn is City Manager, a position that has significant administrative authority in Pikeville.**

With access into Pikeville made even easier with the completion of road projects such as the U.S. 119 four-lane highway to Charleston, W.V., the Expo Center will benefit even further from its reach to a much larger population base to support the events there, said Kitty White, Executive Director of the Pike County Chamber of Commerce.

"The overall effect of the Expo Center is going to be very, very good," she said. ■

## *Proud to serve Pikeville and Pike County*

*Kentucky Power is pleased to be part of the progress in Pikeville and Pike County. The spirit of the community is energizing and we salute the leaders, citizens, educators and businesses who make the area a great place to live and work.*



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**Pike County is the leading coal producing county in Kentucky, with over 33 million tons mined annually.**

years ago, prices were low enough that coal production had been declining for decades.

“With the price of coal staying steady at about \$23 per ton for all those years, you had companies that still had to deal with rising insurance costs, workers’ comp, and goods and materials. Everything went up while the price remained flat.”

With coal selling at \$60 per ton today, mining is back on track. But Gooch noted that the biggest challenge to the industry is finding trainable employees.

“If you look at one of these mines today, you’ll discover that this isn’t your daddy’s coal mine,” Gooch said. “With the safety and technological advancements in place, the reclamation practices in Pike County where (the landscapes surrounding) surface mines are beautifully restored, you’ll see this is an industry that really has changed.”

Current wages for miners in Kentucky average \$45,000 a year. ■

# Coal’s Comeback

New mining methods and demand are refueling the coal industry

The Hollywood image of black-faced coal miners emerging from dingy underground mines with metal lunch buckets in hand is as outdated as the Edsel, especially in Pike County. There, modern coal recovery methods and near-record prices have renewed demand for Eastern Kentucky’s most valuable asset.

“The effects of coal mining in Pike County have changed from what it was 40 years ago,” said David Gooch, president of Pikeville-based Coal Operators and Associates. “A much larger segment of the population was employed in mining, surface mining was just in its infancy,

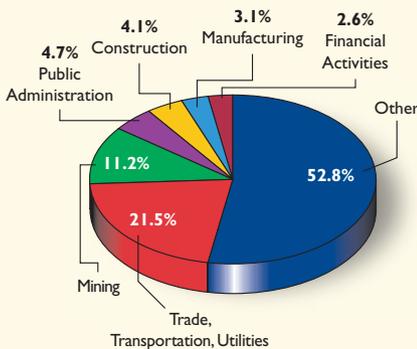
and coal was the single-largest employer in Pike County.” Mining is still a major employer in the county.

A historical comparison of statewide coal production provides a glimpse of how productivity has increased over the years. Kentucky produced just over 60 million tons of bituminous coal in 1960, with nearly 46 million tons coming from Eastern Kentucky, according to Kentucky Coal Association data. In 2002, overall production rose to almost 132 million tons statewide, and almost 33 million tons come from Pike County’s underground and surface mining operations.

All that coal translates into a lot of money. In Pike County alone, more than 4,100 people were employed directly in the mining industry in 2002, generating \$190 million in mining wages. The Kentucky Coal Association reported that mining and related industries represented almost 28 percent of wages generated in the county for that year. In addition, coal severance taxes – the taxes charged on coal that is mined and sold – generated nearly \$142 million in tax revenue for Kentucky in 2002, almost \$42 million from Pike County Coal. Coal taxes returned to Pike County for fiscal year 2002 totaled more than \$2.5 million from the \$121 million worth of coal processed.

Gooch noted that the ebb and flow of coal prices have been reflected in the region’s industry, where until about three

**Pike County Employment by Major Industry (2004)**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

## Natural Gas Is Booming, Too

Where there’s coal, there’s natural gas. That fact makes Eastern Kentucky, especially Pike County, one of the leading natural gas producers in the state.

A series of events – including the destruction in the Gulf Coast from hurricanes Katrina and Rita – pushed the price of natural gas to all-time records in 2005. That has bolstered an already profitable segment of the energy industry in Pike County, according to Jerry Kanney, general partner with Interstate Natural Gas Company, one of the region’s leading natural gas operators.

Kanney said that, as with coal companies, natural gas producers have pumped millions of dollars back into the local economy. He estimated that \$4 million in severance taxes was paid to Pike County last year. With the significant royalties paid out to land owners – Kanney estimated that to be about \$10 million per year in Pike County alone – natural gas companies play important roles in maintaining the region’s economic health.

“I’m supportive of clean coal technology,” Kanney said. “But natural gas is inherently a clean-burning fuel, and I feel that natural gas worldwide will continue to meet a growing demand.”

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**INTERSTATE NATURAL**  
  
**GAS COMPANY**



Dennis  
Rohrer

Jerry  
Kanney

Interstate Natural Gas Company has experienced tremendous growth in the past 16 years. The company has drilled and purchased over 300 wells in Eastern Kentucky and West Virginia, and look forward to drilling between 30 and 50 wells this year alone.

Interstate Natural Gas Company is very involved in community organizations such as the Pikeville Area Family YMCA, Rotary Club, Pike, Floyd, and Tug Valley Chambers of Commerce, Special Olympics, Habitat for Humanity, Pikeville College, Big Sandy Community and Technical College Foundation, Kentucky Oil & Gas Association, and the Society of Petroleum Engineers.

The owners have won numerous awards for their business acumen and community involvement, including the Excellence in Entrepreneurship Award from Eastern Kentucky University in 2004, Pike County Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year in 2004, and the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2005 for Construction in Kentucky and South Central Ohio.

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**Pikeville, Kentucky**



Courtesy of Pikeville Medical Center

Founded in 1924, the Pikeville Medical Center has become the preeminent medical facility in eastern Kentucky and southwest West Virginia and Virginia.

## Life in a Medical Hub

The Pikeville Medical Center has become an economic engine of growing importance

One of the most important developments in Pikeville has been the continued growth in health care, led by the Pikeville Medical Center. Founded in 1924 as a 50-bed institution, the hospital grew through acquisition and expansion.

The first major expansion consisted of an impressive eight-story tower. The new facility opened its doors to its first patient on Christmas Eve, 1971. In time, the building was dedicated to a former president of the hospital's board of directors, William Ernest Elliott, Sr. The hospital continued to be known for its commitment to providing excellent health care in a comfortable, friendly and professional environment.

In 1996, Pikeville Medical Center opened the Leonard Lawson Cancer Center to provide cancer patients with top-notch care in an environment that caters to the cancer patient's special needs locally, instead of making patients trek to other regional care facilities. The Lawson Cancer Center remains the only comprehensive cancer center in Eastern Kentucky.

In 1998, the hospital broke ground for a new 11-story, \$75 million expansion proj-

ect. The new May Tower – named for Pikeville Medical Center former CEO and current president of the board Walter May – was the largest construction project in Eastern Kentucky and was dedicated on Dec. 18, 2000.

“We set out to build this hospital not to be just as good as any other hospital around, but to be better,” May explained about the most recent expansion process. “We traveled to San Antonio, Dallas, New Orleans and Las Vegas before we settled on an architect and how we wanted to build” the wing.

With 1,400 dedicated employees, “our employees and medical staff have bought into this concept of a regional medical center in Pikeville,” May said. “Health care has become the most important economic engine in Pike County, and we will continue to see that grow.”

An important factor for the growth of the health care sector in Pikeville is

the recent arrival of the Pikeville College School of Osteopathic Medicine. Pikeville Medical Center has become the single most important clinical teaching center for the medical school, creating a collaborative environment where patient, student and staff all benefit. The addition of the new wing and the addition of the medical school in town have helped draw the best and brightest in medicine to Pikeville.

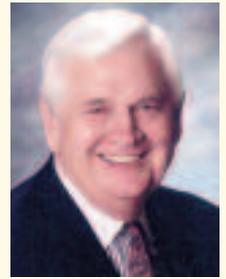
“All we have to do is get these doctors to come visit here,” May said of recruitment visits by physicians. “Once they see the hospital and how beautiful it is here in Pikeville, they love the place and they move here.”

May said Pikeville Medical

Center continues to work hard to be at the center of excellence in the medical field, adding the best in new technologies as they become available and insuring the latest in diagnostic equipment is continually installed.

Serving a population in a region that includes Pike County, Eastern Kentucky and parts of Virginia and West Virginia, May said Pikeville Medical Center will continue to grow and new services will continue to be added.

“There seems to be no limit to what we can do here,” May said. “Technology is going to change things, but in medicine, people will be sick, and somebody has to care for them. That’s why we are here and why we will continue to be the health care leader in the region for years to come.” ■



**Walter May is president of the board of directors of the Pikeville Medical Center. A business leader and former mayor of Pikeville, Mr. May has served on the hospital board for over 40 years and is considered by many to be the driving force behind the Pikeville Medical Center's growth.**



**Built in 1996, the Leonard Lawson Cancer Center at Pikeville Medical Center offers the latest technology in diagnostic procedures, treatment, clinical trials, and patient and family support services.**



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Providing the services  
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At Pikeville Medical Center,  
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We put quality in everything we do and treat our patients with the respect they deserve. To accomplish this, we have assembled an outstanding team of doctors, nurses and support staff while purchasing some of today's most innovative technology. Everything from an ONCOR™ Linear Accelerator for the treatment of cancer to state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment including a 16-slice CT Scanner and a FONAR Stand-Up™ MRI.

To find out more about Pikeville Medical Center and the services we provide, visit our website or call (606) 218-3500.

Services at PMC:

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- Leonard Lawson Cancer Center
- Emergency Department
- MedFlight of East Kentucky
- Family Practice Clinic
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