



GRANT COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Grant County is home to smiling faces
and abundant natural beauty.

Located in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia, Grant County is surrounded by natural beauty; it is a place where time seems to stand still, and everyone stops to say hello.

The county was created on Feb. 14, 1866, from the conflict of the Civil War; it was formed from parts of neighboring Hardy County. Fort Mulligan, an earthen fort used during the war, still overlooks the county seat of Petersburg today. Grant County was given its name after our nation's 18th president, Ulysses Simpson Grant, for the part he played in the war. Fort Mulligan and the county's Civil War Trail attract Civil War enthusiasts nationwide.

The choosing of the county seat and courthouse location was more difficult than the decision regarding the county's name. A temporary courthouse, located a half-mile west of Maysville, was used for the first circuit court meeting after the county was formed on April 9, 1866. This courthouse was used until a more permanent building was constructed in Maysville in October 1867. Maysville remained the county seat until the year 1872, when the records were moved to Petersburg by popular vote. At that time, Mt. Zion Presbyterian Church served as a temporary courthouse. It remained the courthouse from April 25, 1872, to Feb. 19, 1879.

In February 1876, a site was chosen for the county's new courthouse on a lot donated by George Harness. The deed was dated July 3, 1878, for one acre of land. The Grant County Courthouse was built from 1878-79, and it would serve as the county's courthouse for around 100 years. The two-story Neocolonial-style building opened for use on Feb. 19, 1879.

The old courthouse in Maysville was sold to the Board of Education in 1879 for \$250; however, the battle between Maysville and Petersburg for the county seat was not over yet.

In August 1895, an election was held, and Maysville was once again declared the county seat. On Sept. 2, 1895, the county records were moved back to Maysville. They remained there until a bill was presented by the county

Article and photography by Barbara High



The South Branch of the Potomac River is home to spectacular views of plantlife and wildlife, as well as some of the best trout fishing in the region.



Fort Mulligan, located in the valley of the South Branch River and overlooking the Grant County seat of Petersburg, was the site of much troop activity and action during the Civil War.

sheriff on Jan. 13, 1897, requesting that the records be moved back to Petersburg. According to local historian Harold Garber, legend has it that the records were hauled in the back of a wagon, and residents of Petersburg stood along the route, ringing bells in jubilation of their return. Once again Petersburg was the county seat, and the records were back in the town's beautiful courthouse, where they stayed until the closing of the old Grant County Courthouse in the 1970s.

The new Grant County Courthouse, which was built in a more modern style, opened its doors on Sept. 20, 1976. The new courthouse was constructed with technology and convenience in mind and still serves the residents of Grant County today. The old Grant County Courthouse was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on Oct. 26, 1979.

The Grant County community today is as close-knit today as it was in the 1800s, a time when every citizen had the right to express an opinion regarding the county seat and courthouse location. The scenery is breathtaking, with natural wonders like Dolly Sods, the 17,371 acres of wilderness located in the Monongahela National Forest, great for hiking and camping; Smoke Hole Caverns, a cavern system that features the world's longest ribbon stalactite; and the view down the South Branch River, where bald and golden eagles soar above their riverside nests.

Grant County has something for everyone. For the adventurers, the county boasts excellent canoeing, kayaking and rock climbing. The food ranges from fine dining to home-style meals reminiscent of Grandma's Sunday dinners. Landes Art Center regularly hosts art shows, concerts and historical reenactments for residents and visitors, and the West Virginia Theater East boasts amazing local talent. Grant County is the "Home of the Golden Trout"; the county's fish hatchery keeps the streams stocked, and great fishing can be found along the South Branch River.

It's no wonder that residents of Grant County choose to make the county their lifelong home.

"It's a slower pace of life," said attorney Jeff Roth, born and raised in Grant County. "I walk to work, and I know my neighbors. It's a nice place to raise a family."

Petersburg may be a laidback small town, but it is heading toward the future in a big way with the NedPower Mount Storm Wind Project. Co-owners Dominion and Shell WindEnergy Inc. have placed

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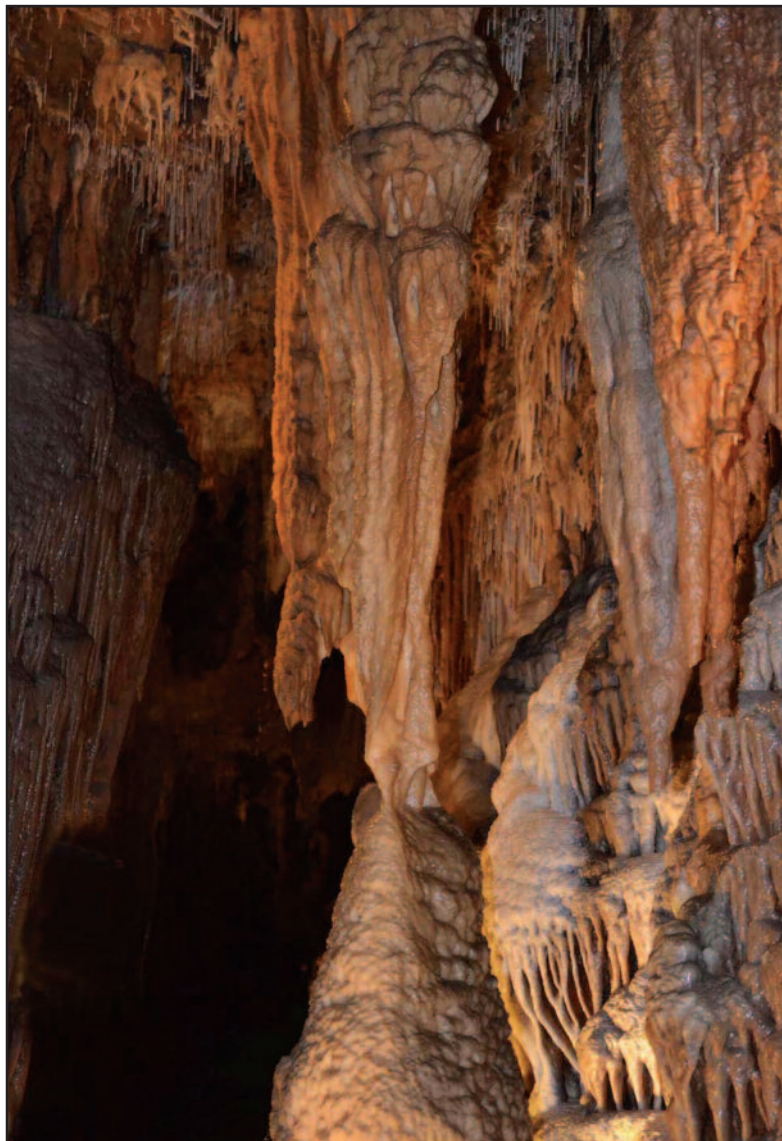
123 wind turbines across the mountains of Grant County; the turbines generate up to 264 megawatts of electricity, enough to serve around 66,000 homes and businesses. With an additional 50 turbines being placed in the near future, the project puts Grant County at the forefront of renewable energy.

Even in spite of its growing population, business development and high-tech future, not too much has changed in Grant County over the years. The most attractive aspect of Grant County has always been its people – people who have time to talk and to lend a helping hand when needed. When you visit Grant County, you’ll see these people, gathered at the park, sitting on a street bench enjoying the day – or catching up with friends outside the Grant County Courthouse. **WVL**

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Grant County is often called “Home of the Golden Trout”; the county’s fish hatchery keeps local streams stocked, and excellent fishing is found along the South Branch River.



Smoke Hole Caverns, a popular Grant County tourist attraction, features the world’s longest ribbon stalactite. The picturesque caverns have been open to the public since the 1940s.