

## **General Information**

Rockbridge County is located in the southern end of the great Valley of Virginia in the western part of Virginia. The county is bounded by the Blue Ridge mountains to the east and the Alleghenies to the west. Lexington is in the geographic center of the county. Buena Vista lies on the eastern edge of Rockbridge County, at the foot of the Blue Ridge.

Washington DC is 150 miles to the northeast, Richmond, Va. is 140 miles to the east, and Roanoke, Va. is 50 miles to our southwest. Interstate 81 bisects the county northeast to southwest. Interstate 64 run concurrent with I-81 from Staunton south to Lexington, where it branches off to the west to Covington, VA and Charleston, WV.

## **News-Gazette General Information**

The News-Gazette, published weekly on Wednesdays, covers Lexington, Buena Vista and Rockbridge County, with an average paid circulation of 7,800. The paper, with predecessor papers dating back to 1801, is the largest paid circulation weekly newspaper in Virginia west of the Blue Ridge. For the years 1997, 2000, 2001 and 2002 The News-Gazette was the top award winner in Virginia Press Association judging of writing, photography and design of all weekly newspapers in its category in the state. In 1994, two News-Gazette writers shared the Best In Show Writing Award for a series on health care in Rockbridge. The News-Gazette has also won excellence awards for writing and design in National Newspaper Association Better Newspaper judging.

The News-Gazette Corp. publishes The Weekender, which is mailed or carrier delivered free to all Rockbridge area homes, with over 15,500 copies delivered every Saturday. The Weekender contains local features, photos and columns, classified and display advertising.

## **Lexington-Rockbridge County Facts**

\* Lexington is home to two nationally-known colleges; Washington and Lee University and Virginia Military Institute.

\* The Virginia Horse Center, one of the finest equine facilities in the country, is located one mile north of Lexington.

\* The Rockbridge area's many historic sites draw increasing numbers of visitors annually. Civil War Generals Robert E. Lee and Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson are buried in Lexington. The Stonewall Jackson House, Lee Chapel, George C. Marshall Museum, VMI Museum, and Natural Bridge are all located in Rockbridge County.

\* Lexington is nationally-known for its downtown restoration and preservation.

## **Demographics and General Information**

### **Rockbridge Area Demographics**

(Note-Rockbridge County figures do not include the Cities of Lexington or Buena Vista.)

	Rockbridge Co.	Lexington	Buena Vista	Virginia
Population, 2001 estimate	20,861	6,864	6,334	7,187,734
Population change, 1990-2000	13.4%	-1.3%	-0.9%	14.4%
High school graduates, age 25+, 2000	71.0%	77.1%	69.0%	81.5%
College graduates, age 25+, 2000	18.7%	42.6%	10.5%	29.5%
Civilian veterans, 2000	14.1%	10.4%	13.4%	15.1%
Home ownership rate, 2000	77.7%	54.9%	70.7%	68.1%
Housing units, 2000	9,550	2,376	2,716	2,904,192
Households, 2000	8,486	2,232	2,547	2,699,173
Persons per household, avg, 2000	2.43	2.06	2.38	2.54
Persons living in same house as in 1995	64.7%	42.0%	59.7%	52.2%
Language other than English spoken at home	3.0%	2.7%	7.7%	11.1%
White people, 2000	95.4%	86.0%	93.6%	72.3%
Black or African-American people, 2000	3.0%	10.4%	4.8%	19.6%
People of other races/ethnicities, 2000	1.6%	3.6%	1.6%	8.1%
People 65 years or older, 2000	15.7%	16.4%	16.3%	11.2%
Median household income, '99 est.	\$36,035	\$28,982	\$32,410	\$46,677
Persons below poverty, '97 est.	12.1%	20.1%	15.4%	11.6%
Private non-farm businesses, 1999	304	446	119	173,550
Private non-farm employment, 1999	4,406	5,674	2,139	2,791,977
Change, private non-farm empl., '90-'99	-1.7%	26.5%	11.1%	20.3%
Retail sales, 2001, (\$1,000)	231,548	203,748	38,009	62,569,924
Workers working at home, 2000	4.6%	5.1%	1.7%	27.5%
Workers traveling more than 45 min. to work	13.2%	4.0%	9.7%	
Housing unit building permits, 2000	219	17	20	48,402
Federal funds and grants, 2000, (\$1,000)	59,693	53,340	30,504	62,708,574
Local govt. employment, FTE, 1997	633	210	242	253,219
Land area, (sq. miles)	600	2	7	39,598

## *News-Gazette Readership*

\* More people read The News-Gazette than read any other newspaper, or listen to any particular radio station in the Rockbridge market.

82% read The News-Gazette  
54% read The Roanoke Times  
53% read the Rockbridge Weekly  
33% listened to WREL radio  
28% listened to public radio

\* Readership by annual household income (figures represent segments of N-G total readership)

less than \$15,000	5%
\$15,000-\$24,999	8%
\$25,000-\$34,999	14%
\$35,000-\$44,999	16%
\$45,000-\$59,999	15%
\$60,000-\$69,999	8%
\$70,000-\$79,999	9%
\$80,000-\$89,999	5%
\$90,000-\$99,999	7%
\$100,000 and up	14%

\* Readership by age (figures represent segments of N-G total readership)

18-24	5%
25-29	7%
30-34	7%
35-39	7%
40-44	16%
45-49	16%
50-54	14%
55-59	11%
60-64	5%
65 and over	9%

### **News-Gazette Readership**

\* 21% of N-G readers consider themselves professionals, 11% are administrative support persons, 10% are managers, 9% are educators.

\* 51% of News-Gazette readers attended some college or have a 4-year degree. 31% have some post-graduate study or hold a post-graduate degree.

\* 38% of News-Gazette reader households have children under 18 living at home.

\* 73% of N-G readers say they read most or all of the newspaper. 21% say they read it cover to cover

\* 60% of N-G subscribers/purchasers keep the paper for more than one day and up to a week past publication date.

\* 76% of N-G readers have read the paper for more than three years, but 7% of readers are new subscribers – less than 6 months.

- On average 2.35 people read each copy of The News-Gazette.