



Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

February 14, 2011

Valentine's Day: A Day of Love and Big Business

PENN STATE HARRISBURG – Valentine's Day is an annual commemoration held on February 14th celebrating love and affection. One legend contends that Valentine's Day originated to commemorate the anniversary of the death of St. Valentine, a Roman clergyman who was executed for secretly marrying couples in defiance of the emperor. According to another, the holiday began as a Roman fertility festival. Regardless of its origins, Valentine's Day provides a terrific opportunity to express affection for that special someone.

Valentine's Day is an ideal time to indulge in a romantic getaway. The Pocono Mountains, which cover a four county region in Northeastern Pennsylvania, offer an exciting vacation destination for love birds. The Poconos are recognized by many to be the "Honeymoon Capital of the World" thanks in large part to the publicity that followed a 1963 *Life Magazine* photo of Cove Haven Resort's famous heart-shaped tub. Each year thousands of honeymooners enjoy the beautiful Pocono Mountains.

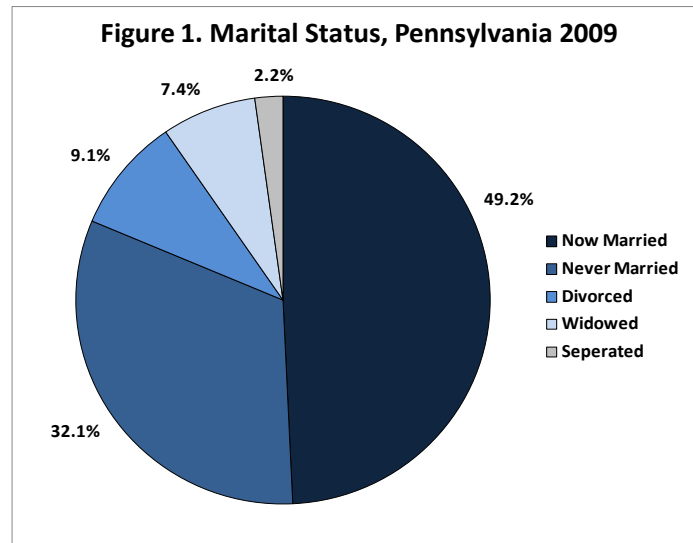
The Perfect Gift

Pennsylvanians celebrating the holiday will have no problem finding the perfect Valentine's Day gift, especially if your sweetie has a sweet tooth. Pennsylvania ranked second in the nation in with 115 manufacturing establishments that produce chocolate and cocoa products in 2008, according to the 2008 County Business Patterns. The Commonwealth's chocolate and cocoa products manufacturing establishments employed 8,179 people and had an annual payroll of \$344.5 million. Pairing those delicious chocolates with a local wine is a great way to enjoy a romantic evening. In 2008, Pennsylvania was home to 58 wineries, which employed 395 people, according to the 2008 County Business Patterns. Bucks County (5) led all Pennsylvania counties in the number of wineries, followed by Berks and Lancaster Counties (4).

If the candy and wine are not enough to win her heart, perhaps a beautiful bracelet or a pair of sparkling earrings will do the trick. Pennsylvania had 1,185 jewelry stores in 2007, according to the 2007 Economic Census. The Commonwealth's jewelry stores grossed nearly 1.1 billion in sales in 2007, many which may have taken place over the Valentine's Day holiday. Some of the merchandise at these locations could well have been produced at one of the state's 47 jewelry manufacturing establishments.

Love and Marriage

The song “Love and Marriage” was the popular theme song for the TV sitcom *Married... with Children*, which featured the dysfunctional marriage of Al and Peggy Bundy. One can only hope the more than 5 million Pennsylvanians currently married are making a better go of it. Nearly half (49.2 percent) of Pennsylvanians age 15 or older were married in 2009, while roughly a third (32.1 percent) had yet to take the plunge (see Figure 1). The remaining Pennsylvania’s age 15 and older were separated (2.2 percent), divorced (9.1 percent) or widowed (7.4 percent), according to the 2009 American Community Survey.



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2009 American Community Survey

The median age at first marriage for Pennsylvania women was 27.5 years in 2009, according to the 2009 American Community Survey. Men waited almost two more years before their first marriage, saying “I do” at 29.3 years. Some marriages end before the wedding cake is finished, while others last forever: the median duration of a current marriage in Pennsylvania was 21.2 years in 2009.

The Pennsylvania State Data Center is the commonwealth’s expert in demographics and Census datasets. To request custom American Community Survey data tables or maps, contact the Pennsylvania State Data Center at 717.772.2710.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey; U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 County Business Patterns; U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 Economic Census.

The Pennsylvania State Data Center is the commonwealth’s official source for population and economic statistics. It is based at Penn State Harrisburg’s Institute of State and Regional Affairs. The Pennsylvania State Data Center is part of the U.S. Census Bureau’s National State Data Center Program.

Editors: For additional data, contact the Pennsylvania State Data Center’s State Capital Office at 717.772.2710 or for faculty comment on this topic, contact Penn State Harrisburg’s Public Information Office at 717.948.6029.