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## Dr. L. Volunteer Dentist West Virginia

West  
Virginia

Local Hero: Dr. L.

Clay may be one of West Virginia's poorer counties, but for Dr. L., it's almost heaven. We don't have a stoplight in the entire county," he says, "and there are bears, deer and wild turkeys. We also have wonderful, honest people." Dr. L., who has been in practice in the town of Clay for almost 32 years, has volunteered for DDS for the last four years. (His daughter Lydia, a senior student in dental school, also worked for DDS under her father's supervision during her rotation.) One of his special DDS patients was a coal-truck driver who had lost an arm. When the man entered the dental office, the doctor became the first person ever to reach out and shake his thumb. The client went on to make a number of four-hour round trips to Dr. L.'s office for multiple extractions and to have dentures fitted. At the conclusion of his treatment, he wrote a letter saying that it was "a five-star experience," and that the personal attention made him feel like a real person again. For Dr. L., dedication and compassion are integral parts of the dental profession. He says, "I'm 57 in June and I can't imagine retiring from dentistry. There's more to life than money. Volunteering makes me feel better as a person."