

## 2026 Committee

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## FEBRUARY 2026 ISSUE

### President's Message

#### Happy Valentines Day and Presidents Day

I hope you survived the blizzard of January 25 and are looking ahead to milder weather. Michelle and I just hunkered down and hoped for the best. It was a good time for a good book. Looking ahead, we will celebrate Presidents Day (and my 88<sup>th</sup> birthday) on February 16 with a tour of the Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Virginia. See the announcement in this newsletter. Say a prayer for good weather.

#### Financial Report

Gary McDowell, our treasurer and registrar, provided us with the 2025 financial report included in this newsletter. The club ended the year just about where we started. Some trips made a little money, and some lost a little, but we maintained a comfortable balance in our account. No one in the club receives any money for their volunteer services and everyone pays the registration fee for our trips. Thank you everyone for keeping our club strong.

#### Only one trip in January

Jason Powell, owner of Shenandoah Shuttle, took us on a wonderful tour of three Loudoun County wineries for our Winter Mystery Wine Tour on a cold and blustery day. Read the trip report in this issue.

#### Registering for Travel Club Trips

If you have any trouble registering for our trips the Lodge Concierge should be able to help you. This includes club members who are not MTL members and family and friends travelling with a club member. Or send me an email with questions. We don't post our trips on MTL Events for registration until they have been announced in our newsletter. Your registration is not confirmed until our treasurer has your check.

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Next Meeting**  
**Potluck Lunch**  
**February 9, 2026**  
**Rachel's Kitchen**  
**11:30 a.m.**

#### Trip Ideas for 2026 Updated

We try to project our trips for the year on our Trip Ideas page to help you plan. Trip details or cancellations will be included in newsletters throughout the year. See our Trip Ideas for 2026 in this issue. If you have any suggestions, especially if you can help in the planning, please send them to me with as much information as you can.

We will include Sam Kerns' Pennsylvania Disasters and Railroads overnight trip on October 13 and 14 using a Varsity motor coach. Watch for future details. The Men's Bible Group is working on a trip to the Museum of the Bible to see the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit at the beginning of Holy Week. And we have a Mystery Brewery Tour scheduled for St. Patrick's Day. Looking forward to April, we will have a Spring Wine Tour and an overnight tour of the Blue Ridge area, including Natural Bridge,

James River recreation area, Blue Ridge Parkway, Peaks of Otter with an overnight at the lodge, Smith Mountain Lake lunch cruise on the Virginia Dare, tour of Jefferson's Poplar Forest, and dinner at Devils Backbone Basecamp. This is a revision of an earlier concept. Price for 20 travelers is around \$400 each including lodging but excluding meals. Watch the trip announcements in the newsletter and on MTL Events.

### Shenandoah Tours

We will return to using Shenandoah Tours for some of our trips. See the selection of trips that Doc Holiday made in this issue. Their staff gave us an excellent presentation on their trips at our January meeting. They will be making a public presentation in March with door prizes and discounts in the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley. Watch for the announcement or check the catalog they handed out at our meeting. <https://www.shenandoahtours.com>

### February 9 Meeting

For our February 9th potluck lunch meeting we will focus on foreign travel with Elizabeth Korn talking to us about Crystal Cruises, and Colleen Cornwell about organizing at least two foreign trips per year for the club. In the afternoon MTL will make a presentation in the event center on a trip to Spain and Portugal. Stay warm and safe!

**George Darnell, President**

**703-850-2132**

**[darnellgd@hotmail.com](mailto:darnellgd@hotmail.com)**



# 2026 Financial Report

*Prepared by Gary McDowell, Treasurer*

Trip Number	Event/item	Credit	Debit	Balance
	Starting Balance 01/01/25			\$5,787.09
1	Quantico	\$960.00		\$6,747.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$900.00	\$5,847.09
2	St Patrick's day Tour	\$1,440.00		\$7,287.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$1,000.00	\$6,287.09
3	Cherry Blooom Cruise	\$4,000.00		\$10,287.09
	George Darnell Cruise Depsoit		\$2,793.00	\$7,494.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$1,200.00	\$6,294.09
4	Balls Bluff Battlefield Tour	\$720.00		\$7,014.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$720.00	\$6,294.09
5	Luray & Shenandoah Cabl'vems Tour	\$960.00		\$7,254.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$1,000.00	\$6,254.09
6	Monticello	\$1,800.00		\$8,054.09
	George Darnell Monticello tickets		\$756.00	\$7,298.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$1,200.00	\$6,098.09
7	Fredericksburg	\$1,350.00		\$7,448.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$1,100.00	\$6,348.09
8	Fauquier City Wine Tour	\$900.00		\$7,248.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$960.00	\$6,288.09
9	Summer Brewery Tour	\$1,020.00		\$7,308.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$900.00	\$6,408.09
10	Summer Winey Tour	\$960.00		\$7,368.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$860.00	\$6,508.09
11	PA Disaster & Railroads Tour	\$3,325.00		\$9,833.09
	Refunds Trip Cancelled		\$3,325.00	\$6,508.09
12	Deep Creek	\$900.00		\$7,408.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$1,100.00	\$6,308.09
15	Oktoberfest	\$1,020.00		\$7,328.09
	Oktoberfest- Shenandoah Shuttles		\$900.00	\$6,428.09
16	Potomac Eagle	\$3,900.00		\$10,328.09
	George Darnell Deposit		\$2,455.00	\$7,873.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$1,200.00	\$6,673.09
17	Fall Colors 1	\$900.00		\$7,573.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$1,100.00	\$6,473.09
18	Fall Colors 2	\$1,080.00		\$7,553.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$1,100.00	\$6,453.09
19	Outlet Mall Shopping Spree	\$660.00		\$7,113.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$900.00	\$6,213.09
20	Candlelight Christmas at Mt Vernon	\$2,400.00		\$8,613.09
	James Hoiday Tickets to Mt Vernon		\$984.00	\$7,629.09
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$1,280.00	\$6,349.09
21	Bull Run Winery	\$1,725.00		\$8,074.09
	George Darnell fee for park entrance		\$79.93	\$7,994.16
	Shenandoah Shuttles		\$975.00	\$7,019.16
22	Antietam Battlefield Grand Illumination			\$7,019.16
	Shenandoah Shuttles			\$7,019.16
	Holiday Luncheon	\$850.00		\$7,869.16
	Shenandoah Lodge		\$1,815.16	\$6,054.00
	Go Daddy		\$42.16	\$6,011.84
	Coffee Shenandoah Club 5/12/25 meeting		\$264.60	\$5,747.24
	Ending Balance 01/02/26			\$5,747.24

## Mystery Winter Wine Tour Trio Report

### George Darnell

January 15, 2026

Fourteen adventurous travelers gathered in the Lodge by the fireplace to check in before boarding a Shenandoah Shuttle driven by the owner Jason Powell. Jason had arranged a tour of three wineries at our request, but we didn't know what they were until we got there. So, it was a "mystery wine tour." Once we were seated Jason passed out sheets with clues about the wineries we would visit. I don't think anyone guessed all three. It was a cold day, and we were glad that the bus had a good heater.



Jason drove through Berryville to Route 7 toward Loudoun County. That seemed to rule out any of the wineries off Route 50. Before reaching Leesburg, we turned South from Rt 7 and drove through countryside with modest houses and upscale estates to a rutted gravel road leading to our first winery: Stone Tower. It has two gates and after trying gate 1, Jason was directed to gate 2. The staff were expecting us and directed us to a room with a fireplace and sat us at two long tables set for a wine tasting. Some of us ordered food to share

before selecting our wines or joining in a seated wine tasting. We had plenty of time to enjoy our wine, food, and conversation before boarding the bus.



Our second stop was Breaux Vineyard, on the other end of the county near Hillsborough. The wind was blowing cold as we walked from the bus to the tasting room. Breaux is a large place with a long tasting bar and ample seating. There were not many other



patrons and certainly no one on the scenic patio facing the vineyard and mountains, where some of us sat during an earlier summer visit. Some of us tried tastings at the bar while others took a flight or glass to a comfortable seating area by a fireplace. We lingered with our selections while swapping stories of life in Lake Frederick. Then it was back on the bus for our last stop.

From Hillsborough we traveled east to Lovettsville and Creak's Edge Winery. It sits on a small hill overlooking the parking lot. We climbed a few steps to the entrance beside a large silo. The inside was warm and friendly with large wooden beams like Region's 117. We gathered on couches and club chairs around a roaring wood fireplace to enjoy our wine and our stories. All too soon it was time to leave and head back home.

Jason managed to get us back to Rt 7 heading home to Lake Frederick, I think he knows every road in the Valley and Northern Virginia. We were back at the Lodge about 6:30, tipped and thanked Jason for an enjoyable winter day, and said our goodbyes. Another fun trip!



## National Museum of the Marine Corps Tour - February 16, 2026

The Lake Frederick Travel Club is repeating a tour of the National Marine Corps Museum near Quantico, Virginia, that we did in 2025 to celebrate Presidents Day. It is a great place for people of all ages, but especially for folks with an interest in history and the role of our veterans in American history. It takes at least four hours for a basic self-guided tour. Travel time with loading and unloading is about two hours. Food is available at the museum for lunch. Visitors may not bring anything into the museum that would not be allowed on a commercial air flight. Wheelchairs are available onsite.



They do not schedule docent-led “guided tours” of the Museum for groups. The exhibits have been designed as immersive experiences involving sights, sounds, motion and temperature changes and other interactive surprises that are revealed as the visitor proceeds on a self-paced journey of discovery.

There are trained volunteers stationed at posts throughout the Museum to answer questions and provide additional information about their area.

There is also an immersive film of the Marine Corps experience shown every hour for \$9.00.

### Schedule:

7:15a.m.	Check in at Lodge
7:30	Bus departs
9:30	Arrive Museum and begin tour
12:00 p.m.	Lunch on your own at the Museum
1:00	Resume tour on your own
4:00	Conclude tour and board bus
6:00	Arrive Lodge

**The minimum for this trip is 14 and maximum is 30.**

Registration is \$60.00 for transportation. Lunch and driver tip are not included.

Please register on MTL Events and drop off your registration check, made payable to “**Lake Frederick Travel Club**” with your contact information and the date of the trip at the lodge concierge desk no later than **February 10, 2026**.

## St. Patrick's Day Mystery Brewery Tour March 17, 2026



What better way to celebrate Saint Patrick's Day than by visiting a local modern-day brew pub. Our area is home to many popular breweries. For this trip we asked our bus company, Shenandoah Shuttle, to surprise us by selecting three not far from Lake Frederick. Which ones will they choose? Can they find three open on a Tuesday? Will they be some of our favorites or new to us? Let's find out.

### Schedule:

- 11:00 a.m. Check in at Lodge
- 11:15 Leave Lodge.
- 6:00 p.m. Arrive Lodge

**Minimum for this trip is 14 and maximum is 24.**

Registration is \$60 for transportation. Food, drinks, and driver tip are not included.

Please register on MTL Events and drop off your registration check, made payable to "Lake Frederick Travel Club" with your contact information and the date of the trip at the lodge concierge desk no later than **March 3, 2026.**



## TRIP IDEAS 2026, VERSION 6

### **FEBRUARY**

- 16--Presidents Da Tout of Quantico Marine Corps Museum

### **MARCH**

- 17--Mystery St. Patricks Pub Crawl
- 31--Museum of the Bible Dead Sea Scrolls Exhibit

### **APRIL**

- 17--Spring Wine Tour
- 27-28--Blue Ridge Spring Odyssey (Overnight at Peaks of Otter)

### **MAY**

- Battles of Fisher's Hill & Cedar Creek
- Monticello, Michie Tavern, & Montpelier

### **JUNE**

- Frontier Heritage Tour
- Summer Wine Tour

### **JULY**

- Trail Ride & Brewery Lunch

### **AUGUST**

- Harpers Ferry Tour

### **SEPTEMBER**

- 16--Gettysburg Tour

### **OCTOBER**

- 13-14--PA Disasters & Railroads Overnight Trip
- Sperryville & Little Washington Tour

### **NOVEMBER**

- Fall Wine Tour

### **DECEMBER**

- Wreaths Across America

## Calendar of Shenandoah Tours Trips for 2026, V6



<p><b>May 5-7</b> – Celebrate Spring at the Biltmore and Grove Park Inn by motor coach. 3 Days/2 Nights/ 4 Meals; \$775 pp double/\$909 single; Deposit \$100 pp. (Page 6) Contact: <a href="https://www.shenandoahtours.com/">https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</a></p>	<p><b>Nov 18-20</b> – Magical Smokey Mountain Christmas by motor coach. 3 Days/2 Nights/3 Meals; \$709 pp double/\$879 single; Deposit \$100 pp. (Page 42) Contact: <a href="https://www.shenandoahtours.com/">https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</a></p>
<p><b>June 8-11</b> – Niagara Falls “Moments to Remember” by motor coach. 4 Days/3 Nights/ 4 Meals; \$1029 pp double/\$1419 single; Deposit \$100 pp. (Page 11) Contact: <a href="https://www.shenandoahtours.com/">https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</a></p>	<p><b>Nov 27-30</b> – A Country Christmas at Opryland Hotel by motor coach. 4 Days/3 Nights/ 2 Meals; \$1499 pp double/\$1999 single; Deposit \$150 pp. (Page 43) Contact: <a href="https://www.shenandoahtours.com/">https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</a></p>
<p><b>Sep 14-17</b> – Niagara Falls “Moments to Remember” by motor coach. 4 Days/3 Nights/ 4 Meals; \$1029 pp double/\$1419 single; Deposit \$100 pp. (Page 11) Contact: <a href="https://www.shenandoahtours.com/">https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</a></p>	<p><b>Dec 1-3</b> – Candlelight Christmas at Biltmore Estate by motor coach. 3 Days/2 Nights/4 Meals; \$979 pp double/\$ 1099 single; Deposit \$100 pp. (Page 44) Contact: <a href="https://www.shenandoahtours.com/">https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</a></p>
<p><b>Sep 23-29</b> – Iceland “Land of Fire and Ice.” 7 Days/6 Nights/7 Meals; \$4618 double/\$6377 single; Deposit \$699 pp. (Page 33) Contact: <a href="https://www.shenandoahtours.com/">https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</a></p>	<p><b>Dec 8-10</b> – Virginia’s Festival of Lights by motor coach. 3 Days/2 Nights/4 Meals; \$819 pp double/\$999 single; Deposit \$100 pp. (Page46) Contact: <a href="https://www.shenandoahtours.com/">https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</a></p>

**NOTE:** For Shenandoah motor coach tours, we need a minimum of 8 people for pick up in Lake Frederick. Otherwise, pick up is at Routes 522 & 50 in the Red Roof Inn parking lot.