

2026 Committee

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Cruise & Foreign Travel

MARCH 2026 ISSUE

President's Message

Sad News for our Club!

The promise of Spring and warmer weather has been dampened by the news that our Treasurer, Gary McDowell, is being treated for Stage Four Kidney Cancer. Gary has been our Treasurer and registrar since February 2020, collecting our checks from the concierge, notifying travelers that they are registered and providing them with our travel waiver and list of travelers, depositing checks in our bank account, writing checks to pay bills, and providing the club with an annual financial report. Gary has resigned to focus on his health, and we pray that the doctors will be able to restore him to full health and we thank him for keeping our club financially sound, we also thank Nanci Bowers for assuming the duties of the Treasurer in addition to her duties as our Newsletter Editor. Nanci has been with the club since its beginning, and she is an active member of our community. We wish her well.

No Trips in February

The Quantico Marine Corps Museum Tour we had scheduled for Presidents Day had to be cancelled because we did not reach our minimum enrollment.

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 do not 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

March 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 has arranged a trip to the Museum of the Bible for a guided tour of the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit at the beginning of Holy Week. See the announcement in this newsletter. The Mystery Brewery Tour scheduled for St. Patrick's Day is in danger of being cancelled if we don't get more registrations.

Looking forward to April, we have a Spring Wine Tour scheduled for the 17th and an overnight tour of the Blue Ridge area, including Natural Bridge, Buchanan Swinging Footbridge over the James River, Peaks of Otter Visitor Center, Bedford D-Day Memorial, overnight at the historic Hotel Roanoke, the Roanoke Star Overlook, 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 \$250 each, not including lodging and meals. See the trip announcements in this newsletter and on MTL Events when lodging arrangements are completed.

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. They will be making a public presentation in March with door prizes and discounts in the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley. Watch the announcement or check the catalog they handed out at our meeting.

March 9 Meeting

For our March 9th potluck lunch meeting, Dan Mortland has a program planned for us. You will have to attend to find out what it is.

See you around campus and at our monthly meeting,

George Darnell, President

703-850-2132

darnellqd@hotmail.com



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.**



Dead Sea Scrolls Exhibit

March 30, 2026



Join the Lake Frederick Bible Groups and Travel Club a guided tour of this exhibit.

Currently, the major traveling exhibition, "[Dead Sea Scrolls: The Exhibition](#)," is at the [Museum of the Bible](#) in Washington, DC, running from late 2025 until September 2026, showcasing ancient biblical texts, artifacts from the Qumran community, and items revealing life during the Second Temple period, offering a unique chance to see these historically significant documents.

While past tours have been at places like the Reagan Library, the Museum of the Bible currently holds the main US exhibition featuring rare scrolls and historical context for early Judaism and Christianity.

We have arranged bus transportation and a group tour of the exhibit at the museum to begin our Passover and Easter celebrations for 2026.

Trip Schedule:

7:15 a.m.	Check in at Lodge
7:30	Bus departs
9:30	Arrive Museum and begin guided tour
1200 Noon	Lunch on your own at the Museum
1:00 p.m.	Resume tour on your own
4:00	Conclude tour and board bus
6:00	Arrive Lodge

The minimum for this trip is 18 and maximum is 30.

Registration is \$90 for transportation, museum admission, and guided tour.

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 March 15, 2026.

Spring Wine Tour

April 17, 2026

For this tour we will visit three wineries in three different counties east of us. Our first stop will be [Potomac Point Winery](#), where Tuscany meets Virginia’s finest wines. As Northern Virginia’s premier winery, their European estate transports you to the enchanting ambiance of Tuscany, where you can indulge in their award-winning wines and savor delectable cuisine. This winery and vineyard is near the Potomac River in Stafford County.



Our second stop will be [Effingham Manor](#) a colonial estate winery in Prince William County. We visited them before Covid and were pleased with their wines and hospitality. They are open 7 days a week from 11AM – 6PM for their friends to enjoy their pastoral setting, and their award-winning wines and take some Effingham history home.

Our last stop will be [Morais Vineyards and Winery](#) in Fauquier County. They are only open Friday to Sunday. So, we scheduled this trip for Friday. The owners are Portuguese and their estate and grounds exude old world charm. Their romantic setting is a popular venue for weddings and receptions.



Schedule:

- 9:15 a.m. Gather in Lodge
- 9:30 Leave Lodge
- 11:00 Arrive Potomac Point
- 12:30 p.m. Leave
- 1:30 Arrive Effingham Manor
- 3:00 Leave
- 3:45 Arrive Morais Vineyard and Winery
- 5:15 Leave
- 6:30 Arrive Lodge

The minimum for this trip is 12 and maximum is 18.

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

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

Blue Ridge Spring Odyssey, April 30 – May 1, 2026

Travelers from around the world visit the Blue Ridge area of America. There is even a quarterly magazine, “Blue Ridge,” that features the attractions of this area. And here it is, right in our own backyard. Fall is a popular time to visit because of the Autumn colors that cover the mountains. But Spring, with Redbuds, Dogwoods, and Mountain Laurel in bloom is a wonderful time for a Blue Ridge adventure.



For this trip we will start with a visit to Natural Bridge, where we can join George Washington and Thomas Jefferson in exploring its majesty. Buchanan, with its small-town charm and famous swinging pedestrian footbridge over the James River will be our next stop. There, we can play Indiana Jones by walking on the bridge and strolling down charming Main Street before having lunch in a local restaurant.

Refreshed, we will head over the mountain to the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford for a guided tour of this amazing site commemorating the Normandy Invasion in WWII. On the way, we will stop at the Peaks of Otter Visitor Center on the Blue Ridge Parkway for some spectacular views. Finally, we will backtrack to the Hotel Roanoke, where we will check in for dinner and lodging. There will be ample time to explore the hotel and area before retiring for the night.



We will have breakfast and checkout on day two before heading to the Roanoke Star for a bird’s eye view of the city.

(Trip Information and Schedule Continued on Next Page)

Blue Ridge Spring Odyssey, April 30 – May 1, 2026, Blue Ridge Spring *(continued)*

Our next adventure is taking a narrated lunch cruise of Smith Mountain Lake on the Virginia Dare.

A tour of Thomas Jefferson’s Poplar Forest near Lynchburg will be our next destination. On the way home we will stop at Devils Backbone Basecamp, where Appalachian Trail hikers are welcome to spend the night. There we will have dinner in the shadow of the Blue Ridge “Devils Backbone. Finally, we will wind our way back to I-81 and Lake Frederick.



Schedule:

Day 1: April 30	Day 2: May 1
7:30 a.m. Bus departs Lodge	9:00 a.m. Depart after Breakfast & Check Out
9:30 a.m. Explore Natural Bridge	9:30 Roanoke Star Overlook
12:00 N Lunch in Buchanan	11:45 Arrive Smith Mountain Lake
2:30 p.m. Peaks of Otter Visitor Center	3:00 p.m. Tour Poplar Fores
3:30 Bedford D-Day Memorial	6:00 Dinner at Devils Backbone
6:00 Hotel Roanoke	10:00 Arrive Lodge

The minimum for this trip is 18 and maximum is 28.

Registration is \$250.00 for transportation, driver’s tip, and entrance fees. Meals and room are not included.

Make your room reservations at the Hotel Roanoke by calling 540-xxx-xxxx using discount code xxxx. Single and double rooms are available for about \$200.00 plus tax.

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 April 1, 2026.

TRIP IDEAS 2026, VERSION 7

MARCH

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

APRIL

- 17—Spring Wine Tour
- 30-May 1—Blue Ridge Spring Odyssey (Overnight at Peaks of Otter)

MAY

- 15—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
- Candlelight Christmas at Mount Vernon

Calendar of Shenandoah Tours Trips for 2026, V7



<p>May 5-7 – 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: https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</p>	<p>Nov 18-20 – Magical Smokey Mountain Christmas by motor coach. 3 Days/2 Nights/3 Meals; \$709 pp double/\$879 single; Deposit \$100 pp. (Page 42) Contact: https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</p>
<p>June 8-11 – 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: https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</p>	<p>Nov 27-30 – 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: https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</p>
<p>Sep 14-17 – 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: https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</p>	<p>Dec 1-3 – 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: https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</p>
<p>Sep 23-29 – Iceland “Land of Fire and Ice.” 7 Days/6 Nights/7 Meals; \$4618 double/\$6377 single; Deposit \$699 pp. (Page 33) Contact: https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</p>	<p>Dec 8-10 – Virginia’s Festival of Lights by motor coach. 3 Days/2 Nights/4 Meals; \$819 pp double/\$999 single; Deposit \$100 pp. (Page 46) Contact: https://www.shenandoahtours.com/</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.