

DAMASCUS TRAVEL CLUB

MEETINGS HELD AT American Legion Hall, 10201 Lewis Drive, Damascus, MD

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 304, DAMASCUS MD 20872

2023-2024 Officers

President	Cathy Burke	202-302-4941	Treasurer	Tammy Monarch	301-253-0044
1 st Vice President	Jim Kemp	301-253-2859	Tour Treasurer	Lois Kemp	301-253-2859
2 nd Vice President	Diane Dantagnan	301-428-0144	Historian	Barbara Morten	301-253-5824
Recording Secretary	Teresa Brown	240-375-0387	Membership Chair	Barbara Walker	301-253-1519
Corresponding Secretary	Judy Cullen	301-972-0137	Chaplain	Dee Nelson	301-740-1555

Refreshments: Cheryl Shores: 240-605-6255

MARCH 2024

from Cathy Burke, President

Happy Spring! (Almost, officially March 19.) Why not rush a good thing... I hope this message finds you well and ready for the rejuvenating vibes that come with the season. I trust you enjoyed a wonderful February. I apologize for my absence; I had planned to be in sunny Florida but we hit a “bump in the road” as they say. We will look forward to our Southern journey next year. I thank all those who have reached out and sent me texts, cards, and prayers during this “bump journey” - no pun intended.

A heartfelt thank you to Jim and Lois Kemp for their efforts in facilitating the February meeting. Your dedication is truly appreciated. I also want to thank anyone who lent a hand to make the February meeting a success. Many folks always offer to lend a hand or provide joy and big smiles for others, and it is really appreciated. This is a great club with a lot of caring people. I'm pleased to say that I plan to attend and am genuinely excited about reconnecting with each of you. Our March gathering on **March 5 at 1 PM** promises to be a delightful one, filled with entertainment. I'm thrilled to share that Diane Dantagnan has confirmed *Rearview Mirror* as our featured entertainment for the meeting. Many of you may remember this dynamic duo from their performance with us a couple of years ago, which had us all singing and dancing with joy.



Looking ahead to April, we will have our Annual **White Elephant** Sale at our April 2 meeting. This is an annual fundraiser for our club and always lots of fun with your donations of next-to-new kitchen items, jewelry, books, glassware, puzzles, dishes, scarves, purses, gloves, decorations, knick-knack items, and more! No clothes, please. There is always something for everyone, and the money raised goes to help with the club bills. The fundraising events throughout our club year also help to keep our membership dues so reasonable

Our Spring Luncheon on May 7 is shaping up to be a great event and the food will be delicious (see the back page). We hope to have entertainment as well. Please get your reservation slip and check in now.

As we move forward, it's time to look ahead to the 2024/2025 club year. We'll be forming a slate of Officers for the Board, and I invite anyone interested in contributing to the nominating committee to contact me. Your involvement is vital, and I look forward to hearing from you. The election of officers is scheduled for the May meeting.

Please remember that our Club year is from July 1 to June 30 of each year. We will start taking renewal forms and membership dues as of May 1 for next year. For new members joining the club, we will accept their forms and fees as of that date for their membership for next year. New members during May and June will be included in the upcoming year without additional fees.

Wishing you all a fantastic spring filled with sunshine, flowers, and plenty of smiling faces! **Happy St. Patrick's Day!** See you soon, *Cathy*

IN THIS ISSUE:

Joys & Concerns.....	2
Quick Glance.....	2
Trips to Review	3
New Trips.....	4
Reservations	insert



JOYS & CONCERNS



- **Happy Birthday** to all our members who were born in March!
- **Happy Anniversary** to couples celebrating their wedding anniversary in March!
- **A belated Happy 55th Anniversary to Barbara and Garry Walker on February 15!**
- **Thoughts and healing prayers** are sent to our own **Cathy Burke** after her recent health issue.
- **Condolences are extended to the family of long-time member Joanne Barnhart who passed away on February 7. Funeral services were held at St. Paul's Church in Damascus on February 20.**

If any of the club members have a special birthday or anniversary to report, we would be happy to publish the event. Just send us an email.

If you know of any sunshine joys or concerns, or have a special birthday or anniversary to report, please contact **Ann Gray** at 301-758-5350 (leave a message if necessary) or email her at **anngray1@gmail.com**

A QUICK GLANCE AT OUR UPCOMING TRIPS AND LUNCHEON

Details of these trips will be printed in this and upcoming newsletters.
If you have any questions, please call the tour guide listed with each trip.

Helen Aument: 240-793-6820 Rusty Embrey: 301-871-7069

Joanne Kessler: 301-253-0335 Casey Koontz: 301-831-6746

March 12-18 Savannah, Charleston, and Myrtle Beach (**Casey**)

April 16 Sweet & Salty in Pennsylvania (**Rusty**)

May 7 Spring Luncheon, Mt. Airy Volunteer Fire Company Reception Hall

NEW! May 15 Mystery Trip (**Joanne**)

June 18-20 Explore Historic Virginia (**Casey**)

NEW! July 16-19 Erie Canal & Niagara Falls (**Joanne**)

NEW! August 11-16 Bar Harbor, Maine (**Casey**)

September 11-20 Ireland (**Joanne**)

NEW! September 30–October 11 Albuquerque, New Mexico (**Casey**)

Note: Please bring your choice of beverage to keep you hydrated on our bus trips.

We do have cups and limited water if someone needs water for medicine. Thanks.

REMEMBER: All money is non-refundable after the final payment FOR ALL TRIPS. This has always been our policy. However, if you cancel after your final payment and someone wants to take your spot, your money will be returned when/if they have paid in full.

CHECK POLICY: Remember the club will not cash your check until we know the trip is a go. This is in case the trip needs to be cancelled and we would therefore need to return your money. Please note your check could be cashed weeks BEFORE your trip once all seats have been reserved and the venue needs to be paid.

PLEASE send ONE CHECK for each activity. DO NOT COMBINE payments for trips and luncheons. It makes it too complicated for our treasurers. **PLEASE DO NOT MAIL ANYTHING TO THE AMERICAN LEGION HALL. OUR MAILING ADDRESS IS P.O. BOX 304, DAMASCUS, MD 20872**

NEW HOPE, PENNSYLVANIA UPDATE

Tour Leader – Joanne Kessler – June 12, 2024

A NOTE FROM JOANNE: I am still gathering details for this fun trip to New Hope. I will have everything ready to publish in our next newsletter. The trip will be a great trip, so mark your calendar!

UPCOMING TRIPS

SOUTHERN CHARM IN THE SPRINGTIME

Savannah, Georgia / Charleston & Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

Tour Leader – Casey Koontz – March 12-18, 2024



Thanks to everyone for getting your final payment made by the deadline! I'm looking forward to our trip to enjoy some early Spring weather while taking in the sights that these wonderful locations have to offer.

Prior to our departure I will email each of you a detailed itinerary and other pertinent information that will be helpful for your planning.

As a reminder, the bus will depart from the Weis Market (26075 Ridge Road, Damascus) at 7 AM. Please allow for morning traffic and arrive at least 15 minutes early to get your seat on the bus. Please, park on the side of the store parallel to Ridge Road.

We have an arrangement with store management to leave our cars for the duration of the trip. Please bring a beverage of your choice to enjoy on the bus. Since this is a longer trip, I plan to have bottled water and some snacks for us to enjoy along the way. Should you have any questions or need to reach me the day of the trip my cell is 301-831-6746.

TRIPS TO REVIEW... *Won't you join us?*

SWEET & SALTY

Herr's Snack Factory (Nottingham PA)

and Turkey Hill Experience (Columbia PA)

Tour Leader – Rusty Embrey – Tuesday, April 16, 2024

Sweet & Salty is a go!! This is the last call to fill the few vacant seats. Details of trip were in the February Newsletter. This is your last chance to sign up for this fun trip. **Reservations must be in by March 5.** **All this fun and all the good eats and treats for \$124** includes the tour of Herr's factory, hot lunch, Turkey Hill Experience & Lab (ice cream!) transportation, driver's tip and all taxes and gratuities.



We leave Weis Market in Damascus at 7:30 AM and return approximately at 6:30 PM. Please plan for traffic and arrive 15 minutes early to board the bus. Park on the side of the store parallel to Ridge Road. We have an arrangement with store management to leave our cars. If you have any questions, please call me at 301-871-7069. My cell on the day of the trip is 202-304-7407.

TRIPS TO REVIEW... *Won't you join us?*

EXPLORE HISTORIC VIRGINIA

Staunton, Lexington, Bedford and Charlottesville, Virginia

Tour Leader – Casey Koontz – June 18-20, 2024

We still have openings for this trip of historic Virginia sites. Don't miss your opportunity to spend a few days visiting many unique places in the beautiful Shenandoah Mountains and western foothills of Virginia's Blue Ridge mountains. On this trip you will visit Staunton and Lexington where we'll have several tours and a carriage ride. You'll also see the moving National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, and on Smith Mountain Lake you'll have lunch and a narrated tour aboard the *Virginia Dare* as well as a stop to visit Thomas Jefferson's private retreat **Poplar Forest**. Our last day in Charlottesville you'll tour **Monticello** and have lunch at the famous Michie Tavern, then tour **Ashlawn**, the home of president James Monroe. See the January and February newsletters for full details.

Price includes two one-night hotel stays, two breakfasts, two lunches and one dinner, all tours, carriage ride, bus transportation, taxes and tips. **Contact Casey Koontz (301) 831-6746 or liontonyjames@comcast.net with any questions.**

Cost of Package – based on 35 paid reservations:

\$709 pp double / \$864 pp single / \$677 pp triple / \$668 pp quad

Deposit of \$150 pp due by April 2, 2024. Final payment due May 7, 2024.

NEW TRIPS TO CONSIDER

NEW!

OUR VERY POPULAR MYSTERY TRIP

Tour Leader – Joanne Kessler – Wednesday, May 15, 2024

Birds will be singing, flowers will be blooming and those who join us will appreciate a beautiful drive somewhere. North? South? Or will it be East or West? There is not much I can tell you about the trip, because it is our ever-popular **MYSTERY TRIP!** Sign up and come along! There is always laughter, good food, maybe an "experience" and always the anticipated surprise! There will be some walking and steps as with most of our trips, but places to sit as well. I will do my best to make your trip a good one!

Price for this trip is \$217 per person. It includes motorcoach, guide, a delicious lunch, entrance and other fees, and driver gratuity. We leave at 7 AM and return by 7 PM. **Deadline for reservations is April 5.** Please complete your reservation form on the insert page in this issue. Any questions call me at 301-253-0335.



NEW!

ERIE CANAL and NIAGARA FALLS

Tour Leader – Joanne Kessler – July 16-19, 2024

This is quite a unique trip as you escape the hot Maryland sun and head north, to begin our adventures in Brockport, New York. This charming historic town will be yours to explore as the hotel is steps from the town. Dinner is included.

After breakfast at your hotel the next morning, we will travel to the **Strong Museum of Play** which is one of the largest history museums in the country and home to the **National Toy Hall of Fame** as well as the **World Video Game Hall of Fame**. Remember pinball machines? Nerf Balls? Easy Bake Ovens? Become a child again and enjoy all these toys from your childhood! We then continue to Fairport NY and enjoy a three-hour lunch cruise on the *Colonial Bell*, along the Erie Canal with lock passage while enjoying a historically narrated cruise. After the cruise you will enjoy a wine tasting at **Casa Larga Winery** which has been producing superior award-winning wines and creating a unique experience for all their guests since 1974. Dinner will be on your own in Rochester.



On our third travel day, after breakfast we will go to Lockport and enjoy a two-hour cruise on another portion of the Erie Canal which is a 19th century marvel of engineering. Since its opening in 1825, the Erie Canal has been enlarged three times to accommodate larger boats and more traffic. Changes were made to the route and to canal structures like docks and bridges each time. Do you know you can still travel by boat from Albany to Buffalo and beyond! The canal includes 524 continuous miles of navigable waterways. It was designated as the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor in 2000.

We will have a white linen buffet lunch at the pier following the canal ride.



the only panoramic view of all three falls, including the American Falls. Then we are off to the **Herschell Carrousel Factory Museum** where over 3,000 hand-carved wooden carousels were built in the early 1900s. Ride the carousels, listen to the Wurlitzers and enjoy some personal memories. Dinner is included at the Hard Rock Café by the falls. After dinner take a short walk to the falls for a spectacular evening illumination and enjoy the beautiful light display.

After lunch we continue to **Niagara Falls** where we will meet a local guide for a tour which includes the **Rainbow Bridge** and the **Floral Clock**. A thrilling ride awaits aboard the famous *Maid of the Mist* where we will hear the crashing water, see the breathtaking views, and soak up every drop of powerful spray from the impressive falls. We then go up the Observation Tower which extends dramatically over Niagara Gorge and offers unobstructed views of the falls as well as the raging whitewater below. The



Observation Tower provides

We will enjoy breakfast at the hotel before leaving for Damascus. There will be a lunch stop and rest stops on our way home with wonderful memories. We will arrive in Damascus at 8:30 PM.

Trip includes motorcoach, three nights accommodations, three breakfasts, two dinners, admission to the Strong Museum, Casa Larga wine tasting, boat trips, Observation Tower, Herschell Carrousel Museum, lunch cruise, Erie Canal cruise, lunch at the pier, all taxes, gratuities, luggage handling, guide's tip and driver gratuity. Any questions, call me at 301-253-0335. Please note the deadlines for your payments.

Cost of Package – \$1,176 pp double / \$1,417 pp single / \$1,097 pp triple / \$1,057 pp quad
Deposit of \$390 pp due by April 20, 2024 / Final payment due May 29, 2024

NEW!

BAR HARBOR, MAINE

**Lighthouse, Lobsters & Seaport Village
Tour Leader – Casey Koontz – August 11-16, 2024**

This scenic tour of Maine will be an experience for all your senses, including your taste buds. Summer is the peak time for visiting, with breezy days and cool nights, ideal for a late summer get away.

Along the way to and from our two-night stay in Bar Harbor, Maine, you will visit **Ogunquit**, the “beautiful place by the sea,” **Perkins Cove** with its unique drawbridge and scenic overlooks and **Portland**, an historic seacoast town with a working waterfront, local shops and galleries and numerous restaurants.



While in Portland you’ll enjoy a **narrated tour of the town of Portland** including a stop at the **Portland Head Lighthouse**. After that you’ll board a **boat for a cruise of Casco Bay** followed by a **traditional Maine lobster bake**.

On our journey home you’ll stop in **Mystic, Connecticut**, where you will take in the **Mystic Seaport Museum and Seaport Village**, the nation’s leading maritime museum which includes a recreated New England coastal village, a working shipyard, formal exhibit halls, and antique vessels. **Dinners will be included in Ogunquit and Mystic.**

In **Bar Harbor** you will embark on two cruises. The first is a **sightseeing / nature cruise of Frenchman’s Bay** and the second will be aboard a traditional downeast-style **lobster boat**. Working with a local guide you’ll receive a **narrated tour of Acadia**

National Park with multiple stops in the park, and a **guided tour of the town of Bar Harbor**. You will enjoy **two dinners** at local restaurants and on one evening you’re off to the **Great Maine Lumberjack Show**. Each day you’ll have time on your own to explore the shops, boutiques and galleries in downtown Bar Harbor.



Contact Casey Koontz (301) 831-6746 or liontonyjames@comcast.net with any questions.

Cost of Package – based on 35 paid reservations
\$2,164 pp double / \$3,044 pp single / \$1,894 pp triple / \$1,794 pp quad
Deposit of \$500 pp due by May 7, 2024 / final payment due July 9, 2024

NEW!

ALBUQUERQUE BALLOON FIESTA

Tour Leader – Casey Koontz – September 30-October 11, 2024

“The Land of Enchantment”! At no other time is this truer than each October when the International Balloon Fiesta is held in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Experience the thrill of the Flight of the Nation’s Mass Balloon Ascension and witness the magic of the evening Balloon Blow at the “After Glow” Fireworks Show. Spend 3 days in New Mexico where you’ll receive professionally guided tours of a number of sites in Albuquerque



and Santa Fe. While traveling by coach to and from Albuquerque, enjoy stops and activities along the way in Memphis, Tennessee; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Fort Smith, Arkansas; Amarillo, Texas; Branson and St. Louis, Missouri and Columbus, Ohio.

Tour includes:

- Coach Transportation
- 11 nights of lodging
- Hotel breakfasts each day
- 7 Dinners including:
 - Cattleman Steakhouse in Oklahoma City, OK
 - New Mexican Restaurant in Albuquerque, NM
 - Route 66 Diner
 - Buffet in the Gondola Club at the Balloon Fiesta
 - Lucille’s Road House, Clinton, TX
 - Fall Creek Steak and Catfish House in Branson, MO
 - The Kitchen in Columbus, OH
- 3 Lunches including:
 - Cracker Barrel
 - BB Kings on Beale St. in Memphis, TN
 - Boxed Lunch in St. Louis
- 1 Breakfast:
 - Gourmet breakfast buffet in the Gondola Club at the Balloon Fiesta
- Tour at Ft. Smith historic site
- Professional guide/escort throughout Albuquerque, NM including:
 - Route 66
 - Turquoise Museum
 - Old Town Plaza
 - Indian Pueblo Cultural Center
 - Anderson Abruzzo Albuquerque International Balloon Museum
 - Travel along the Turquoise Trail to Santa Fe
 - The artist community of Madrid
 - Loretto Chapel Museum
 - Historic Plaza and Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe
- Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta
 - Opening day Festivities and Mass Ascension at the Gondola Club
 - Balloon Glow, fireworks and drone light show at the Gondola Club
- Show in Branson, Missouri
- Cruise on the Mississippi River in St. Louis
- Tram to the top of the Arch in St. Louis
- Taxes and tips for inclusions

Also time to explore these cities on your own: Memphis, TN; Ft. Smith, AK; Old Town Plaza, Albuquerque, NM; Santa Fe, NM; and North Market, Columbus, OH

Cost of Package – based on 45 paid reservations

\$4,221 pp double / \$5,596 pp single / \$3,872 pp triple / \$3,730 pp quad

1st Deposit of \$500 pp due by 4/2/24 / 2nd Deposit of \$500 pp due by 6/4/24 / final payment due 8/23/24.

Contact Casey Koontz (301) 831-6746 or liontonyjames@comcast.net with any questions.

RESERVATIONS

Please remember: SEND ONE CHECK FOR EACH TRIP

Mail to: Damascus Travel Club * P.O. Box 304 * Damascus, MD 20872

Sweet & Salty in Pennsylvania – April 16, 2024

Payment of \$124 pp due March 5, 2024

Name _____ Phone _____ Encl. \$ _____

MENU CHOICE (CHOOSE ONE): BROILED CRAB CAKE ROASTED CHICKEN BREAST SLOW ROASTED BRISKET

EMERGENCY CONTACT:

Name _____ Phone _____

ARE YOU A DTC MEMBER Y N

Spring Luncheon – May 7, 2024

Payment of \$25 pp due by April 26, 2024

Name _____ Phone _____ Encl. \$ _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT:

Name _____ Phone _____

ARE YOU A DTC MEMBER Y N

Mystery Trip – May 15, 2024

Payment of \$217 pp due by April 5, 2024

Name _____ Phone _____ Encl. \$ _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT:

Name _____ Phone _____

ARE YOU A DTC MEMBER Y N

Historic Virginia – June 18-20, 2024

Deposit of \$150 pp due April 2 / Final payment due May 7, 2024

Name _____ Phone _____ Encl. \$ _____

REQUESTED ROOMMATE:

Name _____ Phone _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT:

Name _____ Phone _____

ARE YOU A DTC MEMBER Y N

Erie Canal & Niagara Falls – July 16-19, 2024

Deposit of \$390 pp due April 20 / Final payment due May 29, 2024

Name _____ Phone _____ Encl. \$ _____

REQUESTED ROOMMATE:

Name _____ Phone _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT:

Name _____ Phone _____

ARE YOU A DTC MEMBER Y N

Bar Harbor – August 11-16, 2024

Deposit of \$500 pp due May 7 / Final payment due July 9, 2024

Name _____ Phone _____ Encl. \$ _____

REQUESTED ROOMMATE:

Name _____ Phone _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT:

Name _____ Phone _____

ARE YOU A DTC MEMBER Y N

Albuquerque – Sept 30-Oct 11, 2024

1st Deposit of \$500 pp due April 2 / Final payment due August 23, 2024

Name _____ Phone _____ Encl. \$ _____

REQUESTED ROOMMATE:

Name _____ Phone _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT:

Name _____ Phone _____

ARE YOU A DTC MEMBER Y N



PLAN AHEAD!

TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2024

Our **White Elephant** auction is one of our favorite spring meeting highlights!

This event is a lot of fun with your donations of next-to-new kitchen items, utensils, jewelry, books, glassware, puzzles, dishes, scarves, purses, gloves, decorations, knick-knack items and more!

There will be something for everyone!

Look through your closets, the basement and the garage!

Empty those boxes that haven't been opened in years!

We have auctioned off some wonderful treasures in the past.

You never know what might appeal during this exciting April meeting!

Please bring everything in good condition (especially your money) but **no clothes**.

All the money raised helps to offset the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter, insurance and other business mailings for the Club.

DAMASCUS TRAVEL CLUB
P.O. BOX 304
DAMASCUS, MD 20872
March 2024



Keep these newsletters for future reference!

Come join us at our Spring Luncheon! **Tuesday, May 7 at 1 PM**



**We are offering a delicious Spring Luncheon at the
Mt. Airy Volunteer Fire Company Reception Hall
1008 Twin Arch Road, Mt. Airy**

**\$25 pp / Please send in your reservation form
with your check by APRIL 26.**

*We will have Fried Chicken, Ham, Scalloped Potatoes,
Stewed Tomatoes, Cole Slaw, Apple Sauce, drinks and
a Brownie Sundae for dessert.*