

NEXT MEETING: JANUARY 6 at 1 PM

DAMASCUS TRAVEL CLUB

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

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

2025-2026 Officers

President	Sue Wogatske	301-980-5634	Treasurer	Tammy Monarch	301-253-0044
1 st Vice President	Cathy Burke	202-302-4941	Tour Treasurer	Nancy Sutherland	301-788-8008
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			

Refreshments: Cheryl Shores: 240-605-6255

JANUARY 2026

from Sue Wogatske, DTC Club President

A Warm Welcome to the New Year!

I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season filled with love and precious family time. Last month's gathering at the Greenbrier Resort and Spa was truly memorable, with several of us—myself included—enjoying the Sulphur Spring baths. It was a special way to celebrate the season together and create lasting memories.

Upcoming Meeting and Basket Raffle

As we look ahead to 2026, I am eager to see all of you at our next meeting on Tuesday, January 6, at 1 pm at the American Legion Hall in Damascus. Please note that we will be holding the Basket Raffle during this meeting, as our holiday luncheon was cancelled because of weather. I encourage everyone to join us for this enjoyable event.



Volunteer Opportunity: Website Assistant Needed

The Damascus Travel Club is seeking a volunteer to help maintain our website and ensure it remains accurate, up-to-date, and welcoming. This role is vital in supporting our members and attracting new travelers to our club.

- Keep the Google Calendar current as dates change or new trips are added by checking monthly newsletters and monitoring emails from Teresa Brown.
- Refresh website photos when new ones become available.
- Add information about recent trips to the trip lists on the site.
- Gather new testimonials from members about our club and trips.
- Ensure newsletters are posted promptly and that all editions remain accessible to the public.
- Update the FAQ section and suggest improvements to help inform and attract new members.

Looking Ahead: Exciting Trips in 2026

I am thrilled to announce our first trip of the year: we will be seeing *Oklahoma* at the Dutch Apple Theatre on April 2. Additionally, Casey has organized a three-day tour to Virginia Beach, featuring Patriotic Performances and the Azalea Festival on April 19-21. Please review the reservation deadlines listed in this newsletter to secure your spot.

This year's lineup promises a variety of adventures, from day outings to multi-day and weeklong excursions. Our dedicated Tour Leaders and Board Members have worked diligently to finalize the calendar for the upcoming year, which you will find in this newsletter.

Continued on next page

Contact Information Update

Please note that, effective January 1, my new phone number will be 301-980-5634. You can continue to reach me by email at swogatske@verizon.net, as my email address will remain unchanged. If you have any questions or need to get in touch regarding club activities, feel free to contact me using these updated details.

Gratitude and Community Spirit

Your continued support and participation are what make our club thrive. Whether you have helped with setup, served at events, entertained, or stayed late to clean up, your contributions are deeply appreciated. Let's continue to nurture this wonderful sense of community! If you're able to lend a hand in 2026, please reach out—I would love to hear from you.

Best Wishes for the New Year

Thank you for your membership, support, and friendship. Wishing you a New Year filled with health, happiness, and unforgettable adventures for you and your loved ones. Remember our bad weather policy: IF MONTGOMERY COUNTY SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED, WE WILL NOT HAVE A MEETING.

Keep traveling, Sue

A QUICK GLANCE AT OUR UPCOMING TRIPS AND LUNCHEON

Details of these trips and the luncheon 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

April 2, 2026 Dutch Apple Dinner Theater/*Oklahoma!* (**Rusty**)

April 19-21, 2026 Virginia Beach (**Casey**)

May 5, 2026 Spring Luncheon - Mount Airy Reception Hall

May 13, 2026 Mystery Spring Trip (**Joanne**)

May 18-22, 2026 Spring in North Carolina (**Casey**)

June 21-23, 2026 Celebrate America / Sail250® Virginia (**Helen**)

August 8-18, 2026 Nova Scotia (**Helen**)



JOYS & CONCERNS



- *Happy Birthday* to all 11 members born in January. **Bill Von Feldt** has a New Year's Day birthday!
- *Happy Anniversary* to members celebrating their wedding anniversary in January.
- If any of the club members have a special birthday, anniversary, or a special event to report, we would be happy to publish the news. Just give me, Ann Gray, a call or send me an email (see below).
- We will be happy to recognize a former member's passing in the newsletter, but you will need to give me an address when requesting that a card be sent to the family.

Help keep us current on the status of our DTC members by contacting me, **Ann Gray**, at 301-758-5350 (just leave a message and I will return your call) or email me at anngray1@gmail.com.

NEW TRIPS TO CONSIDER

NEW!

OKLAHOMA!

Dutch Apple Dinner Theater

Tour Leader – Rusty Embrey – April 2, 2026

We open 2026 with a trip to OKLAHOMA. Dutch Apple Dinner Theater does a beautiful show with these old-timer productions, and I promise you don't want to miss this one. Curly and Laury are starting a new life in a new state, with the help of Roger & Hammerstein's music *Oh, What a Beautiful Morning, People Will Say We are In Love, I Can't Say No*, and of course *OKLAHOMA!*

We start off with a buffet with a lot of delicious hot entrées, salad bar, yummy desserts, and ice cream. **NOTE:** Seats will be assigned before entering the theater. Be sure to list who you want to sit with on your reservation slip. Reservations must be in by March 5, 2026.

All this fun and a good time for \$123, includes show, lunch, taxes, and driver's tip.

We leave Weis Market in Damascus at 9:30 AM and return approximately 5:30 PM.



TRIPS TO REVIEW

MYSTERY SPRING TRIP

Tour Leader – Joanne Kessler – May 13, 2026



Thank you for your response to the early request/deposit for this trip. I do not have a final count but I am looking forward to all of us going!

Sorry I cannot give you a clue where we are going (ha ha) but I have never had to cancel a "Mystery Trip" – such a record! The deposit of \$30 was due December 10 with the final payment due by April 7, 2026.

If you have any questions (that I can answer) please call me at 301-253-0335.

LOOK WHERE WE'VE BEEN!

GREENBRIER AT CHRISTMAS

Tour Leader – Joanne Kessler – November 30-December 2, 2025

There were 47 travelers who joined me on this trip. The weather cooperated and we all have a wonderful time during this Christmas Season tour to West Virginia's mountain resort. The choices were many for activities each day and everyone has stories to tell, I'm sure. We topped our journey at our rest stop on the way home – Bucky's. Something for everyone! Who knew?!

This trip was wonderful!



TRIPS TO REVIEW

VIRGINIA BEACH

featuring Patriotic Performances and the Azalea Festival

Tour Leader – Casey Koontz – April 19-21, 2026

We still need a few people to sign up to make this trip a “go.” Please consider going on this trip for an unforgettable experience. If you would like to go PLEASE CONTACT CASEY RIGHT AWAY.

As outlined in the November newsletter, the highlight of this trip is traveling to Virginia Beach where you’ll stay two nights at a beach side hotel and experience the acclaimed **International Tattoo – A Salute to 250 years of American Independence**, tours of the **Cape Henry Lighthouse, Old Coast Guard Station, Military Aviation Museum**, a demonstration of a WWII flying plane and a visit to the **Norfolk Botanical Gardens** where the azaleas should be in full bloom.

You may be wondering if this is a trip about getting a tattoo (a form of body art)? The answer is **NO!** So, what exactly is the **Virginia International Tattoo**? It is an elaborate military marching band performance featuring personnel from over a dozen militaries around the world. The Tattoo is the largest ceremonial military band performance in the United States! Historically, tattoos stem from a 17th-century European tradition of military drummers alerting soldiers that it was time to return to their barracks for the evening. After hearing the call of the local regiments’ fifes and drums, the Dutch Low Country innkeepers would call “Doe den tap too!” – “Turn off the taps!” The “tap too” evolved over time, and the word “tattoo” now refers to a ceremonial performance of military music by massed bands.



This trip is a perfect way to salute 250 years of America, and the Tattoo is a must-see event that includes an unbelievable entertainment spectacular that you will not want to end after the finale. Come along and absorb the ultimate American Musical Event...Military Style!! Your trip includes this impressive event and other exciting stops as noted above.

Full details of this trip are in the **November newsletter**. Do not let this one slip by you with the upcoming holidays. Get your reservation in now!

Cost of Package – based on 35 paid reservations.

\$792 pp double / \$962 pp single / \$752 pp triple / \$712 pp quad

Deposit of \$100 due by December 30, 2025. Final payment is due January 23, 2026.

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

DAMASCUS TRAVEL CLUB
2026 Calendar of Meetings and Trips
Dates and Times Subject to Change

All monthly meetings and potluck/picnic will be held at the
American Legion, 10201 Lewis Drive, Damascus, Maryland 20872.
If we move an event to a different address, we will notify you in plenty of time.

Any meeting or trip cancellations or changes will be noted
on our website, www.damascustravelclub.org
and on our Facebook page, [Damascus Travel Club](#) and/or by email.

Look for more details in the monthly DTC Newsletter when these trips are offered.
Trips marked TBD (to be determined) are in the planning stages.

TOUR LEADERS:

Helen Aument – 240-793-6820 / Rusty Embrey - 301-871-7069

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

If you need information regarding the trips, please contact the respective tour leader
For payment status, please contact Nancy Sutherland at 301-788-8008

JANUARY:

January 6, 2026 – General Meeting – 1:00 PM
Travel Tips

FEBRUARY:

February 3, 2026 – General Meeting – 1:00 PM
Detailed Tour Leader Reports

MARCH:

March 3, 2026 – General Meeting – 1:00 PM
All In One Tours (Cathy Strite)

APRIL:

April 2, 2026 – Dutch Apple – *Oklahoma*
(Rusty Embrey – Tour Leader)

April 7, 2026 – General Meeting – 1:00 PM
White Elephant / Slate of Officers for 2026-2027 presented

April __, 2026 – Jordan Springs -- TBD
(Joanne Kessler – Tour Leader)

April __, 2026 – Mount Olivet Cemetery -- TBD

April 19-21, 2026 – Virginia Beach featuring Patriotic Performances and Azalea Festival
(Casey Koontz – Tour Leader)

April 29, 2026 – Museum and Cruise
(Helen Aument – Tour Leader)

MAY:

May 5, 2026 – General Meeting and Spring Luncheon – **NOON** – Mount Airy Reception Hall
Doug Phebus

May 13, 2026 – Mystery Trip
(Joanne Kessler – Tour Leader)

May 18-22, 2026 – Asheville, NC
(Casey Koontz – Tour Leader)

JUNE:

- June 2, 2026 – General Meeting – 1:00 PM
Installation of Officers
- June 5-6, 2026 – Abbington and Bedford, VA
(Joanne Kessler – Tour Leader)
- June 21-24, 2026 – Norfolk, VA – Sail250® Celebrate America
(Helen Aument – Tour Leader)
- June 30, 2026 – Dutch Apple – *Mary Poppins*
(Rusty Embrey – Tour Leader)

JULY:

- NO GENERAL MEETING
- July 10, 2026 – Suicide Bridge (Crab Feast)
(Joanne Kessler – Tour Leader)
- July 15, 2026 – Totem Pole – *Oscar and Felix*
(Rusty Embrey – Tour Leader)

AUGUST:

- August 1, 2026 – Club Picnic/Potluck – 1:00 PM – American Legion
- August 8-18 – Nova Scotia
(Helen Aument – Tour Leader)
- August 12, 2026 – Totem Pole – South Pacific
(Rusty Embrey – Tour Leader)

SEPTEMBER:

- September 1, 2026 – General Meeting – 1:00 PM
Cash Bingo
- September 9, 2026 – Dutch Apple – *Pretty Woman*
(Rusty Embrey – Tour Leader)
- September 15, 2026 – Ladew Topiary Gardens
(Helen Aument – Tour Leader)

OCTOBER:

- October 6, 2026 – General Meeting and Luncheon – **NOON** – Mount Airy Reception Hall
Entertainment – Activity or Speaker (TBD)
- October 10, 2026 – Medieval Times
(Helen Aument – Tour Leader)
- October 20-22, 2026 – New York Adirondacks
(Casey Koontz – Tour Leader)

NOVEMBER:

- November 3, 2026 – General Meeting – 1:00 PM
Memorial Service
- November 5, 2026 – Sight and Sound
(Joanne Kessler – Tour Leader)
- November 21, 2026 – Koziar's Christmas Village
(Helen Aument – Tour Leader)

DECEMBER:

- December 1, 2026 – Christmas Luncheon and Raffle – **NOON** – Mount Airy Reception Hall
- December 3, 2026 – Dinner Cruise on the Potomac and US Botanical Gardens
(Casey Koontz – Tour Leader)
- December 7-11, 2026 – Myrtle Beach Christmas
(Joanne Kessler – Tour Leader)
- December 16, 2026 – American Music Theater – Winter Wonderland and Shady Maple
(Rusty Embrey – Tour Leader)

SPRING IN NORTH CAROLINA – ASHEVILLE & CHEROKEE

Tour Leader – Casey Koontz – May 18-22, 2026



What better time than Spring to visit the Blue Ridge Mountains for a journey to Cherokee and Asheville, North Carolina! This trip offers a rich blend of natural beauty, cultural heritage, and mountain-town charm. Highlights of this trip include a visit to the Oconaluftee Indian Village, and the Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual Co-Op in Cherokee, NC, and a stay at Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort where you'll have dinner with time to take in the casino, entertainment, and amenities it offers. Enjoy two nights in Asheville where we will experience a guided tour of Asheville, with time to tour and shop the downtown area, tour the Biltmore Estate and visit the Southern Highland Craft Guild, Folk Art Center. See the December newsletter for the full details of the trip.

The trip price includes bus transportation, four nights lodging, three breakfasts and four dinners, carriage ride, admission to Oconaluftee Indian Village, tours of The Biltmore Estate, Teepee Village and Arts & Crafts Co-Op, taxes and tips on all inclusions.

Cost of Package – based on 35 paid reservations

\$1,083 pp double / \$1,312 pp single /

\$1,030 pp triple / \$1,008 pp quad

Deposit of \$400 due by February 3, 2026.

Final payment due by April 7, 2026.

Contact Casey Koontz (301) 831-6746 or

liontonyjames@comcast.net



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: Website Assistant Needed

The Damascus Travel Club is seeking a volunteer to help maintain our website and ensure it remains accurate, up-to-date, and welcoming. This role is vital in supporting our members and attracting new travelers to our club.

- Keep the Google Calendar current as dates change or new trips are added by checking monthly newsletters and monitoring emails from Teresa Brown.
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- Update the FAQ section and suggest improvements to help inform and attract new members.

If you feel you could help the club with this important role, please contact Club President Sue Wogatske at 301-980-5634 or email her at swogatske@verizon.net. **THANK YOU!**



CELEBRATE THE 250TH BIRTHDAY OF OUR NATION

Norfolk, Hampton Roads, and Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Region

Tour Leader – Helen Aument – June 21-23, 2026

Arrive on Sunday for 2-night stay to celebrate the 250th anniversary of our nation's birth in 1776 – the United States of America's semi-quincentennial. International tall ships and military vessels will sail into the port of Virginia as part of *Sail250*[®] America. Four thousand officers, cadets, and crews of over 50 vessels from 20 nations will engage in events along Virginia's waterfront.

Spend the afternoon at *Sail250*[®] Virginia. Ships will be open for touring after docking in downtown Norfolk. Enjoy exploring Norfolk's Waterfront with **Navy exhibits and demonstrations, artisan foods and beverages, national and regional live entertainment, and more.**

Yorktown Guided Tour - Wrap up your adventure where our country began in Yorktown: the end of British rule in the colonies and the birth of a new nation, the United States of America

Deposit \$200 due February 3, 2026 Final Payment due April 7, 2026

Package includes – based on 30 paid

- Transportation & Tip
- Lodging and luggage handling
- Two breakfasts & one dinner
- Entrance and Cruise Fees
- Tour & Admission to Yorktown

Package price

\$762 per person double
\$980 per person single
\$723 per person triple
\$703 per person quad
Taxes and tip for inclusions



Questions: Contact Helen Aument at 240-793-6820

Complete additional details regarding this trip were emailed to club members on November 18, 2025.

NOVA SCOTIA, NEW BRUNSWICK, BAY OF FUNDY, AND PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Tour Leader – Helen Aument – August 8-18, 2026



10 days of travel in beautiful Nova Scotia from Halifax to Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and more. See more details in the **June and July newsletters**, available on our website (damascustravelclub.org) or on the gateway link (see below).

Pricing for package is: \$6,399 pp single / \$5,299 pp double / \$5,199 pp triple
Deposit of \$698 pp is due with your reservation form.

Included in Price: Round Trip Air from Baltimore/Washington International Airport, Air Taxes and Fees/Surcharges, Hotel Transfers. **Not Included:** Cancellation Waiver and insurance of \$429 per person. **For more information visit <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1349802>** PLEASE SEE FULL DETAILS IN THE JUNE EDITION OF THIS NEWSLETTER ONLINE AT www.damascustravelclub.org

For more information visit <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1349802>

RESERVATIONS

Please remember: SEND ONE CHECK FOR EACH TRIP

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

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.

Dutch Apple Dinner Theater (*Oklahoma!*) – April 2, 2026

Payment of \$123 pp due March 5, 2026

Name _____ Phone _____ Encl. \$ _____

REQUESTED THEATER SEAT MATE:

Name _____ Phone _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT:

Name _____ Phone _____

ARE YOU A DTC MEMBER Y ___ N ___

Virginia Beach, Virginia – April 19-21, 2026

Deposit of \$100 due by December 30, 2025

\$792 pp double / \$962 pp single / \$752 pp triple / \$712 pp quad

Final payment due January 23, 2026

Name _____ Phone _____ Encl. \$ _____

REQUESTED ROOM MATE:

Name _____ Phone _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT:

Name _____ Phone _____

ARE YOU A DTC MEMBER Y ___ N ___

Asheville and Cherokee, North Carolina – May 18-22, 2026

Deposit of \$400 due by February 3, 2026

\$1,083 pp double / \$1,312 pp single / \$1,030 pp triple / \$1,008 pp quad

Final payment due April 7, 2026

Name _____ Phone _____ Encl. \$ _____

REQUESTED ROOM MATE:

Name _____ Phone _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT:

Name _____ Phone _____

ARE YOU A DTC MEMBER Y ___ N ___

Celebrate America/Sail 250/Yorktown, Virginia – June 21-23, 2026

Deposit of \$200 due by February 3, 2026

\$762 pp double / \$980 pp single / \$723 pp triple / \$703 pp quad

Final payment due April 7, 2026

Name _____ Phone _____ Encl. \$ _____

REQUESTED ROOM MATE:

Name _____ Phone _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT:

Name _____ Phone _____

ARE YOU A DTC MEMBER Y ___ N ___

**FOR THE TRIP TO NOVA SCOTIA, PLEASE REGISTER ONLINE with Collette at
<https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1349802>**

**Then send us the reservation form which was in the July and August 2025 newsletters,
available on our website (damascustravelclub.org)**

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

January 2026

Happy New Year!



Keep these newsletters for future reference!

Join us for our January 6, 2026, Meeting and
Basket Party!

Since our December Holiday party was cancelled because of weather, please bring your raffle basket (if you have one) with you to our January gathering.

We will have items and gift baskets to bid on for a memorable afternoon while we hold the first meeting of the new year.

