

Volume XLVIII, Number 5 • May/June 2026

BUS TOURS

Magazine

Go West!
page 7

**Student
& Senior**
page 19

Theaters & Entertainment
page 12





Visit
McDONOUGH
Georgia



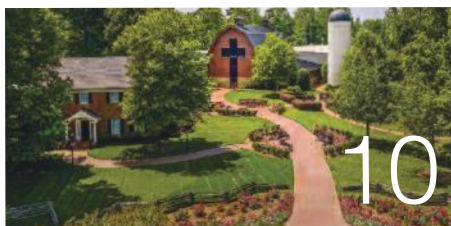
VisitMcDonoughGA.com



contents

MAY/JUNE 2026

Volume XLVIII, Number 5



Guides

4 HISTORICAL ATTRACTIONS & MUSEUMS

Historical attractions and museums are exciting places for both young and old. They provide an insight into the way things were and how people lived in past generations.

7 GO WEST!

While there is substantial open area in the Western states, they also have some very interesting attractions that are popular with bus tours.

12 THEATERS & ENTERTAINMENT

Get your group off the bus and into some great theaters and entertainment. It might end up being the highlight of your tour.

19 STUDENT & SENIOR TOURS

Some locations offer a special attraction to students or seniors or both. Here are a couple of places that could add a lot to your next bus tour.

22 DINING AND LODGING

Dining and lodging are integral parts of bus tours because passengers need to eat and sleep.

Features

10 FAITH-BASED TOURS

Many bus tour planners started out with faith-based tours while others find they are popular with many groups.

16 SCENIC FALL TOURS

The fall season has always been popular for bus tours. Here are some interesting places you can add to your next itinerary.

24 OWENSBURG, KENTUCKY

Although slightly off the beaten path, Owensboro, Kentucky is a delightful river town known for Blue Grass Music, great food and interesting attractions for your bus tours.

26 THE DELIGHTFUL DELLS

Originally popular because of the dells along the Wisconsin River, this area now boasts numerous interesting attractions and some great lodging.

And More

4 BUZZ ON THE BUS

29 TRIVIA QUESTION

30 ADVERTISERS INDEX

STAFF

Editor & Publisher Larry Plachno

Business Manager . . . Nancy Ann Plachno

Typesetting/Page Layout . . Sherry Mekeel

Web site Jake Ron Plaras

Bus Tours Magazine

9698 W. Judson Road

Polo, Illinois 61064-9015

Phone: (815) 946-2341

Fax: (815) 946-2347

Web site: bustoursmagazine.com

Advertising

Central/West

central@busmag.com – (815) 946-2341

Midwest

midwest@busmag.com – (815) 946-2341

Northeast

tourgroups@busmag.com – (815) 946-2341

Southeast/International

southeast@busmag.com – (815) 946-2341

COVER PHOTO

Cross the San Juan Mountains aboard the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, a journey into the West of 1880 on an historic steam railroad.

BUS TOURS MAGAZINE (ISSN 0199-6096) is published six times annually by National Bus Trader, Inc., 9698 W. Judson Road, Polo, Illinois 61064. Subscriptions, \$15 (in US funds) annually, Canadian & International \$20 (in US funds). Printed in U.S.A. Periodicals postage paid at Polo, Illinois 61064 and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to BUS TOURS MAGAZINE, 9698 W. Judson Road, Polo, Illinois 61064.

Change of Address: Please send old mailing label (or old address and computer number) as well as new address.

Advertising: Display advertising rates sent on request. Advertising deadline is the last day of the second month preceding publication.

Founded in 1979, BUS TOURS MAGAZINE is the oldest independent magazine in the bus and group tour market. Circulation includes bus and group tour planners in the United States and Canada regardless of affiliation or whether commercial, private or corporate or group leader.

The contents of this publication may not be reproduced either in whole or in part without the written consent of the publisher. The name BUS TOURS MAGAZINE and the logo incorporating the passengers, bus and destinations are trade marks of National Bus Trader, Inc.

The editorial staff at BUS TOURS MAGAZINE are always looking for news items and editorial material on places that want bus tour groups to stop. Phone (815) 946-2341 or send material to editorial@busmag.com.



Texas Ranger sculpture by Don Hunt

Historical Attractions & Museums

Texas Ranger Hall of Fame & Museum Waco, Texas

"One riot, one ranger," is a phrase made famous by Texas Ranger Captain W.J. McDonald in the very early 1900s. McDonald was called upon by a mayor to stop a forbidden prize fight and ease an angry mob. When stepping off the train by himself, the puzzled mayor asked, "Where are the others?" To that McDonald replied, "Hell, ain't I enough? There's only one riot, isn't there?"

It was the reputation of McDonald and early Texas Rangers that personified an icon of rugged individualism, courage, honesty and virtue. They have created an image that criminals fear and children idolize.

The legendary Texas Rangers are the oldest state law enforcement agency. They celebrated their 200th anniversary in 2023. Tracing its lineage back to 1823, Rangers have served through three centuries under five flags – Mexico, the Republic of Texas, the State of Texas, Confederate Texas and the U.S. again.

The official Texas Ranger Hall of Fame & Museum is conveniently located off Interstate 35 at the Brazos River in Waco, Texas. Visitors learn about the history of the Texas Rangers through exhibits, which include badges, firearms, photographs and other artifacts on display. In addition, children will enjoy a bandit hunt. The Texas Rangers, with their cowboy hats and silver stars on their shirt pockets, remain an important part of this heritage.

Sponsored by the City of Waco, more than four million persons have visited its

museum, hall of fame, research library, Ranger headquarters building and banquet facilities. *Texas Highways* magazine readers ranked it one of the Best Texas Museums, *USA Today* called it one of the nation's outstanding Halls of Fame, and *True West Magazine* titled it the Best Western History Museum in Texas.

The museum is open Monday through Sunday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with group rates available. Guided tours can be booked at least two weeks in advance of arrival with staff availability. For more information, phone (254) 750-8631 or visit [TexasRanger.org](https://www.TexasRanger.org).

Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism

Immerse yourself in the thriving culture and heritage of the largest tribal nation in the United States.

History Comes Alive!

TEXAS RANGER

HALL OF FAME & MUSEUM

www.texasranger.org
(254) 750-8631
I-35 & Brazos River
Waco, Texas
Group Rates & Guided Tours
education@texasranger.org



Nestled within 7,000 square miles of northeast Oklahoma, the Cherokee Nation Reservation boasts more than 15 cultural sites, museums and attractions that share the authentic story of the Cherokee people.

Located alongside the iconic Route 66 in Vinita, the Cherokee Nation Anna Mitchell Cultural & Welcome Center serves as the gateway to the Cherokee experience for many travelers.

HISTORIC ROUTE 66

TWO STORIES. ONE ROAD.

CHEROKEE NATION ANNA MITCHELL CULTURAL & WELCOME CENTER

Cherokee Nation Anna Mitchell Cultural & Welcome Center, Vinita, Oklahoma

The Centennial — it's an occasion worth celebrating on Route 66. Stop and refresh at the only Native American welcome center on Route 66, and you'll encounter a story about a beautiful tradition.

Plan your next tour with us, and we'll tell you the Cherokee story — one of ingenuity, determination and sovereignty through centuries — customized for your group.

For more information call 877.779.6977 or visit us online at visitchokeenation.com/group-tours.



PLAN YOUR ADVENTURE AT
VISITCHEROKEENATION.COM



Guide: Historical Attractions & Museums

Named Top Tribal Tourism Destination of the Year, the site honors the legacy and accomplishments of renowned Cherokee potter Anna Belle Sixkiller Mitchell and her contributions to revitalizing traditional Cherokee pottery. The site shares the rich culture of the Cherokee people and the tribe's shared history with the Vinita community.

Visitors are encouraged to take advantage of the various photo opportunities onsite with the large-scale outdoor art installations, including the sculpture *A Bundle of Seven Arrows* by Cherokee National Treasure Demos Glass. The sculpture represents the unity of Cherokee Nation's seven matrilineal clans. It is surrounded by *The Vessel*, a landscape feature honoring Mitchell's work revitalizing Cherokee pottery, with high walls designed to resemble stamped pottery patterns.

Alongside the eye-catching art installations, guests can enjoy rotating exhibits, a grab-and-go café with Native-inspired cuisine and the Cherokee Gift Shop, featuring authentic Cherokee jewelry, art and more.

Since its opening in 2022, the center has also offered language and history classes, interactive artist demonstrations, cultural art classes, exhibit receptions, genealogy workshops, storytelling events and more.

The Cherokee Nation Anna Mitchell Cultural & Welcome Center is just one of many authentic and immersive cultural destinations available throughout the Cherokee Nation Reservation. For more information or to plan your trip, go to VisitCherokeeNation.com. □

Where to stop in Evansville, Indiana



USS LST Ship Memorial, Inc. • (812) 435-8678
<https://lstmemorial.org>

Come aboard the USS LST-325, America's last operational WWII Landing Ship Tank. Knowledgeable tour guides will take you back in time, sharing gripping D-Day stories, Evansville's shipyard triumphs, and the quintessential role these "Long Slow Targets" had to play. Experience the engineering ingenuity and sailors' resolve that has kept her afloat for over 80 years.

Hours dependent on season; Guided tours only.
Admission: Adults \$20, Youth 6–17 \$10,
Children 5 & under are free



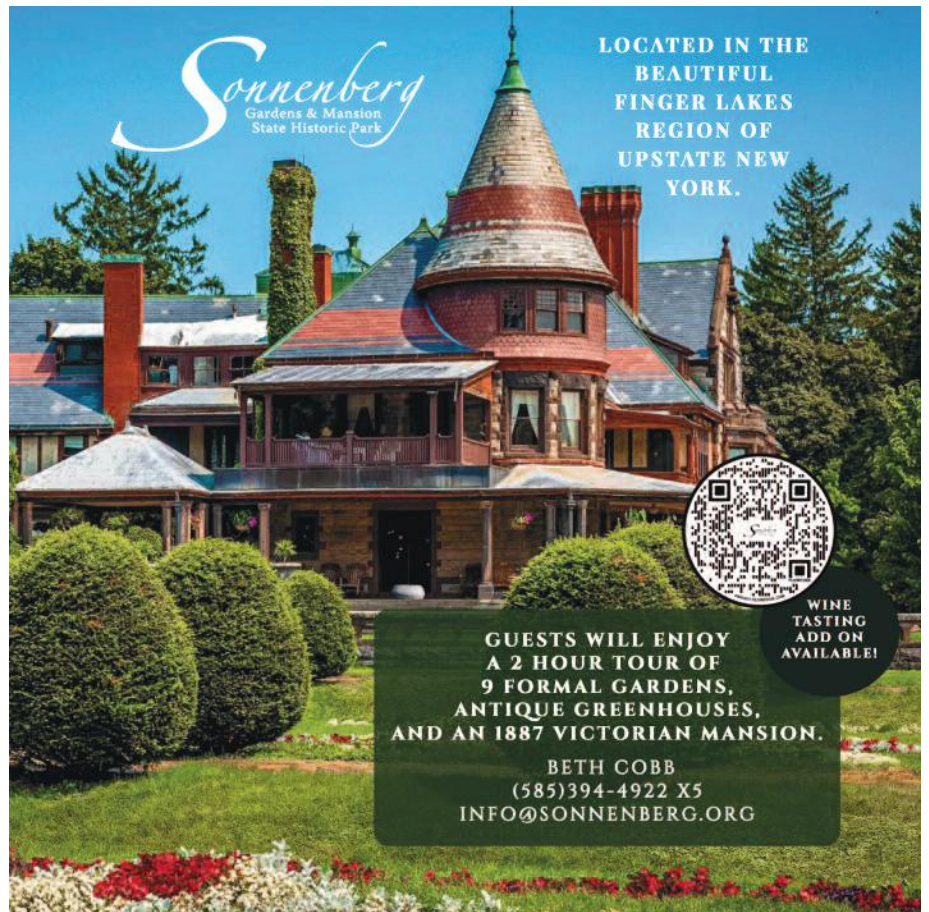
Smack dab in the middle.

The Tri-State Museum and Visitor Center in Belle Fourche, SD is at the middle of the nation – and we have a spectacular monument to prove it! Visit us for exhibits on rodeos, ranching, pioneer life, bank robbers, dinosaurs and more.

Take a photo at the Center of the Nation compass rose monument; step back in time with a visit to our Johnny Spaulding Cabin; shop in our store full of books, jewelry, western memorabilia, puzzles, smart toys and games. Then have a picnic on our spacious lawns!

Meet us in the middle, in Belle Fourche!

415 Fifth Avenue in Belle Fourche
 605-723-1200
www.thetristatemuseum.com



LOCATED IN THE
 BEAUTIFUL
 FINGER LAKES
 REGION OF
 UPSTATE NEW
 YORK.



WINE
 TASTING
 ADD ON
 AVAILABLE!

GUESTS WILL ENJOY
 A 2 HOUR TOUR OF
 9 FORMAL GARDENS,
 ANTIQUE GREENHOUSES,
 AND AN 1887 VICTORIAN MANSION.

BETH COBB
 (585)394-4922 X5
INFO@SONNENBERG.ORG



Go West!

Cumbres & Toltec Railroad

For group travel planners seeking a “bucket list” experience that blends rugged Western scenery with seamless logistics, the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad (C&TSRR) stands unmatched. As America’s highest and longest narrow-gauge steam railroad and a National Historic Landmark, this 64-mile journey across the San Juan Mountains offers a timeless adventure that no motorcoach alone can replicate.

Operating between Chama, New Mexico, and Antonito, Colorado, the C&TSRR is perfectly positioned to complement any Southwest motorcoach itinerary. With depots at both ends of the line, tour operators can plan the railroad portion as a full-day “through-trip” or a half-day excursion. Groups departing from hubs like Santa Fe, Taos, or Alamosa can rely on our experienced team for coordinated arrivals and departures, keeping itin-

eraries on schedule while delivering an unforgettable experience.

Modern travelers crave authenticity, and the C&TSRR delivers. The dedicated group blocks and private car options allow guests to travel together in comfort and style. Victorian-style parlor cars with private attendants offer intimate, elegant surroundings, while open-air gondolas provide 360-degree views of the dramatic Toltec Gorge and the 10,015-foot Cumbres Pass. Every ride immerses groups in the sights, sounds and sensations of the 1880s, creating a connection to history that is truly tangible.

Full-day departures include a hearty, home-cooked lunch at Osier Station, a remote mountain outpost accessible only by train. Facilities are designed for large groups, ensuring smooth service so guests spend more time taking in the scenery and less time waiting.

For group travel planners, the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad offers a once-in-a-life-

time experience through the American West. Coal-fired K-36 Mikado locomotives climb steep four percent grades, letting your guests feel the power and history of the rails. The 2026 season runs May 23 through October 25, with fall colors peaking in late September.

Early reservations are strongly recommended to secure preferred dates. Phone (888) 286-2737 or e-mail groups@cumbrestoltec.com to reserve your group or charter today.

Lowell Observatory Flagstaff, Arizona

Lowell Observatory is a classic roadtrip stop where the spirit of the open road meets the wonder of the night sky. Perched atop Mars Hill in Flagstaff, just a short turn off Route 66, this historic destination invites travelers to trade neon lights for starlight and experience the universe through exhibits, discoveries, and unforgettable skies.

Feature: Go West!

Since 1894, Lowell has hosted landmark discoveries including Clyde Tombaugh's 1930 discovery of Pluto and V.M. Slipher's evidence that our universe is expanding. Today, it continues to advance space science while sparking curiosity in road-trippers, families, and lifelong learners alike.

In 2024, Lowell opened the Astronomy Discovery Center, a 40,000-square-foot hub for free-choice learning. Here, exhibits are inclusive and multi-sensory, inviting guests to learn at their own pace. Kids can build and launch rockets in the Orbits Curiosity Zone, while adults can ponder their place in the universe in the Stardust Lab Astronomy Gallery.

The Lowell Universe Theater surrounds audiences with a two-story, 160-degree LED screen for journeys across the cosmos. The theater's newly launched film series features immersive shows that transport guests from the surface of Mars to the farthest reaches of the observable universe, offering a high-defi-

nition look at the landmark discoveries that have defined Lowell's legacy

The rooftop Dark Sky Planetarium offers open-air, laser-guided constellation shows, guided by live educators under the real night sky. Recline in heated seats as you take in the same Milky Way that Route 66 travelers once glimpsed from desert highways. Inside, the Lowell Universe Theater surrounds audiences with a two-story, 160-degree LED screen for journeys across the cosmos.

Each night, the Open Deck Observatory comes alive with a suite of six modern telescopes aimed at star clusters, nebulae, and galaxies. Nearby, a look through the historic 24-inch Clark Refractor connects you to a golden age of astronomy, including founder Percival Lowell's trailblazing Mars research

and the training of the first astronauts to walk on the Moon.

Lowell's reputation as a premier astro-tourism destination has earned recognition from *TIME*, *Newsweek*, and *PHOENIX Magazine*. Perfectly situated along the Mother Road, it has become a must-see stop where classic Americana meets the cosmos.

For all its high-tech tools and accolades, Lowell's magic is truly timeless: a place where curiosity is celebrated, wonder is shared, and every visitor leaves feeling part of something vast and beautiful.

Book your ticket today at lowell.edu ☐

**The Trivia Question
for this issue is located
on page 29.**

Looking for more information?

Fill out and send the Reader Service Card
at the back of the magazine.



**2026 SEASON DATES:
MAY 23 - OCTOBER 25**

Cumbres & Toltec
TOLTEC VISTA
9613

AN UNFORGETTABLE GROUP ADVENTURE INTO THE OLD WEST

Take your group to places you never knew existed. Built in 1880, the **Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad** offers a 64-mile journey through untouched Rocky Mountain history. From the 10,015-foot summit of Cumbres Pass to the sheer cliffs of Toltec Gorge, this National Historic Landmark is a photographer's dream. Sit back, relax, and let the majesty of the mountains unfold. We specialize in seamless group experiences and offer competitive group rates.

BOOK NOW AT [CUMBRESTOLTEC.COM](https://cumbrestoltec.com) 1-877-286-2737



EXPAND YOUR UNIVERSE

LOWELL OBSERVATORY | FLAGSTAFF, AZ



Lowell Observatory, named one of TIME's 2025 "World's 100 Greatest Places," is celebrating over 130 years of discovery and the centennial of Route 66! Explore exhibit halls, immersive experiences, stargazing, telescope viewing, live shows, historic tours, and more for all ages. **Buy tickets now at lowell.edu**



Faith-Based Tours

Only God could know the important role that a dairy farmer's son would play in world evangelism. From his humble beginnings on a farm in Charlotte, North Carolina, to his decision to follow Christ at a local revival on the edge of town, Billy Graham pursued a singular vision – to share the love of Jesus Christ.

Long before Graham gained worldwide recognition, he committed himself to evangelistic work. When he was just 20 years old, Billy Graham made a crucial decision. As a student at Florida Bible College, he came to a crossroads during a late-night walk. "I remember getting on my knees and saying, 'O, God, if you want me to preach, I will do it.' Tears streamed down my cheeks as I made this great surrender to become an ambassador for Jesus Christ."

Over the course of his life, the reach of Graham's message increased as he preached in packed stadiums and auditoriums – Crusades that were often broadcast even farther on radio and television. As he traveled to more than 185 countries and territories, he was able to witness firsthand the impact the Gospel had on people from all walks of life. In 1973 in Johannesburg, South Africa, Graham stated passionately, "Christ belongs to all people. He belongs to the whole world."

At the Billy Graham Library in Charlotte, North Carolina, Graham's evangelistic work lives on. Nestled on a serene, 20-acre property – just minutes from the Charlotte Douglas International Airport – the Billy Graham Library brings his story to life through the self-guided Journey of Faith tour. Every visitor

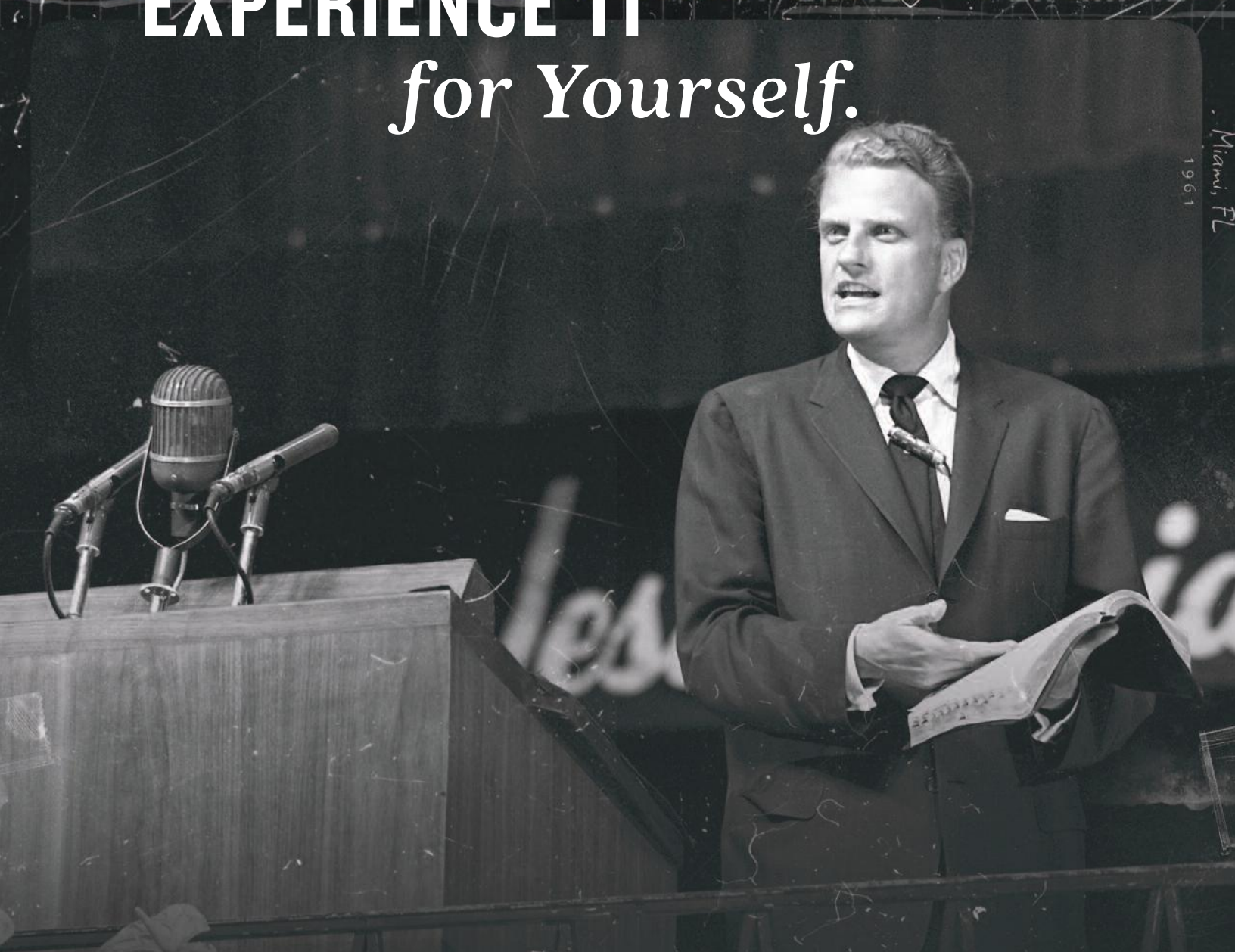
has the opportunity to hear the same message he preached for eight decades: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Just a short walk away, the Billy Graham Archive and Research Center houses all of the evangelist's papers and artifacts in one location. This allows students, leaders and scholars the opportunity to study his records and correspondence on the same campus where they can also visit his boyhood home, gravesite and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association headquarters.

For more information, as well as special event information and group booking details, visit BillyGrahamLibrary.org. □



EXPERIENCE IT *for Yourself.*



Invite your group to discover a powerful story of hope at the Billy Graham Library. Together, you can retrace Billy Graham's journey of faith as you explore multimedia presentations, displays, photos, and memorabilia. Come see what God can do through a life that is fully surrendered to Him.

FREE ADMISSION

Mon.-Sat., 9:30-5:00 | BillyGrahamLibrary.org | 704.401.3200 | 4330 Westmont Drive, Charlotte, NC

©2026 BGEA A MINISTRY OF BILLY GRAHAM EVANGELISTIC ASSOCIATION

Theaters & Entertainment



Starved Rock

Starved Rock Lodge and Conference Center **Oglesby, Illinois**

Escape to Nature and Wake Up with Adventure at Starved Rock Lodge. Nestled in the heart of Starved Rock State Park, just 90 minutes southwest of Chicago, Starved Rock Lodge offers a one-of-a-kind getaway that blends rustic charm with modern comfort. As the only lodging located within the park and open 365 days a year, it provides guests with unparalleled access to scenic trails, waterfalls and the natural beauty of Illinois' most iconic state park. Whether you are planning a family vacation, a romantic escape or a special celebration,

Starved Rock Lodge delivers an unforgettable experience.

Guests can choose from charming lodge rooms or cozy cabins that evoke the warmth of a classic retreat. Each accommodation combines rustic touches with modern amenities, creating a welcoming space to relax after a day of adventure. For added leisure, the lodge features a swimming pool and sauna, perfect for unwinding or enjoying quality time with family.

Starved Rock Lodge offers an array of unique activities designed to immerse visitors in the park's beauty. Guided hikes reveal seasonal waterfalls, stunning canyons and the park's rich history, while trolley and boat

tours provide a fun, scenic perspective of the park and surrounding areas. Guests can also enjoy tribute shows, seasonal events and holiday celebrations that bring the park to life for visitors of all ages.

Dining at Starved Rock Lodge is a highlight of every stay. The Main Dining Room serves chef curated menus that feature seasonal, locally-inspired dishes in a welcoming setting, while the Back Door Lounge offers a casual, comfortable atmosphere for drinks, small plates, and relaxation. Guests can also enjoy treats from the onsite café and gift shop, including homemade ice cream, fudge, popcorn and candied nuts, perfect for a sweet snack during a day of exploring. Seasonal

celebrations and holiday gatherings come alive at the lodge. Summer events can take advantage of patios and open-air seating with refreshing breezes, while winter celebrations are cozy and inviting indoors. The staff works with every guest to ensure each occasion is seamless, allowing hosts and attendees alike to focus on enjoying the moment.

Whether you are strolling the park trails, paddling along the river, enjoying live music or savoring a chef prepared meal, Starved Rock Lodge offers a warm, welcoming escape that combines adventure, relaxation and memorable experiences. It is more than a lodge; it is the gateway to the natural beauty, history and charm of Starved Rock State Park.

Crawford County, Pennsylvania

Beautiful Crawford County is home to endless activities and diverse amenities. Crawford County, part of the Great Lakes



Crawford County

Region, borders Ohio and is conveniently located right off Pennsylvania Interstate 79, 30 minutes north of I-80 or 30 minutes south of I-90. Enjoy a great multiday trip, approved by the locals.

Day 1

Start your day off in Linesville "Where Ducks Walk on the Fish" at Pymatuning State Park's "The Spillway." Throw bread and watch the frenzy of thousands of carp and ducks fight for the bread. Enjoy the picturesque State

Favorite Group Tour Destination

Experience Starved Rock Lodge

Music Tribute Shows
Trolley Tours
River Cruises
Guided Hikes
Indoor Pool Complex
Historic Lodging
On-site Dining
Shopping

Scan to book your next adventure!



One Lodge Lane; Oglesby, IL
815-220-7386
starvedrocklodge.com

STARVED ROCK
LODGE & CONFERENCE CENTER



Guide: Theater & Entertainment

Park, and swing into town for Twin Pies. Who does not love pie and coffee for breakfast?

The nearby town of Conneaut Lake showcases Conneaut Cellars Winery and Distillery. Enjoy a free tasting and a tour. This winery has a large variety of high-quality, award-winning wines and spirits. Take your favorite bottle and board historic *Barbara J. Stern-wheeler* Paddle Boat. The boat has an open upper deck and a lower enclosed room to view Pennsylvania's largest glacial lake.

Enjoy lake front dining at Silver Shores Restaurant on beautiful Conneaut Lake.

Day 2

Ride the historic Oil Creek and Titusville Railroad across "the Valley that Changed the World." Enjoy fun Murder Mystery dinners or wine and brew events. While they are famous for their Fall scenic excursions, any time of their season is great. Stay the night at the Caboose Motel to complete your experience.

After the three-hour train ride, enjoy all that Titusville has to offer.

Day 3

Visit the historic Meadville Market House. Built in 1870, this structure is the oldest, continuously operated market in Pennsylvania featuring many local vendors.

Tour the Baldwin Reynolds House Museum, built in 1843. The mansion was the quintessential Southern home – located in northwestern Pennsylvania with a huge national history impact. Enjoy a daily tours, dinner theatres, lectures, music and more.

Unwind at any of the local restaurants such as Voodoo Brewery, Riverside Brewing, Davenport or Julian's, which feature live music entertainment most nights.

For more information including accommodations, events and additional itineraries, go to VisitCrawford.org or phone (814) 333-1258. Try downloading the new app while on the site.



GEORGE H.W. BUSH
PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM

250
Freedom

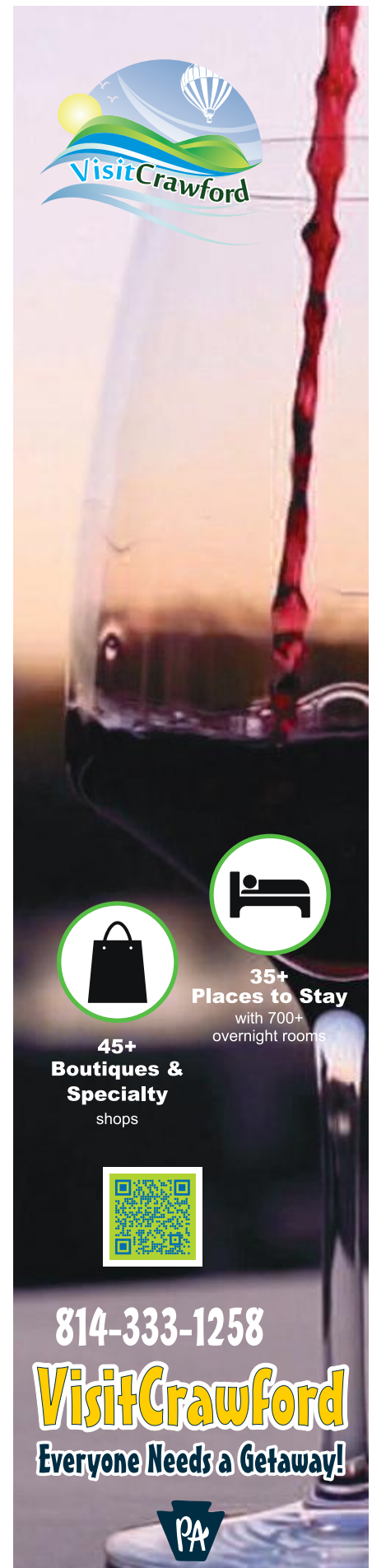
E PLURIBUS UNUM

Celebrating the American Experience

June 30, 2026 - May 16, 2027

1000 George Bush Drive West, College Station, Texas 77845 | Bush41Library.gov

ARTS: This program made possible in part through Hotel Tax Revenue funded from the city of College Station through the Arts Center of the Brazos Valley.



VisitCrawford

45+ Boutiques & Specialty shops

35+ Places to Stay
with 700+ overnight rooms

814-333-1258

VisitCrawford

Everyone Needs a Getaway!

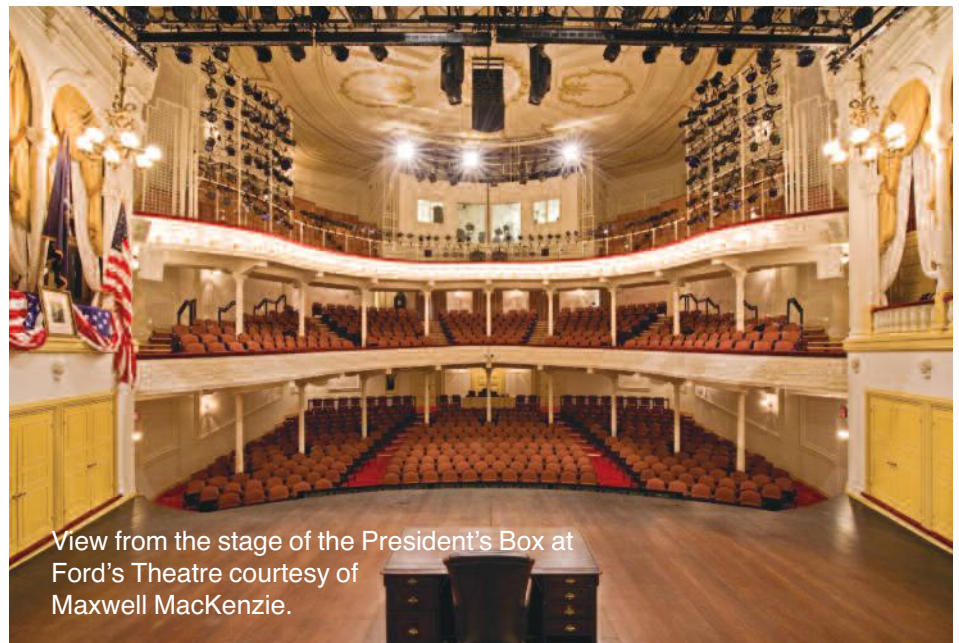
PA

Ford's Theatre

Washington, D.C.

There is nothing quite like the experience of live theater, feeling the energy in the room and sharing a story in real time with fellow audience members. At Ford's Theatre, that experience is uniquely enriched by the setting itself. During the 2026-2027 season, audiences are invited not only to see extraordinary performances, but also to enter a place where American history and live storytelling come together in unforgettable ways.

The season opens with *Come From Away*, running September 11 to October 17, 2026. The moving musical draws audiences into a powerful story of empathy, generosity and hope in the days following September 11, 2001. Seeing the show live, where laughter, quiet reflection and applause are shared by an entire audience, highlights the unique ability of theater to bring people together around a common experience.



View from the stage of the President's Box at Ford's Theatre courtesy of Maxwell MacKenzie.

That sense of connection continues during the holidays with *A Christmas Carol*, on stage November 19 through December 31, 2026. A beloved Ford's Theatre tradition, the production brings Dickens's timeless

story to life for audiences year after year. For many, attending this performance is an annual ritual and a meaningful way to gather with family and friends during the season.

Spring brings playful energy and heart-felt humor to Ford's Theatre with *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, running March 13 through May 15, 2027. With wit, warmth and audience engagement, the show celebrates individuality and the joy of live theater. No two performances are exactly alike, reminding audiences why theater experienced in the moment remains so compelling.

A visit to Ford's Theatre extends beyond the stage. Historic Site Visits with group rates include access to the museum, the Peterson House and the historic theater where President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. The site offers a meaningful and accessible way to engage with a defining moment in American history.

For those attending together, performance tickets are 20 percent off for groups of 10 or more. The 2026-2027 season at Ford's Theatre offers more than a night out. It is an unforgettable experience in one of Washington D.C.'s most iconic spaces. □

COME FROM AWAY

A Christmas Carol

The 25th Annual Putnam County SPELLING BEE

FORD'S THEATRE

Enjoy 20% off theatre tickets and special \$4.50 admission to our historic site!

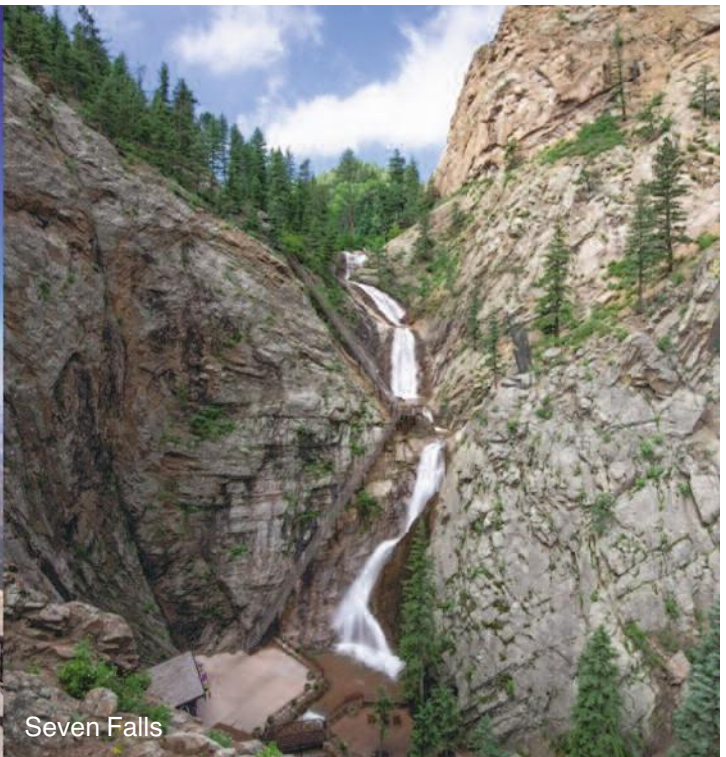
Season Sponsors
Chevron INTUIT LOCKHEED MARTIN

www.fords.org
Groups: (800) 899-2367
groupsales@fords.org

Scenic Fall Tours



Cog Railway

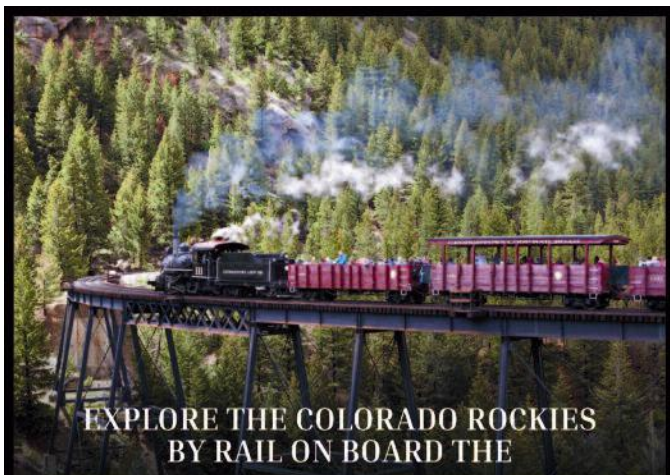


Seven Falls

The Broadmoor Manitou & Pikes Peak Cog Railway

Give your guests two of Colorado's most memorable experiences in one itinerary: The Broadmoor Manitou and Pikes Peak Cog Railway and The Broadmoor Seven Falls.

For group planners, the appeal starts with variety and ends with a day guests will talk about long after they get home. At the Cog Railway, groups board in Manitou Springs for a scenic roundtrip journey to the 14,115-foot summit of Pikes Peak – America's Mountain. The



EXPLORE THE COLORADO ROCKIES
BY RAIL ON BOARD THE

GEORGETOWN LOOP RAILROAD

GEORGETOWN, CO

MAKENNA GALKE, GROUP SALES
makenna.galke@historicrailadventures.com
(303) 569-0133

WWW.GEORGETOWNLOOPRR.COM

Abilene and Smoky Valley Railroad

200 SE 5th; Abilene, KS 67410

website: asvrr.org

email: groups@asvrr.org

Telephone 785-263-1077



Traveling I-70 across Kansas?
Abilene is a great place to stop to
celebrate **America250** in 2026!!

We offer 1 to 2 hour train rides on
the Kansas Heritage Railroad.

Adjacent to the Eisenhower Presidential
Library and Museum

Charters available for 160, 104, 56 or 48.
with meal and drink options available

WE TRAIN ALL YEAR FOR THIS



All aboard the most state-of-the-art cog railway in the world. While the entire experience of riding the railway has been enhanced, the journey itself and the iconic, breathtaking views as you ride to the summit of America's Mountain remain the same. **Visit [CogRailway.com](https://www.cograilway.com) to purchase your e-ticket today.**



Feature: Scenic Fall Tours

railway operates year-round, and current group options include rates for 25 or more, seasonal group pricing and private car or full-train buyouts for larger outings.

At Seven Falls, groups experience one of Colorado's most iconic natural attractions inside a dramatic 1,250-foot-walled box canyon. Known as "The Grandest Mile of Scenery in Colorado," the park offers paved walking access, the in-mountain elevator, hiking trails and dining at Restaurant 1858. Group tours are available for 25 or more and are designed for everything from reunions and student groups to corporate outings and special celebrations

Just as important, the logistics work. Seven Falls includes complimentary parking and shuttle transportation from the Norris Penrose Event Center and groups with their own bus transportation can coordinate drop-off and pick-up at the park. The Cog Railway offers flexible group products that help plan-

ners match the experience to their schedule and budget.

Together, The Broadmoor Manitou and Pikes Peak Cog Railway and The Broadmoor Seven Falls offer the kind of pairing group planners value most: iconic scenery, memorable shared experiences and the confidence that the logistics are just as thoughtfully handled as the guest experience. From the initial booking process to arrival, the team understands the specific needs of group travel and works to make planning straightforward and flexible. With the ability to adjust reservations closer to arrival, a ticketless process that simplifies check-in, and a warm, ready-to-help staff on site, tour managers can focus less on troubleshooting and more on enjoying the day alongside their guests. The result is a Colorado experience that feels polished, efficient and genuinely welcoming from start to finish. □



Jim Dykes
New York City
Step On Guide

• 5 Stars on Trip Advisor
• Friendly & Easy to Work With
• Half-day Rate \$375.00

Call 917-576-7170
jimdykesnyc@gmail.com
www.jimdykesnyc.com



DISCOVER TEXAS
THE MESQUITE WAY

EXPERIENCE REAL TEXAS CULTURE.
ENJOY AUTHENTIC TEXAS BBQ.

GROUP RATES FOR ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT BBQ & TEXAS RODEO

Mesquite
— VISIT TEXAS —



Gone With the Wind Museum

Student & Senior Tours

Gone With the Wind Museum and Brumby Hall and Gardens Marietta, Georgia

In 2018, the collection found its home at Brumby Hall and Gardens, just a quarter mile off the Square. The house was built in 1851 for Colonel Brumby, the first superintendent of the Georgia Military Institute, where the Hilton Marietta Conference Center stands now. During the Civil War, it was repurposed as a makeshift hospital when General William T. Sherman's troops occupied Marietta in 1864. Remarkably, it survived Sherman's infamous "March to the Sea," spared out of respect for Colonel Brumby, who graduated West Point alongside Sherman.

The Trezevant family purchased the home in 1925 and had it restored as nearly as possible to its original condition, with all the

modern conveniences. The house remained a private residence until 1995 and is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

Brumby Hall is the perfect "Tara- like" backdrop for the *Gone with the Wind* Museum with the six, large columns and expansive front porch. The Museum is home to hundreds of artifacts related to both the novel and cinema versions of *Gone with the Wind*, including letters written by the book's author, Margaret Mitchell; the actual Bengaline honeymoon dress that actress Vivian Leigh wore in the film and the newest addition, the Green Drapery Dress Bonnet wore in the film when Scarlett visits Rhett in jail.

The museum's grounds extend beyond Brumby Hall itself. The Carriage House features an exhibit showcasing pieces of the

actual Tara façade used in the movie's production in Culver City, California. Beyond the Carriage House, visitors will find the meticulously maintained Historic Gardens of Brumby Hall. Brumby Gardens has been home to many celebrations, including showers, parties, bar mitzvahs and corporate events.

Whether you are a lifelong fan of *Gone with the Wind* or simply looking to experience a piece of Southern history, the museum and grounds offer an unforgettable journey through time.

The Museum and Gardens are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. More information regarding admission, event rentals, etc. can be found at gwtwmarietta.com. Tours and buses are very welcome with ample parking on-site.

Guide: Student & Senior Tours

Huntsville Botanica Garden Huntsville, Alabama

Naturally delightful journeys await you in Huntsville, Alabama – a place where the Southeast's quiet charm meets a world of vibrant color, immersive landscapes and pure, refreshing escape. At Huntsville Botanical Garden, every visit feels like stepping into a living postcard, one painted with Alabama's lush plant diversity and framed by the warm, welcoming spirit of the region.

Tucked in the heart of Huntsville, Alabama, and just down the road from the U.S. Space and Rocket Center, this 118-acre haven is more than a stop along your journey – it is an invitation to slow down, breathe deeply and discover something new around every bend.

Wander through curated display gardens, cross into the serene Lewis Birding Trail or step inside the nationally-renowned Purdy Butterfly

House, where hundreds of delicate wings drift through shafts of sunlight during butterfly season. Families will find adventure in the Wicks Family Garden, where imaginative play and nature collide, and guests of all ages will marvel at Mama Zelda, the 18-foot-tall troll (created



by artist Thomas Dambo) seated at the heart of the Mother Earth Troll Garden maze.

What truly makes the Garden shine within the charming Southeast is the way it blends

natural beauty with meaningful connection. Here, vibrant blooms and peaceful pathways become places to reconnect – with yourself, with loved ones and with the wonder of the natural world. The Garden's mission is simple yet powerful: to connect people to plants, enriching life through environmental stewardship, education and delight.

Season after season, the garden transforms – each visit offering a fresh perspective, a new discovery, a moment worth savoring. Whether you are chasing the gentle quiet of a morning stroll or exploring immersive exhibits, there is always something naturally delightful to experience here.

As you map out your journey through the Southeast, make room for a stop that feels like coming home to nature. Let Huntsville Botanical Garden welcome you, delight you and refresh your spirit – one blooming moment at a time. □

PICKWICKIN' ADVENTURES

EXPLORE PICKWICK LAKE

PICKWICK | SHILOH | SAVANNAH | SALTILLO

Unforgettable history at **Shiloh National Military Park** and southern fried catfish at the legendary **Haggy's Catfish Hotel**.

ExplorePickwickTN.com

TUPELO, MISSISSIPPI ...
POSITIVELY THE PLACE

TUPELO, MISSISSIPPI, is positively the place to enjoy a personalized tour, catered meal, and live entertainment at a one-of-a-kind attraction - customized to suit the tastes of your groups. **#MyTupelo**

Imagine what you can do here!

tupelo

For more information contact:
Jan Pannell - Sales Manager
jpannell@tupelo.net
662-841-6521



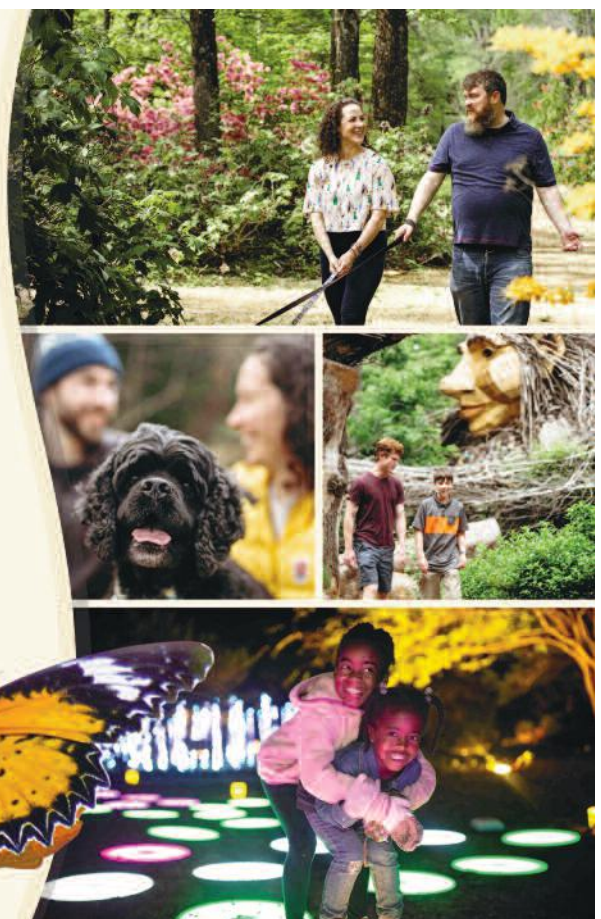
MARIETTA
GONE WITH THE WIND
 MUSEUM
at Historic Brumby Hall
gwtwmarietta.com
770-794-5576

Naturally Delightful

Open year-round • Discover 118 acres of gardens, scenic trails, and inspiring exhibits, from *Mama Zelda* by artist Thomas Dambo to the dazzling Galaxy of Lights.

HUNTSVILLE
BOTANICAL
 GARDEN

4747 Bob Wallace Avenue
 Huntsville, AL 35805
hsvbg.org



Dining & Lodging

The Springs Resort

The Springs Resort **Pagosa Springs, Colorado**

The Springs Resort in Pagosa Springs, Colorado, is a fully immersive destination where guests never have to leave the property. With 45+ mineral-rich soaking pools and cold plunges, on-site dining outlets, a panoramic sauna, thermal spa, and a full suite of wellness offerings – all just steps from your room – it is the ideal stop for tour operators seeking a memorable, turnkey experience.

The newly expanded resort features 157 guest rooms and complimentary access to immersive, accessible wellness experiences, including in-water sound bathing and in-pool meditations. Special classes can also be arranged to align with your tour schedule. Hotel guests enjoy 24-hour soaking and breathtaking views of the river and surrounding San Juan Mountains.

Dining options range from fast and casual to refined and flavorful. Enjoy poolside favorites at Barefoot Grill or a sit-down expe-

Award-winning Colorado Hot Springs

Southwest Colorado's premier hot spring resort offers group-friendly lodging, signature restaurant, immersive wellness, and 24-hour soaking access to over 45 mineral pools & water features.



Guide: Dining & Lodging

perience at Wild Finch, the new signature restaurant led by Chef Daya Myers-Hurt. Her elevated, seasonal menu brings globally-inspired cuisine with locally-sourced ingredients to the heart of the resort.

Voted *USA Today's* Best Spa Resort in 2023, 2024 and 2025, and home to the world's deepest geothermal hot spring, The Springs Resort is a must-stop destination for any 2026 itinerary.

Located just 30 minutes from Chimney Rock National Monument, three hours from Santa Fe, and five hours from Denver, Pagosa Springs is an easy and scenic addition to any Southwest tour route.

Deeply discounted group rates are available. Contact marketing@pagosahotsprings.com to learn more or reserve your stay. □



TOUR BUS PARADISE

Welcome to Asheville's Hidden Gem

Scan To Learn More



Experience true mountain hospitality in our modern boutique-like hotel with stylish guest rooms, beautiful decor, and delicious dining at Woodfire Bar & Grille.

1450 TUNNEL ROAD
ASHEVILLE, NC 28805
GROUP SALES (828) 298-5611



ASHEVILLE EAST – BLUE RIDGE PKWY











Complimentary Breakfast • Visits with Santa • Stunning Decorations



www.InnatChristmasPlace.com
Groups: 865-868-0530
Email: Sharon@innatchristmasplace.com

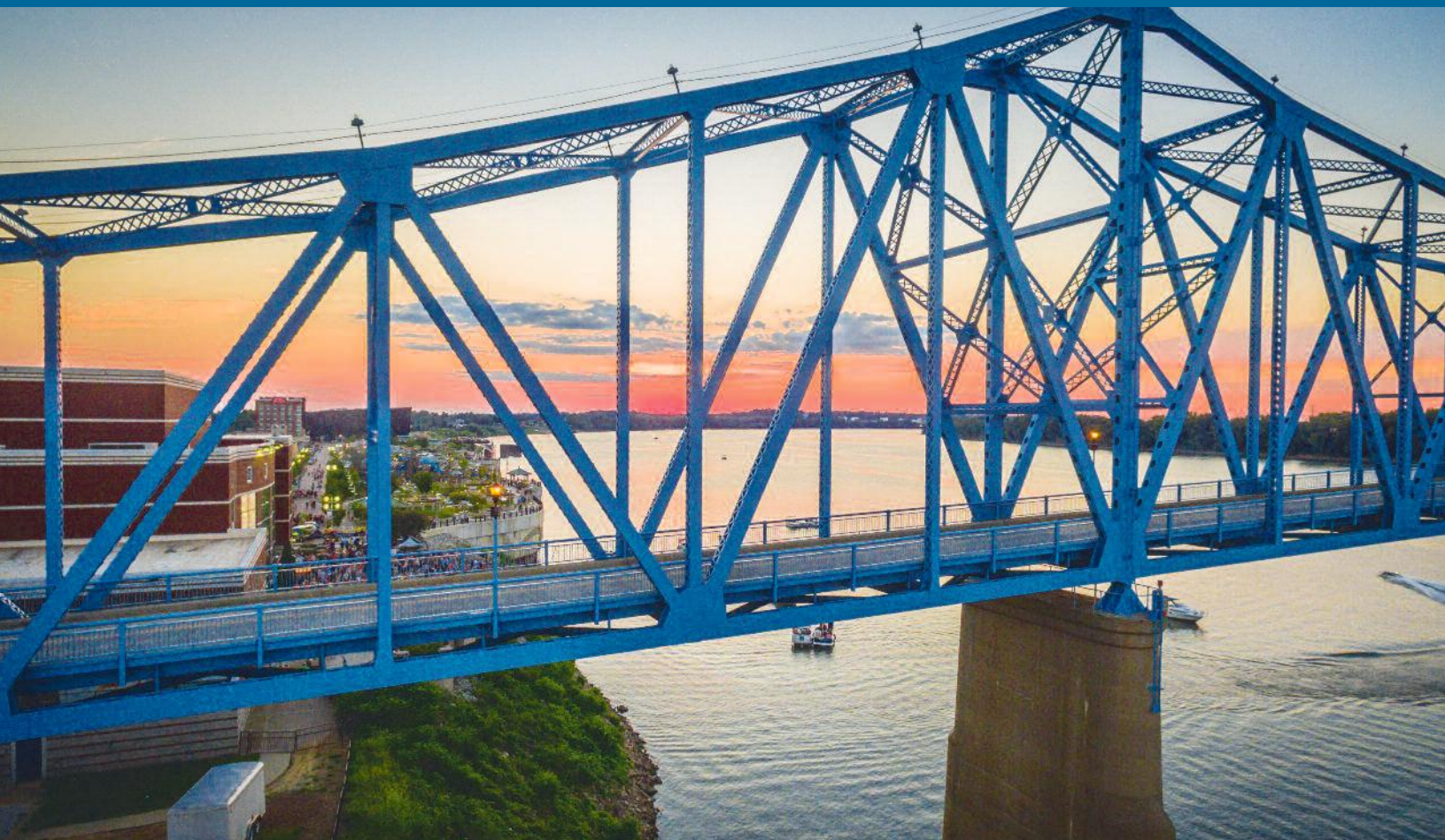


Pigeon Forge, Tennessee
Celebrating the Spirit of Christmas Every Day of the Year!™

Bring Your Bus to Owensboro

by Dave C. Kirk

Photos courtesy of Visit Owensboro



One of Owensboro's claims to fame is its location on the shore of the Ohio River. The Blue Bridge crosses the Ohio River with its boat traffic to connect Owensboro with neighboring Indiana. Owensboro was the host company for Heartland Travel Showcase in March of 2026.

If you are looking to explore somewhere new, look no further than the river city of Owensboro, Kentucky. This centrally located Kentucky destination is off of interstates 65 and 64. It is in the middle of everywhere and is in the central time zone. The city is less than two hours from Nashville and Louisville and only three hours from Indianapolis, St Louis and Cincinnati. Owensboro sits on a large bend in the Ohio River and is connected via the infamous Blue Bridge to Indiana. Make sure to check out the bridge at night as it performs nightly light shows.

Owensboro is the Bluegrass Music Capital of the World and is home to the world's only Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame & Museum. Catch a live concert, take an instrument lesson, gaze through bluegrass music's history and check out the hall of fame at this newly opened venue. Concerts run about every other week and can be packed into hotel stays and group tours in the museum. The Hall also hosts special events like the Kentucky Fiddle Championships, Kentucky Fried Pickin' and has several rotating exhibits including the *Jerry Garcia: A Bluegrass Journey*

exhibit now on display. The hall also has a outdoor pavilion which hosts larger shows with seating up to 1,500 during the warmer months. Owensboro is also home to one of the largest bluegrass music festivals in the country called ROMP which is always the last full week in June.

Since you are coming to Kentucky, check out Green River Distilling Company, the USA's 10th oldest bourbon distillery. This hands-on working distillery has been making bourbon since 1885 and its motto is the whiskey without regrets. The distillery offers not only



You can turn your group loose to enjoy downtown Owensboro. Downtown Owensboro is known for its walkability with a huge number of local restaurants, bars, breweries, coffee shops plus boutique and antique shopping. Many bus tours passengers may also enjoy walking along the beautiful Ohio River.



One of the reasons why bus tours visit Owensboro is because it is the Bluegrass Music Capital of the World. It is the home of the Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame & Museum and also can boast of having one of the largest bluegrass music festivals in the country. Here, Bluegrass Music Association Mandolin Player of the Year Sierra Hull performs at the Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame and Museum.

a traditional tour and taste option but also barrel thieving tours, cocktail making classes and sit and sips for those who want to have a little slower paced experience.

One of Owensboro's newest attractions is Owensboro Racing and Gaming. This \$100 million facility is owned by Louisville's Churchill Downs. It features more than 600 historical racing machines, a massive sportsbook, restaurant and multiple bars with live entertainment.

Owensboro is a foodie town and what it is known for most is western Kentucky BBQ mutton. Mutton is older sheep that has been slow smoked overnight over hickory wood based with a dip consisting of vinegar and spices. The three historic Owensboro BBQ restaurants are Moonlite, one of *Southern Living's* best BBQ restaurants in the south, Old Hickory, winner of Kentucky BBQ Pitmasters and Ole South which features one of the most famous BBQ buffets in the state.

When you are done with the three Bs, there is lots left to discover like nature at the Western Kentucky Botanical Garden. Step back into time as you enter the garden through the historic Weatherberry estate. Plenty of museum experiences await you like the Owensboro Museum of Fine Art where you will gaze at the 19th century-stained glass windows and enjoy the works of Picasso and Heade. Understand Owensboro's past at the Owensboro Museum of Science and History. Take a shopping trip out to the country where you will check out Preservation Station, an old elementary school transformed into a shopping experience like no other.

Let your group check out all of the walkability of downtown with tons of local restaurants, bars, breweries, coffee shops, boutique and antique shopping. Watch the sunset over the Ohio River from Smothers

Park. Be sure to check out Brasher's Little Nashville which took a page out of Broadway and is a real-life honkytonk in the heart of downtown. Each night there is an array of traveling artists and even line dancing lessons.

When you are in Owensboro, you are only 30 minutes away from the award-winning Holiday World and Splashin' Safari in Santa Claus, Indiana. We have many groups that visit the park during the day and stay in Owensboro.

If you are looking for agritourism, come pick strawberries at Reid's Orchard where you will experience a farm that has been running operations for more than 100 years. Trunnell's is another group-friendly option offering pumpkin patches and multiple activities for every age group.

Be sure to check the Visitowensboro.com calendar when thinking about when to bring your group to our city. We are Kentucky's festival city so there is pretty much always an event happening on any given weekend year-round. From our Hometown Christmas dancing light shows in the winter to the free airshow in the fall. Summer brings concerts of all varieties including the Friday After Five series.

Enjoy the travel amenities of Owensboro where hotels have surface parking and buses are welcomed and appreciated. In Owensboro, you will work with a small team at Visit Owensboro helping you craft the perfect literary to meet your budget. The staff is with you every step of the way and offers complimentary fam trips to let you try out the city to make sure it fits your group. There is no better time than now to come see what the fuss is all about and why so many travel shows are picking Owensboro as their destination. □

Since recent efforts of our magazine staff to share bus tour information from our travels has been welcomed by our readers, we will continue with some notes on our recent trip to look at what is going on in Wisconsin Dells.

Wisconsin Dells is easy to get to by bus. There are three exits on Interstate 90 serving the area with interstates going south to Madison, Milwaukee and Chicago as well as north to Minneapolis and St. Paul. The original Kilbourn City was founded by Byron Kilbourn in 1857. It was Henry Hamilton Bennett who popularized the area with his photography along the beautiful Wisconsin River. As a result, the community was renamed Wisconsin Dells in 1931.

From the original attraction of boat rides on the Wisconsin River, Wisconsin Dells has grown and expanded over the years and now can boast of having major motels, numerous restaurants and some great attractions. In addition, there are several other popular bus attractions nearby including Ho-Chunk Casino, the Mid-Continent Railway Museum, Circus World, House on the Rock and a winery or two.

Broadway

Broadway is the main east-west street of downtown Wisconsin Dells. It boasts of several blocks of restaurants, gift shops, bars and attractions. You can turn your bus group loose here for hours. There are public restrooms at the Convention & Visitor Bureau just a short walk south on Superior Street but most of the attractions and all of the restaurants have restrooms.

Ripley's Believe It or Not

You can tell your bus passengers that Ripley's dates back to December 19, 1918 when Robert Ripley started a regular newspaper column in *The New York Globe* originally called Champs and Chumps that presented sports feats. He began adding non-sports items and changed the name to Believe It or Not in October, 1919. At its peak of popularity, the column was read daily by 80 million readers.

The Delightful Dells



Ripley's Believe It or Not Museum

by Larry Plachno

The syndicated column became so popular that it branched out into other areas including radio, books, films, television, Internet and even computer games. Eventually, the Believe It or Not concept was developed as museums and other attractions. Each location is somewhat different and aspires to follow the original plan of the newspaper column by offering odd, unusual and interesting items.

Located at the west side of Broadway, Ripley's Believe It or Not Museum offers a collection of unique and interesting displays guaranteed to captivate your bus passengers. There are 13,000 square feet on two levels with amazing galleries, puzzling illusions and strange stories. Restrooms are located on the lower level and there is a gift shop on the upper level that offers some interesting items.

Dells Mining Company

For many years the Dells Mining Company was located on Dells Parkway. It has now moved to a building towards the eastern side of Broadway. One advantage of the new location is that things are now inside and you are not bothered by the weather.

What you can do at Dells Mining Company is buy different buckets of soil and sand. Then you slowly sift through the material at one of two troughs with running water. This is fun for both young and old as different gems and semi-precious stones are discov-

ered. There are different types of buckets available with some having more things to find and even cut stones.

Once you have finished sifting through your bucket of material, you will have several gems or semi-precious stones in your hand. You can take these home as souvenirs or you can walk over to the other side of Dells Mining Company where one of the staff can tell you what you have and show you ways your gems can be finished and made into different kinds of jewelry. This provides a rather unique souvenir of your trip to Wisconsin

Dells. Dells Mining company will send you the completed jewelry in a few weeks.

Dells Parkway

Dells Parkway a major four-lane, north-south roadway connecting Wisconsin Dells to Lake Delton. It is lined with attractions and restaurants. I might note that the area is very crowded in the summer months, particularly on weekends. You might want to consider a bus tour in the shoulder seasons when things are less crowded but most of the attractions and restaurants are still open.

Timbavati Wildlife Park

Timbavati is an excellent example on how Wisconsin Dells is changing and improving. It is a new attraction located on Dells Parkway only a short drive south of Broadway. My memory tells me that it took over an area that formerly had some amusement park rides for youngsters.

Timbavati is an impressive combination of a zoo and a wildlife park. You can get a container of food to feed the animals as you walk around. The buildings include Birds and Reptiles, Feline Center, Penguins, Primates, Indoor Exhibits, Parakeet Encounter, Goat Mountain, Kangaroo Walkabout and the Woodlands area with several different types of animals. Camel and pony rides will sometimes be available. You can also walk over to the Wildlife area where there is a giraffe feeding dock.

A major part of the Timbavati experience is riding the Safari Train. This amusement park train takes visitors into the Grasslands and the Train Feeding Area. Here, the train stops while the animals come up to the train to see if you have some food for them. Have your cameras ready because some of the animals will come right up to the train looking for a treat. Moving on, the train will make a stop at the Giraffe Feeding Deck where you can feed the giraffes and possibly some camels.

You will not go hungry at Timbavati. The Congo Cafe offers burgers, pizza, nachos and ice cream while you can get beer, wine and



Feature: The Delightful Dells

frozen drinks at The Oasis. Both the zoo area and the Safari Train station have restrooms. In addition, you will find a gift shop at the Safari Train station.

Dells Army Ducks

The Dells Army Ducks are located further south on Dells Parkway and down a hill on the east side. Most of the original World War II Ducks were built on the General Motors bus assembly line in Pontiac, Michigan, which is why some of their parts are the same as buses of that period. What makes a Duck ride different is that they can go on land and water. They provide an unforgettable adventure through the scenic Lower Dells. The ducks have been an attraction in Wisconsin Dells for 80 seasons and offer a one-of-a-kind sightseeing experience that blends history, nature and fun.

Your Duck adventure will allow you to marvel at the sandstone rock formations that took more than 14,000 years to develop and give the area its name. The Dells Army Ducks tour passes natural landmarks including Grotto Island, the Twin Ink Stands, Sugar Bowl and Lone Rock. With powerful six-wheel drive, the Ducks are also comfortable

on land where they can travel off-road and then splash down into a lake.

Originally designed to carry troops, the Ducks today provide a time-traveling adventure. Each tour is led by an energetic and knowledgeable guide who shares fascinating facts, entertaining stories and a few well-loved corny jokes. A Duck tour has something for passengers of all ages. It is one of the most unique and iconic ways to experience the beauty, history and adventure of the Wisconsin Dells.

The Dells Army Ducks has a gift shop with restrooms that you can visit both before your departure and after your return.

Other Locations

The Crystal Grand Music Theatre

The Crystal Grand is located on Monroe Avenue, Route 23, just a short distance from the second or middle Dells interchange on I-90. It has grown into one of Midwest's most celebrated performance venues. It opened in 1994 and has seating for roughly 2,000. This makes it large enough to attract national touring acts yet small enough to ensure that every seat feels close to the action.

Over the years the Crystal Grand has hosted an impressive array of talent. This includes country stars, rock legends as well as beloved pop icons. LeAnn Rimes brought her soaring vocals and powerful presence to the theater. Lee Brice brought his You, Me and My Guitar tour to Wisconsin Dells. Gary Allen, another country favorite, has also drawn enthusiastic crowds to the Crystal Grand.

The theater's reach extends beyond country music. Acts like the REO Speedwagon, Jay Leno, Pat Benatar, Jackyl, Nate Bargatze and Shane Smith and The Saints have all taken the stage, giving the Crystal Grand its reputation as a diverse hub for live entertainment. In 2023 the Crystal Grand was nominated for Academy of Country Music Theater of the year, a testament to its growing influence within the music industry. For Wisconsin Dells, the Crystal Grand is not just a music theater, it is a place where memories are made and where music truly comes alive.

Chula Vista Resort

Located on River Road on the east shore of the Wisconsin River and just a few minutes north of downtown Wisconsin Dells, the Chula Vista Resort has everything you would



Dells Army Ducks



Chula Vista
Resort

Just Beyond the City, Surrounded by Serenity

Nestled in nature yet only minutes from town, Chula Vista Resort offers the perfect blend of comfort, relaxation, and gentle adventure.

ChulaVistaResort.com





Trivia Question for The May Issue

What tourist railroad popular with bus tours has rebuilt a 100+ year old Pacific steam locomotive for tourist service?

For the answer go to:
[https://bustourismagazine.com/
trivia-may-jun-2026](https://bustourismagazine.com/trivia-may-jun-2026)



SNAPSHOT OF OUR 50-SHOW 2026 LINE-UP

JANUARY 31ST
CRAIG MORGAN

FEBRUARY 21ST
ELI YOUNG BAND & LANCO

FEBRUARY 28TH
THE FRONTMEN

MARCH 14TH
MOLLY HATCHET & SWEET

APRIL 18TH
CLINT BLACK

APRIL 25TH
TRACY LAWRENCE

WWW.CRYSTALGRAND.COM

CRYSTAL GRAND

MUSIC THEATRE
Wisconsin Dells



BUS TOURS
ENJOY DISCOUNTS
& SPECIAL PERKS

Contact: Kate Alexander
katea@crystalgrand.com

want for group-friendly accommodations including convenient planning, versatile amenities and warm Wisconsin hospitality.

One of the largest independent resorts in the area, Chula Vista welcomes groups of all sizes with more than 600 guest

rooms, suites and condominiums, many featuring scenic river or poolside views. There is ample complimentary coach parking, easy passenger drop-off zones and coordinated check-in assistance with luggage and Express Check In to keep group arrivals smooth and efficient.

Tour planners appreciate the resort's flexible group dining options including private banquet spaces and sunset river boat dinner cruises that launch directly from Chula Vista Resort docks. There are on-site restaurants like Kaminski's Chop House and the Kilbourn City Grill. Chula Vista offers their famous Las Vegas-style 90-foot Breakfast Buffet that is difficult to match anywhere and even includes custom omelettes.

When not away on tour, your group can take advantage of the resort's indoor and outdoor waterparks, the new Navi Spa for massage or facials, scenic boat rides and the mile-long River Walk. Chula Vista turns a bus tour into a memorable experience. □



Advertiser's Index

Abilene & Smoky Valley Railroad	16	Lowell Observatory	9
Billy Graham Library	11	Sonnenberg Gardens & Mansion	
Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism	5	State Historic Park	6
Chula Vista Resort	29	Starved Rock Lodge	
City of Mesquite	18	& Conference Center	13
Conway Scenic Railroad	31	Texas Ranger Hall of Fame	
Crawford County CVB	14	& Museum	5
Cumberland County Playhouse	32	The Broadmoor Manitou	
Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad	8	& Pikes Peak Cog Railway	17
Ford's Theatre	15	The Crystal Grand Music Theatre	29
George Bush Library & Museum	14	The Inn at Christmas Place	23
Georgetown Loop Railroad		The Springs Resort	22
& Mining Park	16	Tri-State Museum	
Gone with the Wind Museum		& Visitor Center	6
and Brumby Hall & Gardens	21	Tupelo CVB	20
Hardin County Tourism	20	USS LST Ship Memorial Inc.	6
Holiday Inn Asheville East –		Visit McDonnough, Georgia	2
Blue Ridge Parkway	23		
Huntsville Botanical Garden	21		
Jim Dykes – NYC Guide	18		

MOVING?

Please let us know at least 60 days in advance to ensure that your next issue of BUS TOURS MAGAZINE reaches your new address. Postcards with change of address forms are available at your local post office.

Please return your mailing label or the information on it with your new address.

A CHOICE OF TRAIN RIDES!

- Tour groups welcome!
- Spring and Winter options
- More 1 hr Valley trains!
- One way group travel options and special fares available
- More dates for the scenic 4-hour *Mountaineer* over Crawford Notch!
- Ask about Crawford boarding options!

For group sales contact:
Jack Duffin
jack@conwayscenic.com
603-986-7327

CONWAY SCENIC RAILROAD



The Mountaineer offers a supremely scenic journey over New Hampshire's Crawford Notch.

Call or Book online - ConwayScenic.com • (603) 356-5251

38 Norcross Circle | North Conway, NH

Cumberland County PLAYHOUSE

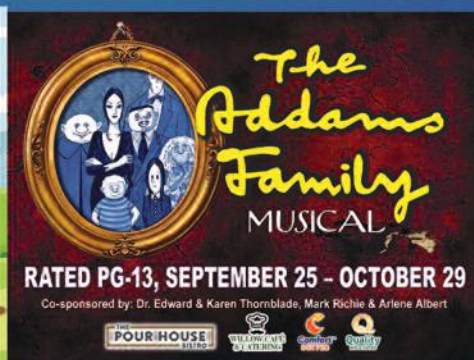
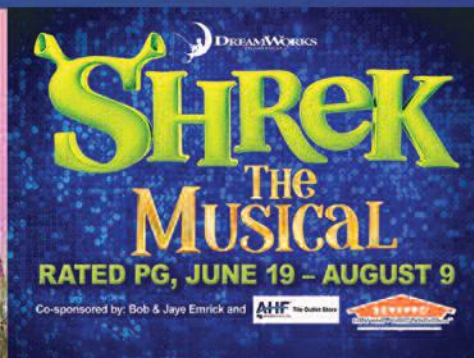


Co-sponsored by:

RATED PG-13, NOW THRU MAY 2



The Family Of Owen Golden



**PLAYHOUSE
SEASON
PARTNERS:
KEN & GRACE PATTON**

NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
for the **ARTS**
arts.gov

(931) 484-5000
www.ccplayhouse.com

**TENNESSEE
ARTS
COMMISSION**
Cultivate. Create. Participate.



American Gothic House and Center Eldon, Iowa

When travelers step off the coach in Eldon, Iowa, they are not just at a museum – they arrive at the backdrop of one of the world’s most recognizable paintings. The American Gothic House and Center offers the kind of stop tour planners value: an iconic photo opportunity, a flexible visit length and easy planning that help keep an itinerary on time.

At the heart of the experience is the little white farmhouse with its pointed Gothic window – the very house Grant Wood used in 1930 for his painting, *American Gothic*. Wood posed his dentist and his sister to represent a Midwestern father and daughter, with the Eldon home as the iconic setting. Recreate

that famous scene on the lawn with your travelers. Admission fees include costume use, adding authenticity to your group photo.

Inside the adjacent Center, visitors enjoy user-friendly exhibits, short films and interpretive panels that tell the story of Wood, his art, and the Iowa landscape that shaped his work. Just outside, a native prairie garden provides a pleasant break and a connection to the plants and textures that define Wood’s world. The gift shop is another highlight, stocked with unique and often one-of-a-kind finds that make meaningful souvenirs.

The site is group-friendly with on-site bus parking, restrooms and picnic tables for a quick break. Most visits last 30 to 90 minutes. To save time, planners may request the 28-

minute video in advance for a small fee and show it on the motorcoach before arrival.

Tours are based on staff availability and should be booked three to four weeks in advance. Public hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, 1–4 p.m. Monday and Tuesday tours may be available by request. Rates are \$5 for ages 13 through 59 and \$4 for ages 60+, with discounted group pricing for 10 or more. Bus drivers and tour guides are complimentary.

Ready to put your travelers in the picture? Contact Cari Nicely, Administrator, American Gothic House and Center, 300 American Gothic Street, Eldon, Iowa 52554; phone (641) 652-3352; e-mail cnicely@wapellocounty.org; Web site at americangothichouse.org; Facebook @AmericanGothicHouse.

White Pines Lodge

Mt. Morris, Illinois

As group travelers look ahead to booking group tours for 2026, White Pines Lodge continues to shine as a destination that brings together entertainment, dining, lodging and outdoor recreation in one memorable setting. With decades of hospitality experience and a long-standing reputation, White Pines Lodge offers a welcoming retreat where guests can relax, be entertained and enjoy time together.

A signature highlight is the Playhouse Theater. Live productions such as *Elvis Through the Years* and *Kenny and Dolly in Harmony* feature familiar music, professional performances and a warm, inviting atmosphere. Each show is paired with a buffet-style lunch, combining great food with unforgettable entertainment.

Each Christmas season, White Pines Lodge presents its own month-long production, *Scrooge the Comedy*. This one-of-a-kind show delivers laugh-out-loud moments through clever storytelling and enthusiastic

audience participation, making it a favorite holiday tradition for many returning guests.

Beyond the stage, White Pines Lodge is known for its on-site dining, offering classic, homestyle cuisine that guests enjoy whether visiting for the day or staying overnight. His-

toric lodging adds further appeal, inviting guests to unwind and fully enjoy the lodge's heritage and charm.

Guests can also explore shopping for unique gifts or take scenic hikes along trails



The Original

Small admission fee Exhibits Gift Shop Movie Costumes

Picture yourself here...

**AMERICAN
GOTHIC HOUSE
& CENTER**

Eldon, Iowa

americangothichouse.org



MIX-TAPE

FACTORY  OBSCURA

Experience 6,000 square feet of immersive, interactive art in Downtown Oklahoma City!

Enjoy group, senior and student discounts at this wheelchair-accessible, adult-designed experience that's fun for all ages, featuring a gift shop with 100+ local artists, free parking, and nearby restaurants, shops and attractions.

25 NW 9th St, Oklahoma City, OK 73102 www.factoryobscura.com

that showcase the natural beauty of the area, creating a well-rounded experience for every interest.

With convenient access for groups and thoughtful amenities throughout, White Pines Lodge is more than a stop along the way – it is a destination. From matinees to welcoming dining, historic accommodations and outdoor activities, White Pines Lodge remains a timeless favorite for group travel in 2026 and beyond.

Book your experience by phoning (815) 655-2400 or go to visitwhitepines.com.

Whitewater Valley Railroad Connersville, Indiana

All Aboard Indiana's Most Scenic Railroad. Located at 455 Market Street in Historic Connersville Indiana, the Whitewater Valley Railroad offers a variety of excursions throughout the year. It is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit operating railroad museum. The historic rolling stock was manufactured prior to 1960 and operated in as-built condition. The railroad is 100 percent volunteer-based including train crew, track maintenance and all mechanical and restoration staff.

For more than 50 years thrilling, historic and educational trips through the Whitewater Valley have been offered. The signature trip, the Valley Flyer, is a five-hour round trip on weekends May through October. Guests travel to the 1880's persevered canal town of Metamora, Indiana. After a short layover that allows riders to visit the

Is YOUR GROUP coming to Myrtle Beach? Make plans with us and DOUBLE UP!

SCAN QR CODE TO GET GROUP DETAILS

2026 SEASON PASSES ON SALE NOW!

BOOK YOUR 2026 GROUP NOW AND SAVE BIG!

BROADWAY GRAND PRIX FAMILY RACE PARK
843-839-4080
WWW.BROADWAYGRANDPRIX.COM

40 Years Myrtle Waves WATER PARK
843.913.9250
WWW.MYRTLEWAVES.COM
3000 MR. JOE WHITE AVE. • MYRTLE BEACH, SC

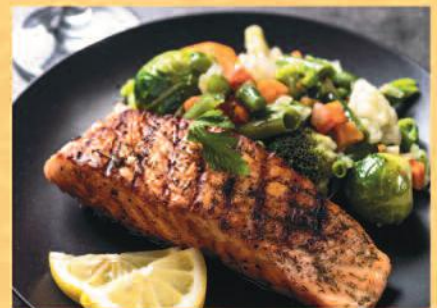
Favorite Group Tour Destination

Experience White Pines Lodge

Dinner Theater Shows
Historic Lodging
On-site Dining
Gift Shop
Outdoor Hiking



6712 W. Pines Rd. Mt Morris, IL
815-655-2400
visitwhitepines.com



restaurants and shops, the train returns to Connersville. The Wild West Express features the Circle D Rangers with a family-friendly trip of songs, shootouts and fun. Fall and winter brings some of the most popular trains of the year and tickets for these trains sell out quickly. Multiple other trains and specialty trips occur throughout the year on select weekends and holidays.

To purchase tickets or for more Information on any of the trips visit the Web site, at whitewatervalleyrr.org. You can speak to a ticket agent during weekdays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. by phoning (765) 825-2054.



Spruce Forest Artisan Village Grantsville, Maryland

Step back in time and experience yesterday today at Spruce Forest Artisan Village, located on the historic Little Crossings campus along the legendary National Road. Rich with stories from the French and Indian War and the travels of George Washington, this unique destination offers vis-

itors a chance to explore history while enjoying the creativity and hospitality of the present.

The Village is home to eight resident artisans who practice and preserve traditional crafts while offering their work for sale. Guests can watch pottery take shape on the wheel, see metal transformed by the forge and discover the artistry behind weaving, painting and other timeless

trades. Each artisan shares not only their finished pieces but also the knowledge and techniques that have been passed down through generations, giving visitors a deeper appreciation for these historic crafts.

A visit to Little Crossings also offers exceptional dining experiences. Penn Alps Restaurant is well known for its hearty meals and popular buffet, serving classic

ALL ABOARD!

Plan your group's next adventure on the heritage Whitewater Valley Railroad which offers one-of-a-kind views of Indiana's landscape.

THE VALLEY FLYER

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY - MAY THROUGH OCTOBER

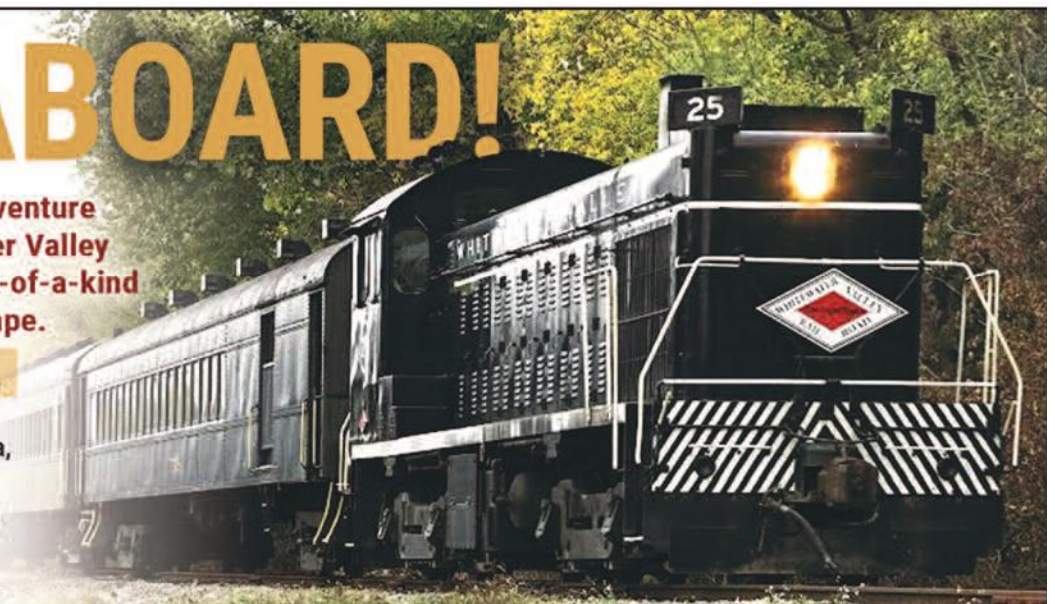
Depart the Connersville Station to see Historic Metamora, Indiana, a restored canal town. Visit the working grist mill, restored canal and lock, historic covered aqueduct, shops and restaurants.

SEASONAL THEMED TRAINS

APRIL TO DECEMBER

Easter Bunny Express - Spring Whitewater Limited
Wild West Special - Civil War Special - Themed Trains to Dinner
Pumpkin Liner - Ghost Train of Metamora
Throttle Time - Fall Foliage Flyer - The Polar Express*

THE POLAR EXPRESS and all related characters and elements © & ™ Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. (s24)



Ask About Our Themed Trips, Special Events and Group Rates!

765-825-2054 • whitewatervalleyrr.org • info@whitewatervalleyrr.org

comfort foods in a warm and welcoming setting. Just steps away, Mountain Grape Tavern offers a more contemporary menu featuring steaks, pasta and a carefully selected wine list. Whether you are looking for a casual meal or a relaxed evening out, the campus provides options that complement the charm of the Village.

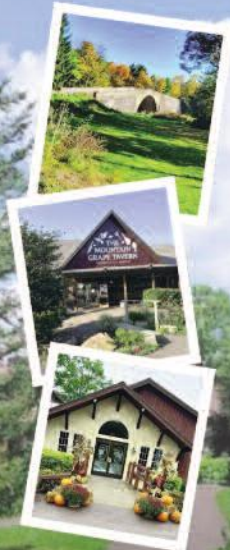
Art enthusiasts will also enjoy the on-site gallery, hosted by the local Arts Council. This space features rotating exhibits from guest artists, adding another layer of creativity to the campus. Nearby, the Penn Alps Craft Shop – one of the largest craft shops in the region – features Appalachian and Pennsylvania Dutch crafts, showcasing the rich cultural traditions that define the area.

History continues at Stanton's Mill, listed on the National Register of Historic Places and still producing wheat flour today. Visitors can also explore the Granary, a restored stagecoach station now serving as a beautiful artisan studio.

A visit to Spruce Forest Artisan Village and Little Crossings offers a memorable blend of history, art, craftsmanship and

hospitality – where the past is preserved and shared for generations to come. □





ONE CAMPUS

Endless Options

8 Artisan Studios

2 Restaurants

Historic Cabins & Stories

Guest Artisans & Gallery Shop

1 Craft Shop

1 Wine Shop







pennalps.com / spruceforest.org
301.895.5985 Exit 19 off I68 Grantsville, MD







VISIT THE LARGEST GOURD CRAFTING FARM IN THE WORLD!

Take a tour to see how our expert crafting team creates our unique gourd designs.

Create your own gourd project with the help of our team as a fun group project.

Enjoy our 7,000 sq. ft. gift shop filled with unique hand-crafted items, gifts, and decor.



Meadowbrooke Gourds

125 Potato Road | Carlisle, PA 17015
717-776-6029 | www.mbgourds.com

The National Railroad Museum



Explore the Legacy That Built America!



The National Railroad Museum in Green Bay, WI, is one of the most interactive RR Museums around! Our Museum features the largest collection of drumheads in the world, over 70 pieces of rolling stock, 150,000+ railroad artifacts, and more!

nationalrrmuseum.org | 2285 S Broadway Green Bay | info@nationalrrmuseum.org



HIKE AND ATTRACTION CENTRAL

On The Icefields Parkway
in the heart of the Rockies

Hwy #93N, at the junction of
Hwy #11 on the Icefields Parkway.

Find out all we
offer to enhance
your tours.



Restaurant



Cafe



Pub & Deck

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Buffet & Catering



Hotel



General
Store



Fuel Station

Within 30 minutes of most major attractions.
GLACIERS, MOUNTAINS, HIKING & SO MUCH MORE!
Phone: 403-761-7000 | Banff National Park Resort



**SPRINGHILL SUITES BY
MARRIOTT – GREEN BAY**
1011 Tony Canadeo Run
Green Bay, Wisconsin 54311
marriott.com/grbsh

Where to Stay in Green Bay

Prime Location

- Minutes from Lambeau Field, Titletown District, and the RESCH Expo

Spacious All-Suite Rooms

- Separate living & sleeping areas
- Plush bedding, mini fridge and microwave in all suites

Complimentary Breakfast Daily

- Fresh, hot and cold selections served daily

Relax & Recharge

- Indoor heated pool and Jacuzzi
- Meeting rooms available for private gatherings

Free High-Speed Wi-Fi

- Stay connected whether you're working or streaming

Tour Group Concessions

- Roundtrip baggage pull — \$10 per person
- Cookies & coffee meet-and-greet
- Pre-keyed rooms for fast, easy check-in
- Complimentary bus parking
- Tour Guide Earns Double Bonvoy Points

CONTACT: Robin Orrell, Director of Sales at
(920) 569-8502 or robin.a.orrell@marriott.com

Reader Service Card

To receive more bus and group tour planning information, from these advertisers, just check the box and mail or fax this form back to us.

Mail to: Bus Tours Magazine, 9698 W. Judson Road, Polo, Illinois 61064 or fax to (815) 946-2347

Please print all information to insure correct response.

Name/Title

Firm/Organization

Address

City, State, Zip

Area Code & Phone No.

E-mail (optional)

Comments

MAY/JUNE 2026

To receive information from **all** advertisers in a territory, check the box below

☐ Midwest ☐ Northeast ☐ Southeast ☐ West ☐ Central

To receive information from individual advertisers, check the specified box(es) below

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Abilene & Smoky Valley Railroad . . .16 | ☐ Jim Dykes – NYC Guide18 |
| ☐ Billy Graham Library11 | ☐ Lowell Observatory9 |
| ☐ Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism . . .5 | ☐ Sonnenberg Gardens & Mansion |
| ☐ Chula Vista Resort29 | ☐ State Historic Park6 |
| ☐ City of Mesquite18 | ☐ Starved Rock Lodge |
| ☐ Conway Scenic Railroad31 | ☐ & Conference Center13 |
| ☐ Crawford County CVB14 | ☐ Texas Ranger Hall of Fame |
| ☐ Cumberland County Playhouse32 | ☐ & Museum5 |
| ☐ Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad . . .8 | ☐ The Broadmoor Manitou |
| ☐ Ford's Theatre15 | ☐ & Pikes Peak Cog Railway17 |
| ☐ George Bush Library & Museum . . .14 | ☐ The Crystal Grand Music Theatre . . .29 |
| ☐ Georgetown Loop Railroad | ☐ The Inn at Christmas Place23 |
| ☐ & Mining Park16 | ☐ The Springs Resort22 |
| ☐ Gone with the Wind Museum | ☐ Tri-State Museum |
| ☐ and Brumby Hall & Gardens21 | ☐ & Visitor Center6 |
| ☐ Hardin County Tourism20 | ☐ Tupelo CVB20 |
| ☐ Holiday Inn Asheville East – | ☐ USS LST Ship Memorial Inc.6 |
| ☐ Blue Ridge Parkway23 | ☐ Visit McDonnough, Georgia2 |
| ☐ Huntsville Botanical Garden21 | |

You Can Return Your Reader Service Request Three Ways:

1. Mail to *Bus Tours Magazine*, 9698 W. Judson Road, Polo, Illinois 61064

2. Fax to (815) 946-2347

3. Fill out online at BusToursMagazine.com/rsc

Save postage or fax charges and get bus and group tour information by filling out the Reader Service Card online.

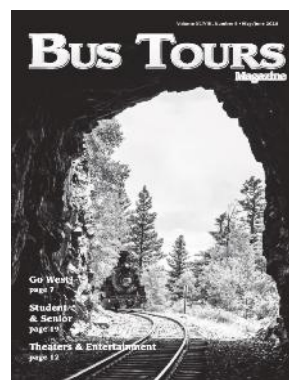
Just go to **www.BusToursMagazine.com/rsc**

BusToursMagazine.com

Looking for ideas for your next bus tours?

**Surf on over to Bus Tours Magazine
at www.bustoursmagazine.com
for ideas including:**

- Supplier Directory
- Online Editorial
- Digital Ads / Banners
- Digital Issues of *Bus Tours Magazine*
- Videos of Bus Tour Locations
- Regional Sections
- Plus Much More



**For more information on advertising opportunities please
contact us at (815) 946-2341 or nationalbustrader@gmail.com**

Get a Copy of Bus Tours Magazine for a Friend or Associate

If you would like an additional free copy of Bus Tours Magazine, please follow one of the three steps below to get on the mailing list. Please be sure to check one of the tour involvement boxes on the form.

How Can I Receive Bus Tours Magazine Free?

1



Snail Mail – Fill out the form and mail to:
Bus Tours Magazine
9698 W. Judson Rd
Polo, IL, 61064

2



Fax – Fill out the card below and fax to (815) 946-2347.

3



Online – Visit our Web site at www.bustoursmagazine.com and click on the appropriate “Subscribe” link.

Postal regulations require that we periodically obtain your approval to keep your name on the mailing list of Bus Tours Magazine.

Free Bus Tours Magazine Subscription

You May Also Fax This Form To: 815-946-2347

☐ Additional Free Copy of Bus Tours Magazine

Name _____

Company _____

Street Address _____

City _____

State (Province)/Zip (PC) _____

Contact me for renewal by ☐ e-mail ☐ phone

Phone# _____

e-Mail _____

Please indicate your area(s) of group tour involvement:

☐ Bus/Group tour planner

☐ Tour Wholesaler

☐ Bus Operator Planning Tours

☐ Corporate/Organization Tours

☐ Receptive Operator

☐ Group Leader

☐ Other, please specify _____

Today's Date _____

Your signature _____

Bus Tours Magazine

9698 W. Judson Road, Polo, Illinois 61064
May/June 2026

- **Abilene and Smoky Valley Railroad**
page 16
- **Sonnenberg Gardens & Mansion**
page 6
- **USS LST Ship Memorial**
page 6
- **Gone With the Wind Museum**
page 21
- **Chula Vista Resort**
page 29

Moving Ahead
With 2026 Tours

Please fill out the Reader Service Card
on the back wrapper.