

Departure Information: Please plan to arrive to the First Presbyterian Church in Murrysville no later than 6:45 am. This will give us time to get your bags on the bus, give you your name tags, etc. The church address is 3202 N Hills Rd, Murrysville, PA 15668. My team will be there beginning at 6:30 am. We WILL have access to the restrooms at the church. You will drive around to the back of the church building and someone from my team will tell you exactly where to park. We will be parking nose to nose in order to conserve space in the parking lot. Please carpool with fellow passengers if possible, or if there is someone willing to drop you at the church that is also great. We will depart for the airport at 7 am.

If you want to meet us at the airport you may do so. If you are in the first departure group (see below) please plan to be to the Southwest check-in area by 8 am. Those who are on the group tickets MUST check in as a group. So we all need to be together. If you're in the second check-in group and arriving on your own, please plan to arrive by 8:30 am. I know that is a little early for the second group but it is essential that we stay together due to how the tickets are booked.

As you know, we are flying Southwest, which means that technically you can check 2 free checked bags per passenger, with each bag not exceeding 50 pounds in weight and 62 inches in combined dimensions (length + width + height). If your bag is overweight or oversize there will be a fee. You may also take a carry-on bag that will fit in the overhead bin, and a personal item that will fit under the seat in front of you. Now let's get real for a moment. You will enjoy this trip more if you pack as lightly as possible. Please make every effort to limit yourself to one checked bag. If you are able to just bring a carry on size bag which is limited to 24 X 16 X 10 more power to you and go for it! There will not be baggage service at our hotels, so it will be up to you to lug whatever you bring. If you need to bring a cpap machine, you should carry that on the plane. It does not count as your personal item. As someone pointed out at our meet and greet, we will seldom have time to change before dinner, so one outfit per day is what you will need.

The following group will be leaving on Flight 1705 which departs at 10:10 am and arrives in Baltimore at 11:15 am. This group will then depart Baltimore at 2:40 pm on flight 1944, arriving in Salt Lake City at 5:15 pm. Sharon Bartolotta, Frances Gallo, Diana Fontanese, Elizabeth Stephenson, Jordan Stephenson, Scott Stephenson, Brenda Oravets, Judy Brodmerkel, Anne Marie Simoncelli, Michael Simoncelli, **Bill Hammond, Nancy Hammond, Debbie Corll, Dan Corll, Ellen Frisco, Don Frisco, Ray Leiser, Lisa Leiser, Toni Vokes, Barb Sharp, Jodi Strzeszewski, Randall Strzeszewski, Tammi Herrington, Brad Herrington.**

If your name is highlighted in yellow, you were booked outside of the group block and have your own confirmation number. This means that you will need to check yourself in at the 24 hour out time, promptly at that time. So at 10:10 am on Wednesday 9/17 be ready. Toni & Barb, I have your confirmation numbers for you. If anyone else doesn't have their confirmation numbers, let me know. If your name is not highlighted, you will be checked in as part of the group block.

For those checking in as a group – I will have a master boarding pass on my phone. We will check in together, and after you show your ID to the agent you will receive a paper boarding pass to carry with you.

The second group will depart on flight # 2929 at 11:50 am. This flight will arrive in Denver at 1:10 pm, and then depart Denver at 3:05 pm on flight 1346. This group will arrive in Salt lake City at 4:35 pm. The only person not booked as part of the group on this flight is **Lynn Mance**. Lynn you will need to check yourself in. Everyone else is part of the group and will be checked in by me: Thomas Trienski, Lisa Dormire, Mary

Staab, Penny Manges, Stacey Klingensmith, Patricia Ridenour, Robert Ridenour, Joyce Spangler, Paul Harvey, Bettie Harvey, Sharon Johnson, Ralph Johnson, Sandra Rubright, Karen Grillo, Mariam Lamison, James Copeland, Sandra Copeland, Karen manz, Rebecca Horrell, Brenda Gergely, John Gergely, Anna Marie Hottell, Christine Flloyd, Kathryn Whitacre, Nancy Klingensmith, Glenn Klingensmith, Rita Perotti, Nancy Scopel, Mark Scopel.

Remember that seating on Southwest is open seating. I will do my very best to hit the check in promptly at the 24 hour mark. If it appears that it is going to be a full flight, please consider getting into a little group of six to fill both sides of the aisle, so that we're not leaving a bunch of single seats throughout the plane for our fellow passengers.

Here is a link to TSA's list of what you can and can't bring on a plane: <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/whatcanibring/all>

Please note new regulations that charging blocks for phones must be in your carry-on bag and not your checked bag due to fire risk. (It was also noted last night that battery operated curling irons, shavers, etc. must also be in your carry on.)

As you pack – keep in mind there will never be a time that you need to be fancy. Temperatures will range from an average high of 89 and low of 54 in Moab, to an average high of 71 and low of 37 in Bryce. Light comfortable clothes and a jacket are in order.

Here are some packing items that are on my list: Lightweight casual clothes, good rain poncho or rain jacket, sturdy walking shoes (hiking boots really won't be necessary but if you have them and are comfortable in them, go for it) an extra pair of shoes in case yours get wet, beanie in case it is windy and cold, sun hat, swimsuit, your usual toiletries, bug spray, sun screen, medications, motion sickness medication if you have a tendency, national park passport if you have one, reusable water bottle, collapsible trekking poles if you are comfortable using them, binoculars, charging block for your phone, sunglasses, travel toilet paper and sanitizing wipes, collapsible cooler, freezer packs, lightweight day pack or drawstring pack, heel protectors if you have a tendency to get blisters, first aid supplies for your personal needs, snacks. Please note that restrooms in the national parks may be "rough" so the travel toilet paper and wipes might make the experience more comfortable.

Travel day: Thursday September 18

At the church, you will be given your name badge for the trip. Please plan to wear it in case of emergency. If you prefer to clip it on your waistband that is fine, but please have it somewhere that someone could easily find your badge to know that you are with the group. Because our shuttle to the airport and our bus home for the trip are both 56 passenger buses, your assigned seat will be for every time we get on a bus that is solely for Redstone passengers. Because numbering systems vary on buses, you will get on the bus and count back the number of rows indicated on your name badge, on either the driver side or the door side. If there are numbers on the seats or overhead on any of our buses, ignore these numbers and just count. Please sit in your assigned row to ensure that we keep traveling groups together. This trip is totally full with 56 passengers, so if you are traveling in an odd numbered group you will be seated with another passenger who is traveling with an odd numbered group. Because we have a waiting list for this

trip, we opted to accommodate as many people as possible. Yes we will be cozy, but we will have so much fun.

Our first group is to arrive in Salt Lake City at 4:30 and the second at 5:15. Once we all have our bags we will proceed to pillar 2B outside. I am hoping we will be leaving the airport at 6 pm. We will stop for dinner at the famous Chuck-a-Rama (a popular buffet in Utah) and then make our way to the hotel for the night. We will be staying that the Holiday Inn Express Holiday Inn Express 206 South West Temple in Salt Lake City. Please note that Salt Lake is 2 hours behind us in time, so we will be quite tired by the time we get to the hotel. This hotel does not have a pool.

Friday, September 19

Rise and shine and pack up to move on. Breakfast is available at the hotel beginning at 6 am. Your body will tell you that's 8 am so you'll be up and ready. We want to have the bus loaded and ready for departure at 9:00 am. A step on guide will be joining us to give us a tour of Salt Lake City. The tour will end in time for us to enjoy the daily organ recital at the Mormon tabernacle at noon. It's a short concert but a way to get in to the temple. We will then have time to visit a food court for lunch before a 1:30 pm departure.

Upon our arrival in Moab we will make a stop at a grocery store in case anyone wants to purchase some snacks/drinks. We'll make sure there is access to adult beverages somewhere, too. You may want to purchase some granola bars, crackers, etc. to carry with you for snacks on our long park days. We will always plan a stop, but if you prefer to eat something light this is your chance to grab some snacks. You will notice that your packing list recommends either a collapsible cooler (if you want to carry chilled items) or some kind of light daypack or drawstring pack to carry snacks in. You will also notice the refillable water bottle recommendation. Because of how much time we will spend moving about, I will not be able to provide water and snacks as we do for our trips that leave from Redstone. So please make sure that you have your own bottle/container to fill with ice and water each morning. On hot days it will be very important that you stay hydrated. There are water sources in the parks to fill up, too. I would recommend either a camelback backpack to carry with you, or a bottle with some kind of strap that you can hang over your shoulder. Carrying a bottle in your hand while you walk and get on and off the bus gets old.

After our little shopping stop, we will make our way to the Fairfield Inn and Suites by Marriott located at 1863 North Highway 191 Moab. This hotel offers complimentary breakfast from 6 to 9:30 am and has a lovely pool area. You may even have time for a dip upon our arrival.

At 7:45 pm we will go to a cowboy cookout at the Canyonlands by Night complex, adjacent to our hotel. We will walk to the river, a short walk. At 8:45 pm we will have a private river tour where we will hope for clear weather so that we can see those stars shining like we've never seen before.

Saturday, September 20

Today starts our adventures in the National parks and today will be a full day! We will depart the hotel at 7:30 am. We're returning that evening so no need for suitcases. Bring your water, sun hats, etc. Our first stop of the day will be Dead Horse State Park. There is really only one overlook for us to see there, but it is

legendary so we will make the stop. We will then proceed to Canyonlands National Park. There we will do the short and easy hike to Mesa Arch, and visit a couple of overlooks in the “Isle in the Sky” area. We will make a stop at the visitor center, where if you don’t already have one you can pick up a passport, do the short hike to the Mesa Arch, and then stop at a couple of overlooks. We will also stop at the visitor center, where if you don’t have one, you might want to purchase a national park passport to stamp at the parks we are visiting. If you have one make sure you bring it! We will be listening to tour narration as we travel. If you don’t like listening to that kind of thing, please bring your own ear buds, ear plugs, or headsets to block out the sound.

We’ll make a fast food lunch stop en route to Arches National Park. (This is where you might want to munch on your snacks instead of fast food!) Arches is a timed ticket entrance and we have a 2 pm slot. Arches will give us an opportunity to visit the balanced rock and the infamous delicate arch from vantage points near the bus. Those with a little more walking ability can make their way about a half mile up a path for a closer look at Delicate Arch. We will park between Window Arch and Double Arch where you can choose to meander about and enjoy the view from that perspective or make your way about a half mile up paths to be closer to the arches of your choosing. If you use a cane or walking sticks, make sure you bring them since this is uneven rocky ground.

After a long and beautiful day you can choose to get dropped at the hotel for a swim and to maybe order some pizza or doordash, or the bus will stop in the heart of Moab where you can choose from many dining options on your own, and then we’ll return to the hotel for the night.

<https://www.discovermoab.com/restaurants/>. The pool and whirlpool are open until 10 pm.

(When you get off the bus this night, please use the provided disinfectant wipe to wipe down your seat area, and remove any garbage from the area. You’ll see why in the next day’s info.)

Sunday, September 21

Breakfast is available beginning at 6 am. We will offer a short morning prayer at 7:30 am. Plan to be on the bus ready to roll at 8 am. Because of the tremendous amount of scenery that we will enjoy from inside the bus, we don’t want one side of the bus to feel “cheated.” Therefore, we are going to flip sides every two days. This is why we are cleaning up our seat area upon exiting on Saturday night. So if you were in row 7 on the driver’s side previously, on this day you will go to row 7 on the door side. Today’s drive will be spectacular so we will make our first swap as we begin the day.

We will then make our way to Capital Reef National Park along a breathtaking drive. Lunch pickins are slim in these parts so about half an hour before we get to the park we will stop at the Hollow Mountain Convenience Store for restroom, snacks and beverages. Once we get inside the park we will stop at the Gifford House where hopefully you will be able to buy PIE! Pie is about \$10 if I remember correctly but is a whole small pie that can easily be shared. There is much to see just on the drive through this park, but we will also be stopping at several overlooks that require about a .2 mile walk to the overlook. This is a different park in that there is much history to enjoy hearing about, orchards, and scenic views along the drive. There aren’t really any short hikes in this park that are of note.

We have had a dinner change for this night, and will be eating at the Cowboy Buffet at the Ruby Resort near Bryce. After dinner we will head to our hotel for the night, the Quality Inn Bryce Canyon. 3800 US-

89, Panguitch, UT 84759. This will be the most “basic” of the hotels that we stay in, but our choices were limited in this area. There is no pool at this hotel, but views for miles to enjoy with your new friends. This is also the most basic breakfast we will have. It is clean, a great location, and quirky.

Monday, September 22

Today we will to leave the Quality Inn at 7:30 am and make our way to Bryce. Bryce is a world of magical hoodoos and you will feel like you’ve left the planet. We will have a gentle walk available along the rim for those who choose, and a slightly more strenuous walk down into the canyon to get up close to the hoodoos. Please make sure that you choose the path that is right for you! You will see spectacular things either way. We will stop at several overlooks to enjoy the view. As we depart, we will stop at a large convenience store where you can buy sandwiches and snacks. After we leave Bryce, if traffic has been good, we will make a stop at the Coral Pink Sands State Park. Enjoy seeing the kids surf and slide on the coral sands from a viewpoint. It’s crazy! If Bryce has been too crowded or traffic is bad, we may need to skip this stop. We will make our way to Hurricane, Utah for the night where we will enjoy dinner at the Rooster Run Café and then stay at the Sleep Inn and Suites, 58 N 2260 W, Hurricane, UT 84737. There is an indoor pool at this hotel. Each person will be given an envelope with \$35 in cash for tonight’s dinner. As we get off the bus we will wipe down seats and remove garbage again tonight in preparation for a sweat flip the next day.

Tuesday, September 23

Seat Swap! Today we will make our way to one of the most visited national parks, Zion. I anticipate this park being the most challenging for us logistically. We’ll leave the hotel at 7:30 am after breakfast at the hotel. Breakfast begins at 6 am. Part of Zion is only accessible via park shuttles, so we will need to park at the visitor center and transfer to these buses to see parts of the park. My recommendation is to take the shuttle the whole way to the final stop and walk the Riverwalk (which is paved), and then return to stop 6 where you can either have some lunch at the Lodge or do another walk to the Lower Emerald Pools (which is a little more natural with some elevation. Both walks can be done in about 2 hours but you will need some additional time for transportation on the buses. You may also choose to make your way back to the visitor Center and have some lunch at the brewery which is 2/10 of a mile from the visitor center. As we leave Zion, we will try to stop at the Overlook Trail where those who wish can do this short walk (with some drop and some elevation change.) Several of you have sent me pictures and videos of this spectacular short hike, but it is very unlikely that there will be parking available though so we can’t have our hearts set on this. There is not a shuttle to this trail. But if there is a spot we will stop! We will leave Zion mid-afternoon and say goodbye to Utah as we make our way to Page, AZ. We will visit the Red Heritage Dinner Experience for dinner and a show, sharing Navajo customs through music, dance, and stories. We will overnight at the Comfort Inn and suites 890 Haul Rd, Page, AZ 86040. This hotel also has an indoor pool.

Wednesday, September 24 & Thursday, September 25

This morning we will enjoy a little more time in Page before we hit the road. We’ll visit the Horseshoe Bend and those who are up for it can make the 1 mile round trip walk to the overlook. It is a fairly level walk, but not shaded at all. We will also stop to see “the one behind the Shell station,” as this slot cave is

notoriously called. We will then make our way towards the Grand Canyon. We will make a lunch and shopping stop en route at the Cameron Trading Post. This is a great place to shop for jewelry. We will enter the Grand Canyon national park through the East Gate and be able to stop at a couple of overlooks as we make our way to the hotel. Our home for the next two nights will be the Red Feather Lodge. 300 AZ-64, Grand Canyon Village, AZ 86023. This hotel has an outdoor pool. Breakfast will be in the neighboring restaurant both mornings and is included. We will have a group dinner at the Big E Steakhouse at 6 pm. Seeing the Imax might be something to enjoy that evening. The last show is at 8:30 pm. You can also visit some souvenir shops, etc. on foot from the hotel.

Our hotel is just two complexes down from the Visitor Center the houses the IMAX theater. There are pink jeep tours and other tours available from this location. I highly recommend that you consider setting up a tour to most easily see the highlights of the Canyon. Unfortunately, they are closing the shuttles into the park early this year so there will not be shuttle back and forth to the park from this visitor center.

Thursday is your day to enjoy the Grand Canyon as you wish. Unfortunately the lack of shuttle service from the hotel area will make this a little more challenging. If you're not an adventurer, you may want to schedule a tour that departs from the visitor center adjacent to our hotel. Our bus will make several runs back and forth from the hotel to the South Rim Visitor Center. The bus will depart hotel at 8 and go to South Rim Visitor Center. It will leave the hotel again at 11 am and then return from the visitor center at 11:30 am. It will depart the hotel for the park again at 3 pm, and return from the park to the hotel at 3:30 pm. It will depart the hotel again at 5 pm and return from the visitor center at 5:30 pm. This run will be your last chance to go into the park, but it will make one final pick up and return to the hotel at 8:30 pm. Once you are at the visitor center, you will use the park shuttles to move about the park to various overlooks and restaurants. You may want to make a dinner reservation if you want to eat in the park that evening. Sunset is at 6:20 pm.

I strongly suggest that you spend some time on this website looking at dining and activity options. It looks like right now there are still dinner and lunch reservations even in the historic El Tovar. Unfortunately mule rides are on hold due to the fires on the North Rim. But don't wait long to schedule these things. <https://www.nps.gov/grca/index.htm> You can also explore other tours at <https://www.viator.com/Las-Vegas-attractions/Grand-Canyon-South-Rim/d684-a1249> including helicopter rides. I don't recommend this or any other company, but it's a starting point for you. Trip Advisor would be good for looking for reviews.

Please do some research and begin planning your time at the Grand Canyon so that you are not disappointed with your visit. But also remember, the Canyon is a big hole in the ground. You may even want to make this a relaxing day at the pool once you've seen the hole. If you have questions feel free to ask me and I'll give you my limited free advice!

Friday, September 26

Enjoy breakfast at the restaurant by the hotel before our 9 am departure. We will make our way to Las Vegas, This is our longest drive of the trip at a little over 4 hours. We'll stop about 2 hours into the drive in Kingman, Arizona for leg stretching and lunch (planned for an infamous In and Out Burger), and then make a stop at the overlook for the Hoover Dam before continuing into Las Vegas. We will pick up an

extra hour along the way. Our hotel for the night will be the Holiday Inn Express 175 E Tropicana Ave, Las Vegas, NV 89109. The hotel is located about a 10 minute walk from the Strip. Ubers are plentiful. If you want to see a show or eat in one of the better known restaurants, now is the time to make your reservations. www.vegas.com As an aside, Covid killed buffets pretty much permanently in Vegas. There are a couple of high end ones that have dinner (Wynn and Ceasars) going for around \$80 a person, and a cheaper one at Circus/Circus, but most buffets are now for breakfast only. There are tons of fun restaurants though so do a little research and enjoy! Note: Once you get off of the Strip at all, Las Vegas can have a seedy feel. You may see homeless people and people who are struggling outside of our hotel. Unfortunately this is normal. Travel in at least pairs, or consider a taxi if this makes you uncomfortable.

Saturday, September 27

Time for this adventure to end. We will have THREE groups on the way back, and the check-in procedure will be the same as on the way out.

Our first group now leaves Vegas at 9:15 am, so the bus will leave from the hotel with this group at 7:00 am. Breakfast is available at the hotel at 6. The airport is only about 12 minutes from the hotel. This group is actually flying through the Southwest hub in Tampa, FL, arriving at 4:40 pm due to the time change before a connection to Pittsburgh at 6 pm that gets in at 8:30 pm. This group includes: Bartolotta, Gallo, Fontanese, Stevenson 3, Oravets, Brodmerkel, Simoncelli 2.

The second group has a flight at 10:55 am so your hotel departure will be 8:15 am. This group will be flying through Midway in Chicago arriving at 4:40 and then departing for Pittsburgh at 6 pm. Bill Hammond, Nancy Hammond, Debbie Corll, Dan Corll, Ellen Frisco, Don Frisco, Ray Leiser, Lisa Leiser, Toni Vokes, Barb Sharp, Jodi Strzeszewski, Randall Strzeszewski, Tammi Herrington, Brad Herrington. This group is all booked outside of the group block so you will be able to check yourselves in at 10:55 am on Friday to get your boarding number.

The third group has a departure at 1:10 pm arriving in Pittsburgh at 8:20 pm. Believe me I tried to get all of us on this flight but only got 31 seats. The bus will pick this group up at 10:30 am. If your name isn't listed above... you are on this flight.

When booking a group with Southwest, they divide us among flights so that the prices don't become insane. Our group ticket rate was \$490 a person, but if we had all gone on one flight this would have jumped up to \$1100. Thanks to luck of the draw, some of you are on less desirable flights, but Southwest is upholding their promise to put us all on flights that arrive within an hour window of each other.

Our flights are all scheduled to land in Pittsburgh at around 8:30 pm. I have the bus scheduled to pick us up at 9:30 pm to return us to Murrysville. We will of course stay in communication with the bus and each other to adjust as needed to any flight delays, but let's all hope for the best.

Gratuities for the bus driver for the big trip, airport shuttle drivers, and step on guide in Salt Lake City are included. At things like the boat ride, Red dinner theater, etc. they may pass a tip bucket.

My cell as we get closer to the trip is 412-496-6779 and texts are preferred and appreciated.

If you weren't at the event to pick up your shirt, please call Gia at 724-832-8401 X 3378 to arrange a time that you can do so!

Stay adventurous! 😊