

Dodge

*The Dodge Company Proudly Presents
the
2024 Wreaths across America Project*

Arlington National Cemetery

December 12 - 14, 2024

Celebrating The 33rd Annual Wreath Laying Project



WREATHS
— *across* —
AMERICA

*Remember the fallen;
Honor those who serve; and
Teach the children the price of freedom.*

Thursday, December 12, 2024

**We're Ready To Roll For The 33rd Annual
Wreaths across America Project**

**We're In Luck, There Are No Options For Thursday's Adventures;
Everyone Will Be Going To The Same Venues ...
The United States Port Mortuary, Dover, Delaware and
The United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland**

Participants are invited and encouraged to join us at the United States Port Mortuary in Dover, Delaware for a half-day Operational Orientation. En route, we will travel through parts of DC, historic Annapolis, across the Bay Bridge, and on to the Eastern Shore of Maryland, ending at the United States Air Force Base in Dover, Delaware. While we won't be stopping along the way, there is a lot of country to see, and you will have an opportunity to visit with new friends and colleagues.



To be granted a private operational overview of the U.S. Port Mortuary, the Charles C. Carson Center for Mortuary Affairs, is a true honor and privilege and an event that will help everyone understand the dignity and respect afforded our Nation's Heroes on their final journey home. Our visit also will help to give true meaning and understanding to the remainder of the events of our journey and ultimately the Arlington Wreath Laying. Our operational overview of the base's facilities can be summed up in a few words—Dignity, Honor, Respect For The Decedents; Care, Service, Support For Their Families.



Upon arrival at the Carson Center, Christin Michaud, Public Affairs Officer, and Danielle Wilk, Port Mortuary Branch Chief, and the men and women charged with caring for our Nation's Fallen Heroes will give an in-depth explanation of the Dover mission and operations of this sacred facility. Even individuals who are not involved

in the day-to-day practice of funeral service always appreciate being a part of this event.



While on base we will have an operational overview of the activities that take place at the Port Mortuary and the Joint Personal Effects Depot where personal effects of killed, wounded or missing members from all military services including the Coast Guard, Department of Defense civilians and contractors, as well as embedded media are sent. These personal effects are photographed, inventoried, and prepared for return to their owners or their next of kin. Our final stop on base will be the Fisher House for Families of the Fallen which opened in 2010, and offers high-quality, temporary housing to the families of the fallen as they await the Dignified Transfer, the return of their loved one.



Following our departure from Dover Air Force Base, we will head back to Maryland's Western Shore for lunch at Fisherman's Inn, and an exciting tour of the United States Naval Academy. Once at the Academy, participants will have an opportunity to experience a narrated walking tour of The Yard which includes the history and traditions of the Naval



Academy, including a tour of Bancroft Hall, home to the entire brigade of 4,000 midshipmen, one of the largest single dormitories in the world. Truly awesome when one of our guests has high aspirations to walk The Yard as a midshipman in just a few years! Later during our tour, we will visit the crypt and marble sarcophagus of John Paul Jones. With a little luck, Billy may be out and about. Admittedly, a full day, but one that is certain to fascinate you.

Thursday, December 12, 2024 - Continued ...

Plans call for everyone to arrive back at the hotel in time for the traditional Embassy Suites nightly cocktail reception. Dinner will be on your own, but we will have plenty of suggestions to offer as there are many delightful restaurants in the area.

Friday, December 13, 2024 - Another Great Day Is In Store!

The hotel restaurant opens at 6:00 A.M. for our participants, and you can enjoy a cooked-to-order breakfast before we start out for another great day. We're shaking things up again this year and going straight to Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) for a narrated tour of the cemetery, prior to the 9:00 A.M. Changing of the Guard Ceremony and the traditional Dodge Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.



Throughout the day, we will visit the "tried and true" sites of the Nation's Capital and the historic monuments that speak to our overall mission. We're going to add a few new monuments. We're definitely going to visit the Jefferson Memorial this year. It has been on our itinerary for several years but traffic snafus have held us up in the last two years.

Dr. Kathleen Bashian is scheduled to be with us again this year and knows how important this is to us. Traveling along with Kathleen will be one of her colleagues. Two buses call for a second tour guide! Kathleen promises she's picked the second best!!!

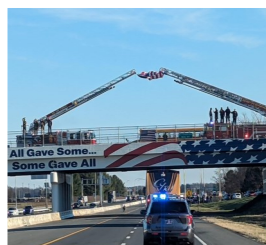


Following our morning activities, we will be returning to Clyde's of Gallery Place for lunch. In truth, Clyde's of Gallery Place is an opulent homage to Washington and American sporting. Moreover, Clyde's restaurants have been long-time Washington favorites. The menu has been changed again this year, we're back to the tried and true from years gone by. Talk about not having chili on our menu last year ... that was sinful! We are sure there will be something to tempt the taste buds of all, and no difficult decisions will have to be made.



As has always been the practice, we will continue visiting the many monuments in the Capitol City. After lunch, we will board our motor coach once again and work our way to the United States Supreme Court and the Thomas Jefferson Building of the Library of Congress which has always been considered a phenomenal display during the Christmas Holiday Season. Admittedly, there is always something new in the city each year to see, and no matter how many times you have visited the area, you will learn something new. The Supreme Court and Library of Congress are just two of our new offerings this year. We'd love to do more, but there are only so many hours in a day.

As the sun begins to set, we will board our motor coach for our hotel. Once again, dinner will be on your own, but we do have lots of suggestions for fantastic places to dine.



Saturday, December 14, 2024 - The Reason We Come ...

No grumbling allowed! Saturday morning, the hotel's restaurant will open for us at 5:30 A.M. so we will be ready for our most important day. We will board our coach at 6:30 A.M. and depart for Arlington National Cemetery and the staging area for the 2024 Wreaths across America Arlington Wreath Project. There will probably be upwards of 50,000 - 70,000 people meandering throughout the cemetery but there is a unique intimacy to what has been termed "a one of a kind goose-bump experience;" one that you will never forget – promise! Regardless of the number of participants, the cemetery has never been crowded, but it has been wet and cold. Through it all, dignity and respect prevail. Please remember, this is the one really fluid part of our mission as one never knows what directions will be given insofar as parking, drop-off, and pickup locations so please keep your cell phones turned on and make certain you have Sally B's and Bill's numbers. We never want to leave anyone stranded.



Please remember Saturday is the day for jeans, substantial shoes or boots, layered clothing, hat and gloves; in other words, work clothing. It can be cold at the cemetery and it can be wet. Hand warmers for inside your gloves are smart to pack, as is an inexpensive poncho in case of inclement weather. Oh, I almost forgot, you may want to limit your beverage intake in the morning as **restroom facilities are limited.**

After placing in excess of 264,000 wreaths, we will board our motor coach and depart the cemetery promptly at 11:50 A.M. and head back to the hotel, perhaps cold and tired, but unquestionably enriched by the events of the morning.

The afternoon is yours for free time, but we do have lots of suggestions if you feel you must be on the go the entire day. Lunch will be on your own. Many of us wind up at Crystal City Sports Pub where the second floor is excellent for large groups, and the food is excellent and reasonably priced, or at one of the new hot spots directly across the street from the entrance to the hotel. For those who may be a tad bit tired, some of our veterans have learned that naps are a good thing as an exceptional evening has been planned. Dinner is on your own.

Please keep in mind that the final event of the day will take us to Constitution Hall where we will be treated to an uplifting holiday event, the United States Navy Concert Band's Holiday Concert. This concert combines the musical forces of multiple ensembles from the U.S. Navy Band - the Sea Chanters, Country Current, the Commodores and Cruisers as they celebrate the spirit of the season and do all within their power to spread a lot of holiday magic. This is another not-to-be missed performance and is often reported to be the best Christmas show in town. In order to be on site for curtain time, we will need to board our motor coach at 7:00 P.M. We will return to the hotel at the conclusion of the program at 9:30 P.M.



Sunday, December 15, 2024—Time To Go Home

We have not planned any formal tours or visits to church services. However, if you have a late flight and would like some suggestions to help you enjoy your last day in the area, just let us know. We have several ideas to share. Some folks have expressed a desire to visit The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception or the National Cathedral. Both are absolutely gorgeous, especially during the holiday season. Talk to Sally B and she'll give you a hand.

~ Helpful Hints ... Perhaps Some New Things This Year ~

Hotel Reservations. We will be returning to the Embassy Suites Hotel Crystal City – National Airport by popular demand. All who were present in previous years have applauded the hotel's facilities and services.

Tour participants will be responsible for making their own hotel reservations. The number to call has been provided on the Hotel Information Sheet.

Arrival: If you are planning to join us for our Thursday event, you should plan to be on site Wednesday evening, December 11th as there is virtually no way for you to get into the city on an early morning flight and be able to link up with us Thursday morning.

~ Helpful Hints ... Continued ~

Embassy Suites - Crystal City - National Airport Hotel
1393 South Eads Street
Arlington, VA
703-979-9799

Reservation Link – Everything must be exactly as shown below:

<https://book.passkey.com/go/WreathsAcrossAmerica2024>

Dodge Reservation Code: DGE

Reservation Telephone Number If You Prefer To Call In Your Reservation: **1-800-362-2779**

Check-in time is 4:00 P.M. All guests arriving before 4:00 P.M. may be accommodated as rooms become available provided that such guests elect to pay an early arrival fee of \$25.00 before noon. After noon, as available, the hotel will do what it can to accommodate guests.

Flying: Please be certain to fly into Washington Reagan National Airport (DCA). Our host hotel, Embassy Suites-Crystal City / National Airport Hotel, is but one mile from the airport. Free shuttle service is available to and from the airport to the hotel. Those wanting to do a little exploring beforehand, discounted hotel rooms will be available starting December 9th.

Embassy Suites/DoubleTree Airport Shuttle Service. New this year ... Secondary to construction, Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) has changed the pick-up location for the Embassy Suites/DoubleTree Hotel Courtesy Shuttles to curbside at Terminal A, and the Ticketing Level (3rd Floor/Upper Level) at Terminal B/C at doors 2 & 4.

Driving: Those traveling with the Dodge Wreaths across America Project, will be afforded a discounted garage parking rate of \$30.00 per night. Valet parking is not available. Be sure to mention our code: **DGE**. Despite your hotel confirmation, don't let anyone tell you our parking fee is more than \$30.00 per night. Our contract calls for the \$30.00 fee.

Registration Forms. *This is really important.* This year, the Dodge Wreaths across America registration will be done completely online. You will receive both a confirmation from Sally's office and a receipt from the credit card processing company. All registrations will be processed in the same fashion and will require a credit card. This will not only streamline the registration process but will provide a secure way to process our registrations. Registrations must be submitted on the Dodge website at shop.dodgeco.com. **Once on the Dodge website, click on Seminars in the menu at the top and then click on the "Register" button.** Please remember, this must be done on or before **November 1, 2024**. After November 1st, you'll be taking a chance on securing a reservation and registrations will be accepted on a space-available basis at the prevailing rate. As a word of caution, many people have asked to have their names placed on the list of interested parties for our 2024 event following our 2023 adventure. So, please don't procrastinate, forward your completed online reservations as soon as you are confident you will be joining us.

Confirmations. Upon receipt of your registration form, you will be provided with an acknowledgement of receipt of your credit card transaction. Hotel confirmations will be forwarded directly by Embassy Suites. Hotel fees will be posted to your credit card on hotel check-out. Sally also will acknowledge receipt of your reservation as there will be a few other things that will need to be addressed through the office. Prior to leaving home, you will be provided with a list of helpful tour tips; i.e., items that are prohibited in certain venues, when and where to assemble, a minute-by-minute itinerary and reminders about anything that you should know to make your trip more enjoyable.

Attire. Business casual attire is appropriate for all events, but **NOT** the Saturday morning Wreath Laying. This is one time you will want to be in warm clothing and jeans or clothing that can take a beating as we do not want you to ruin your good clothing with sap from the wreaths or a little mud if the weather is inclement. Please keep in mind that substantial shoes or boots are in order as you will be traversing cemetery grounds where the ground is not necessarily level. Gloves are essential. Make sure that anything carried in is hands-free (fanny pack, knapsack, etc.) You'll need your hands free for wreaths. Cameras are always good but be sure they are not going to be a burden. We will have to pass through a security check point so please remember your IDs.

~ Helpful Hints ... Continued ~

Attire - Continued. So, as not to be confused with Saturday's activities at Arlington National Cemetery, remember jeans are **NOT** appropriate for any other part of our tour, especially as we will hold a formal Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Friday morning.

This is a very solemn and dignified event. Moreover, we have signed an agreement acknowledging our guests be properly attired. Business casual attire is perfectly acceptable.

Tour Package. Our tour package (Thursday thru Saturday) includes ground transportation, tour fees / tickets and all gratuities. Lunch Thursday and Friday afternoons are included, as well as snacks along the way. A cooked-to-order breakfast is included in your hotel reservation, as well as the hotel's evening reception. If you are traveling with children, please contact Sally B for special pricing. Breakfast will open at 6:00 A.M. on Thursday and Friday for our Dodge participants. Tickets will be required. Whatever you do, trust us, not the front desk when they tell you breakfast is served at 6:30 A.M. They do it every year!

Security Clearance. To avoid any snafus, please be certain to have a government-issued photo ID or Passport with you at all times. Security in many of our venues is a concern. Please be certain to complete the information on our registration page as each has very specific security requirements. Social Security numbers may be required at some of our venues. If so, Sally B will be in direct contact with you for this information which will be treated with utmost confidentiality. The Dodge Company and its employees take ID security very seriously.

With your help, the 2024 Dodge Wreaths across America Arlington Wreath Project will be a historic event!

Space is limited; so please register early for this unique moment in history.

For complete information, please contact:

Sally L. Bélanger, CFSP, MBIE, Community Relations Liaison

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Come, Join Us ... "Don't Say I Should Have ... Say I Did!"

