



Pre-Event Activities: Monday, March 10th

1:30pm-2:45pm: Early Registration

3:00pm: Pre-Event Activities begin. Please sign up in advance. Go here to [**Sign up**](#)

- **Walking Craft Beverage Tour in Downtown Harrisonburg.** – Downtown Harrisonburg, Virginia’s First Culinary District, is home to five craft breweries and one cidery. Experience the Shenandoah Beerwerks Trail, get your passport stamped and learn more about the craft beverage scene in the Shenandoah Valley.
(Meet at Pale Fire Brewing Company – there is a parking lot across the street.)
- **Downtown Art Tour** – Enjoy strolling through downtown Harrisonburg, an original Virginia Arts & Cultural District, and home to over two dozen murals and sculptures. Visit the iconic LOVEworks sign, see the four-story chess player mural and our beloved bronze ducks.
(Meet at the Harrisonburg Visitor Center)
- **Edith J. Carrier Arboretum Walk** – Experience the lovely arboretum on the JMU campus with three miles of wooded trails, a pretty pond, and charming children’s garden.
(Meet there or shuttle with the group from the hotel. Only six fit in the van. Wear appropriate shoes.)
- **Journey Through Wine Country in Rockingham County:** Experience the beauty and variety of Shenandoah Valley Vineyards. *(Tour limited to 14 people)*
- **Melrose Caverns Tour** - Descend into one of the areas least known caves, Melrose Caverns, once a hiding place for troops during the Civil War. Visit this family-owned property, popular as a wedding venue and view Civil War graffiti left by the soldiers.
(Tour starts at Melrose Caverns. Meet there.)
- **Rockingham Recreation Center Tour** – Explore the brand new 74,000 square feet recreational center with four indoor basketball courts and a 200 meter indoor track. The venue is expected to be a popular sports tourism destination.
(Tour starts at the Rec. Center. Meet there.)

5:30pm: Welcome Reception - JMU Atlantic Union Bank Center Club Room
(1700 Jeff Bourne Way – free parking in the adjacent Ballard Parking Deck)

Drinks and appetizers and a tour of the state of the art 8,500 seat multi-use facility which opened in November 2020 and hosts Duke’s men’s and women’s basketball.

DINNER ON YOUR OWN



Seminar Agenda: Tuesday, March 11th

- 7:30am-8:15am: BREAKFAST & REGISTRATION** *(Provided by VTC)*
- 8:30am: Welcome:**
Rita McClenny, VTC President & CEO
Deanna Reed, Mayor of Harrisonburg
- 8:45am: VA250 Updates & Out of Many, One: The Mobile Museum Experience**
Cheryl Wilson, Executive Director, VA250
- 9:30am: Merchandising that Moves: Creating Impactful Displays to Attract & Engage Visitors**
James Kinard, Assistant Manager, Virginia Welcome Center at Bracey
- 10:30am: BREAK**
- 10:45am: Hauntingly Good Tourism: Integrating a Ghost Tour to Boost Community Engagement & Visitation**
Jennifer McConnell, Sales & Service Coordinator, Visit Williamsburg
- 11:45am: Adjourn for afternoon Study Tour – Make your way to the LOVEworks**

Study Tour Part 1 - Itinerary

- 12:10pm:** Group photo by the LOVE sign at Hotel Madison
- 12:15pm:** Board buses at the front entrance to Hotel Madison to head to lunch
- 12:30pm: LUNCH at The LOFT at Liberty Street** *(Provided by VTC)*
Meet owner Kirsten Moore and hear how an old warehouse became home to charming boutiques, a coffee roaster, wine bar and popular event venue.
- 1:30pm:** Bus Departure from The Loft
- 1:45pm-5pm:** Split into groups to visit popular area attractions

Group 1 :
1:45 Brethren and Mennonite Heritage Center
2:45 Depart for Snow & Ice
3:00 Snow and Ice Gift Store
3:30 Depart for the Planetarium
4:00 John C. Wells Planetarium

Group 2 :
1:45 Snow and Ice Gift Store
2:10 Depart for the Planetarium
2:30 John C. Wells Planetarium.
3:30 Depart for the Heritage Center
3:45 Brethren and Mennonite Heritage Center



- **The Brethren and Mennonite Heritage Center :**
Step back in time to see how the Brethren and Mennonite settlers of the Shenandoah Valley lived and worked with carefully preserved buildings from the 1700s, 1800s and 1900s.
- **Snow and Ice Gift Store:**
Enjoy the warm glow of holiday lights and the sparkle of decorations in this magical shop filled with all-season décor.
- **The John C. Wells Planetarium:**
Stargaze inside the captivating planetarium, the only one of its kind in the world and see the night sky at any location on earth.

5:30pm: Reception and entertainment at Court Square Theater

Home to local theater productions, independent films and incredible music, this theater was created within a space which once housed the premier car dealer in the area from the 1920s to the 1970s. Enjoy entertainment and light refreshments. *(Reception provided by Harrisonburg Tourism)*

DINNER ON YOUR OWN

6:30pm: Bus shuttles start
(Continuous shuttles between downtown Harrisonburg and Hotel Madison)

7:45pm: Last shuttle bus picks up in Downtown Harrisonburg for return ride to the hotel

Wednesday, March 12th Study Tour Part 2 Itinerary

Check out of the hotel or return in time to checkout before lunch

7:45am: Meet in the hotel lobby to walk with tourism staff (10 min. walk). Free parking is available a block away for those wishing to drive their personal vehicle.
(Very limited shuttle service will be provided with our 7-seater tourism van.)

8:00am: BREAKFAST The Explore More Discovery Museum
(Provided by Harrisonburg Tourism)
The museum has been voted the Best Kid-Friendly Venue in the Valley, features several floors of interactive exhibits that include a science lab, an art studio, an auto service center, play kitchen, craft room and more.

8:30am: RAFFLE DRAWING
Win a Harrisonburg gift basket that includes two nights stay at Hotel Madison and gift certificate to dinner at Monty's *(Must be present by 8:30am to win.)*

8:30am: Remarks by Director Lisa Shull, The Explore More Discovery Museum



9:00am-11:00am: Rotating Walking Tours of Downtown Harrisonburg. Leave with your guide from the Explore More Museum

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
9:15 Tour of the Fire Museum 9:45 Walk to Oasis 9:50 Oasis Visit 10:20 Walk to HHH Visitor Cntr 10:30 Tour of HHH	9:05 Tour of HHH Visitor Cntr 9:35 Leave HHH 9:50 Fire Museum Tour 10:20 Walk to Oasis 10:30 Oasis Visit	9:10 Visit to Oasis 9:40 Walk to HHH 9:45 Tour of HHH 10:15 Walk to Fire Museum 10:30 Tour of Fire Museum

- **The Hardesty-Higgins Visitor Center** is a certified Virginia Visitor Center located in the charming (1848c) home of Harrisonburg’s first mayor. One of the oldest buildings in the city featuring the Valley Turnpike Museum, Rocktown Gift Shoppe and Civil War Orientation Center.
- Tour the **Larry W. Shifflet Fire Museum** (*Take the elevator to the 3rd Floor*) The museum provides an in-depth look at firefighting through the ages through fire memorabilia such as uniforms, medals, an old fire alarm, photographs and equipment.
- Enjoy an artist demonstration at **Oasis Fine Art & Craft Co-op**. Stained glass sparkles from the entrance to the tread of the stairs leading to fine art paintings, ceramics, hand crafted jewelry and more within this beautiful artist co-op.

11:00am: **Time on your own**
Explore downtown Harrisonburg, an original Virginia Arts & Cultural District, award-winning Main Street community and Virginia’s First Culinary District with over 30 independent shops and 30 restaurants.

11:30am: A guided walk back to the hotel will be offered from the Hardesty-Higgins House and very limited shuttle service will be provided with our 7-seater tourism van.



Seminar Agenda: Wednesday, March 12th

- 12:00pm:** **LUNCH** (*Provided by VTC*)

- 1:00pm:** ***Connecting Communities: Integrating Your Visitor Center for Greater Engagement and Impact***
Ryan French, Executive Director & CEO
South Central TN Tourism Association & Experience TN

- 2:00pm:** **BREAK**

- 2:15pm:** ***PMAP Updates and Opportunities for your CTIC Award for the 2024 Brochure of the Year***
Gary Jeffrey, Director of Consumer and Partner Services, VTC

- 2:45pm:** ***Trailblazer Award and New CTIC Certification***
The Valentine Museum- CTIC Certification

- 3:00pm:** ***Boosting Visitation: Best Practices for Attracting and Engaging Visitors***
Cherron Davis, Sr. Tourism Relations Manager, VWC at New Church
Kathleen Reilly, Sr. Tourism Relations Manager, VWC at Clear Brook
Teresa Staton, Sr. Tourism Relations Manager, VWC at Covington

- 4:00pm:** **ADJOURN**