

PRE-MEETING FIELD TRIP



**SATURDAY, JUNE 6 -
SUNDAY, JUNE 7, 2026
(10 AM - 9:30 PM)**



**NEW RIVER GORGE AND HAWKS
NEST STATE PARK**

This field trip is packed with exciting activities that showcase wild and wonderful West Virginia. This adventure includes overnight lodging at Hawk's Nest State Park and transportation to and from the Hotel Madison, as well as for all field-trip-related activities.

Attendees will depart the Hotel Madison at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 6, to head to the New River Gorge, where they will enjoy lunch, a Bridge Walk under the New River Gorge Bridge, and a Jet Boat Tour. Following the activities at the New River Gorge, a cookout for dinner will be held at an outdoor pavilion at Hawks Nest State Park near the overnight lodgings. On Sunday, June 7, participants will enjoy a tour of the Greenbrier Bunker. After the bunker tour, we will head back to the Hotel Madison with an anticipated arrival of 4pm.



View of New River Gorge from Hawks Nest overlook.

Photo credit: WVGES archives

MID-MEETING FIELD TRIP



TUESDAY, JUNE 9,
2026 (10 AM - 9:30 PM)



SHENANDOAH MT. AND
SURROUNDING AREAS

The mid-meeting field trip is designed as a family-friendly day exploring Shenandoah Mountain and the surrounding valleys. We'll observe Paleozoic stratigraphy, Eocene volcanics, and the unique thermal waters of Bath County along scenic routes 250 and 220. In the afternoon, participants can stay in Warm Springs to enjoy the Jefferson Pools, explore town, or hike the Flag Rock Loop. Alternatively, attendees can participate in activities at the Omni Homestead or hike the Deerlick Trail. A bus trip to the Falling Springs Falls overlook is also available. We'll finish the day with dinner and drinks at the historic and charming Trimble Hall at the Old Dairy in Warm Springs.

We highly recommend scheduling any activities at the Omni Homestead in advance. [Click here to schedule.](#)



View of the Greenbrier Hotel in WV, circa 1939.

Photo credit: WVGES archives

POST-MEETING FIELD TRIP



THURSDAY, JUNE 11,
2026



BLUE RIDGE MT. AREA

Over, under, and through – three walks along the western flank of the Blue Ridge Mountains

Our trip will begin along Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park where we will stop at a scenic overlook to see basement rocks of the Blue Ridge province. At our second stop we will complete a 1.1-mile hike with 175 feet of elevation gain to Black Rock Summit, featuring panoramic views and outstanding displays of talus. Our third stop will be the historic Blue Ridge Tunnel. You will have the option of walking through all or a portion of the tunnel (up to 2 miles on a gentle grade) or walking from the eastern to the western trailheads if time allows (about 2.3 miles with some up and downs in the second part). Our last stop will be at Grand Caverns, where we'll complete a geology-based tour that will involve about 1 mile of leisurely walking with several stairs.



Broad Ford Sandstone in C&O Railroad cut at Caldwell, circa 1939.

Photo credit: WVGES archives

GUEST FIELD TRIP 1



**MONDAY, JUNE 8,
2026 (9 AM - 4 PM)**



**MONTICELLO AND
CHARLOTTESVILLE**

Come explore Jefferson's historic Monticello and Charlottesville's downtown pedestrian mall! Departing Harrisonburg at 9 am, and arriving at Monticello, in Charlottesville at 10 am will ensure an on-time start of a reserved Monticello's Highlights Tour; "This 45-minute guided experience includes first floor spaces in Thomas Jefferson's home, the West Lawn, and the South Wing. You'll learn about Jefferson and his vision for America, the realities of slavery on the Monticello plantation, and the mountaintop's iconic architecture. This popular pass includes access to our gardens, grounds, walking tours, family-friendly activities, and exhibits."

We plan to depart Monticello around 12:45 pm and head to the iconic Charlottesville downtown pedestrian mall for a two hour block of time for guests to enjoy a plethora of lunch options, cafes, local shops, and a relaxing environment to bask in; "Downtown Charlottesville, VA boasts a charming blend of historic charm and modern vibrancy. Stroll along the iconic Downtown Mall, lined with boutiques and eateries. Discover cultural gems and indulge in farm-to-table dining. With a rich history and lively atmosphere, Charlottesville captivates visitors at every turn".

We will depart Charlottesville at 3 pm for a 4 pm arrival back in Harrisonburg.



Monticello, home of President Thomas Jefferson, Charlottesville, VA.

Photo credit: Adam Fagen/Flickr

GUEST FIELD TRIP 2



WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10,
2026 (9 AM - 4 PM)



FRONTIER CULTURE MUSEUM AND
STAUNTON, VA

Spend the morning exploring a living history museum! Wander through outdoor exhibits highlighting life in English, German, Irish, and West African farm households of the 1600s and 1700s. Interact with costumed historical interpreters to learn about the development of a unique frontier culture as colonists began to populate the new world. We will explore elements of daily life, including cooking, working the land, blacksmithing and more. Afterwards we will venture to historic downtown Staunton, the birthplace of Woodrow Wilson and home to a reconstruction of William Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse. This quaint town boasts beautiful architecture and a variety of locally owned boutique shops. Enjoy lunch on your own with plenty of time to visit coffee shops, trendy breweries, grab some gelato or coffee, or even see a glass blowing demonstration!



HARRISONBURG

VIRGINIA



Frontier Culture Museum in Staunton, VA.

Photo credit: OZinOH/Flickr