TRIPING THE LIGHT FANTASTIC ON COMMUNITY CENTER TRIPS

By William Nicoson

The award-winning Winter and Spring Program Guide of Reston Community Center is a must-read. There have never before been so many opportunities to visit fascinating places and view magnificent scenes at such modest prices for Reston residents. The catch is that, for the large majority of trips, you must qualify as a “senior” with at least 55 years behind you. All seniors owe a debt of gratitude to Eileen Boone for her selection of Trips & Tours. In most cases bus pickups and returns will be made both at Hunters Woods and Lake Anne.

Nature

The famous Philadelphia flower show will be visited on March 9. Reston residents pay $25 for the trip and admission. Lunch is on your own.

If hiking is your passion, join the April 19 trip to the Stony Man Trail where a hike of about four miles of the Shenandoah National Park Central Section will lead you to an overlook of Stony Man Mountain, second highest peak in the Shenandoah Mountains. Lunch at the Skyland Lodge is included. The cost for Reston residents is $30.

If cycling is your passion, two trips are offered. On May 2, take to the bike path between Annapolis and Glen Burney. A “great picnic lunch” is included. Or you may prefer to cycle on the beautiful Eastern shore on May 16, observing wildlife such as the Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon. Reston residents will pay $30 for each outing.

On May 25, cruise up the Rappahannock River from Tappahannock for twenty scenic miles on a two-hour guided tour. Lunch will be served at Ingleside Plantation, one of Virginia’s largest farm wineries. Wine tasting will of course be offered. The next stop will be the Westmoreland Berry Farm where homemade strawberry shortcake will be served for dessert. Reston residents will pay $40 for this exceptional outing.

Heritage

On May 10, a tour will visit monuments and memorials in the District of Columbia, including the recently opened World War II Memorial and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. An experienced guide will place monuments and memorials in the context of history. Bring your own bag lunch. Cost of the trip to Reston residents will be $12.

On April 13, a heritage tour will visit historic Baltimore. Architectural wonders will include the Saint Jude Shrine and the Lloyd Street Synagogue. A “delicious” box lunch is included as you travel through such diverse neighborhoods as Greentown, Little Lithuania and Little Italy. A visit to Bertha’s Restaurant will follow for afternoon tea. Cost to Restonians will be $35.
Performing Arts

Alfred de Musset’s masterpiece, *Lorenzaccio*, in a new translation by Washington playwright John Strand, promises high drama at the Feb. 2 performance, staged by the Shakespeare Theatre and directed by Michael Kahn. You remember Musset: he took George Sand to Italy before Sand took Chopin to Majorca. Sand wrote novels based on both liaisons. Those were the days. The charge for Restonians is $34, but for $44 you may also attend before and after discussions on Jan. 28 and Feb. 4.

Other promising performances include Gounod’s *Faust* staged by the Virginia Opera at the George Mason Center for the Arts on April 22 ($40) and a National Symphony rehearsal featuring a Mozart concerto and an Elgar symphony on Feb. 17 ($10).

Museums

Visits to the Kreeger on Feb. 1 ($12), to the National Museum of the American Indian on Jan. 12 ($10) and to the National Museum of African Art on Feb. 23 ($10) all sound promising.

Luncheon Expeditions

The Inn at Buckeystown on Jan. 24, Magnolias at the Mill in Purcellville on May 13, and Pat Troy’s Ireland’s Own in Alexandria on March 15 are outstanding luncheon destinations, each costing Restonians only $18.

Not Limited to Seniors

Restonians 18 and older may attend an evening performance on March 19 of the prize-winning play, *Rent*, at the Warner Theater in DC ($60) and on April 16, a matinée performance of the flamboyant musical, *La Cage Aux Folles* in New York ($82).

Restonians 14 and older may journey to Colonial Williamsburg on May 21 ($68), to the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and several historic houses in Richmond on April 30 ($48) and, for Restonians 5 and older, to DC memorial sites celebrating our African-American heritage on Feb. 12 ($25).

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