

Dodge

*The Dodge Company Proudly Presents
the
2025 Wreaths across America Project*

Arlington National Cemetery

December 11 - 13, 2025

Celebrating The 34th Annual Wreath Laying Project



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

Thursday, December 11, 2025

**We're Ready To Roll For The 34th Annual
Wreaths across America Project**

**We're In Luck Again This Year, 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 People's House, Washington, DC**

Our guests 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. If the day started too early for you, you can even grab forty winks along the way.



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 on 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. Whether you have been present for one or more Operational Orientations or if you are a “first timer,” we guarantee you will come away with a true appreciation of Team AFMAO and their mission..



Upon arrival at the Carson Center, 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 but stop for lunch at Fisherman's Inn which was a real hit in 2024. While waiting to be served, enjoy the “G scale” suspended train which travels around the restaurant while you dine or take a look at the largest collection of oyster plates on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.



If traffic doesn't create a problem, we hope to stop at the Watermen's Memorial Monument which plays tribute to the region's maritime heritage and is dedicated to all Maryland Natives who have died while working on the Chesapeake Bay.

Thursday, December 11, 2025 - Continued ...

Following lunch, we will continue our journey back to the Metro DC area for what promises to be an interesting afternoon for all as a new and informative visit to 1700 Pennsylvania Avenue is in store.

Over the years, many have asked why we don't schedule a tour of the White House as part of our program. In short, it is difficult to schedule such a tour for a group our size and timing would limit everything else we have planned for our guests. It's called, "juggling time." However, this year, we will visit 1700 Pennsylvania Avenue and The People's House, a new, exciting venue which opens the doors to White House history. This cutting-edge educational museum experience tells the story of the Executive Mansion, its inhabitants and the people who have dedicated their careers to its functions. Dr. Kathleen Bashian, our veteran tour guide, is excited for us to visit The People's House.



Following our visit to 1700 Pennsylvania Avenue, 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 12, 2025 - The Tradition Continues: 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 set out for another great day. Following our early morning breakfast, we will travel 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, but we're going to add a few new venues. Dr. Kathleen Bashian will join us again this year for she knows the Capital City inside and out.

Following our morning activities, we will stop at 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. Our menu has hasn't changed much this year — we've learned to stick to the "tried and true" from years gone by. Talk about not having chili on our menu in 2023, that was sinful! We are sure there will be something to tempt the taste buds of all. Better yet, you don't have to make any decisions until you arrive onsite.



As mentioned earlier, we're going to add another "almost new venue," one which has only been on our schedule two other times but is often remembered for its historic value, dating back prior to the Civil War, and the giggles created by our onsite docent Dayle Dooley who has a delightful way of narrating the history of this historic cemetery. This is a true must see. Be sure to ask about the value of goats!

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.

As you recapture the events of the day and review your pictures from the day, remember, Sally and Stephen would love for you to share them as we often get so caught up with other things that pictures are the last things on our minds. Just e-mail them to Sally at sbelanger@dodgeco.com.

Saturday, December 13, 2025 - 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 2025 Wreaths across America Arlington Wreath Project. There will probably be upwards of 50,000 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 Stephen'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 267,000 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 with the United States Air Force Band and its *Season of Hope 2025*. The Airmen and Airwomen 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 one of the best Christmas shows 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 14, 2025 —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.

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/2025wreathsacrossamerica>

Reservation Telephone Number If You Prefer To Call In Your Reservation: **1-703-979-9799**

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. Things at Washington National Airport (DCA) seem to change every year. Pick-up locations for the Embassy Suites/DoubleTree Hotel Courtesy Shuttles are outside Doors 4 & 7, lower level, Terminals B/C, These are the newer terminals. Shuttle stops at Terminal A are outside Door 1, the oldest, smaller terminal.

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: **WAA**. 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.* Registration for the Dodge Wreaths across America Project 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 **October 27, 2025**. After October 27, 2025, 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 2025 event following our 2024 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 but think old, garden-type gloves, not good leather gloves. Also, keep in mind that hand warmers can be a blessing in disguise.

~ Helpful Hints ... Continued ~

Attire - Continued. 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 please be sure they are not going to be a burden.

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.

Security Procedures. We will have to pass through a security check point so please remember your IDs. Also, please keep in mind that Arlington National Cemetery now requires all individuals over the age of 18 who enter the cemetery in a vehicle to present a REAL ID at the security checkpoint. This applies to all adults who enter the cemetery and do not possess a DOD Common Access Card or Automated Installation badge. Visitors who walk, take public transportation or use a ride-share service will not be required to present a REAL ID. Rather, they will be required to go through the standard physical security screening in the Welcome Center or Wreaths Entrance Gates. Passports will suffice in instances where visitors do not have REAL IDs.

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.

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!

With your help, the 2025 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
The Dodge Company / 38 Young Avenue / Brunswick, Maine 04011
207-841-6330 / sbelanger@dodgeco.com

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



Even 4-Star General Darryl A. Williams who served as the commanding general of the U.S. Army Europe and Africa and commander of the Allied Land Command, not to mention the 60th Superintendent of West Point, wanted to join Team Dodge with its Wreaths across America efforts. He couldn't thank our team enough for remembering ...