

## **Villages Convertible Club -- Trip Guide**

This guide is provided to Villages Convertible Club (VCC) members to assist in making the club trips as enjoyable as possible. The guide is a supplement to the VCC policies.

**1. Trip Planning** – The VP, Trip Planning (VPTP) is responsible for a) creating a schedule of trips and b) executing those trips. The VPTP develops the trip plan with input from club members. Currently this input is gathered twice each year at ‘brainstorming’ sessions, where any club member can attend. In addition, there is a trip planning team which helps the VPTP sort through the input and develop the overall schedule of trips. The trip planning team consists of volunteers who have previously served as trip leaders. A second role of trip planning team members is to support new trip leaders by answering their questions, and providing any guidance required. This makes it easier for new trip leaders to feel comfortable in their role.

Trip leaders are volunteers who plan and lead trips. Once the trip schedule is created, club members are given the opportunity to lead a trip of their choice, or a trip they have suggested. Members who would like to lead a trip must register their interest with the VPTP. The VCC pays the venue admission fee for trip leaders. Leading a trip is considered to be an honor in our club. It is a great way to contribute, and to quickly form relationships with other club members.

**2. Trip announcements** – The schedule of trips is published in the VCC web newsletter each month. Most trips are scheduled months in advance of the trip date. Trip ‘announcements’ are emails that are sent from the VP, Communications. These announcements are 1) save the date – sent if an event or trip is scheduled many months away; 2) registration open – this announces that registration is open for a particular trip, and also provides the cutoff date for registration; 3) cutoff date reminder – this is emailed about 4-5 days before the cutoff date as a reminder of the date. Also, a list of current registrants is provided so members can check to see if they are on the list; 4) final announcement – this is emailed only to trip registrants about 5-6 days before the trip. This provides departure meeting location and time, directions to the trip destination, and other pertinent information.

**3. Registering and paying for trips** – The web site is where we register for all trips. As indicated above, there will be an email announcement indicating when registration opens for any trip. The web site will provide information about the trip, date, and any pertinent information to help members decide if they would like to register for the trip. Payment for the trip is made on the web site, and the non-financial registration information is automatically provided to the trip leader. There

are no refunds for trips. The VCC operates much like The Villages Ticket Office. If someone buys a ticket to an event, they 'own' the ticket. The club provides an opportunity on the VCC web site for members to sell their space and ticket to another member on the 'Members to Members' forum.

**4. Departure meeting** – All trip registrants are expected to attend the departure meeting. This meeting is a good time to meet and greet fellow club members. In addition, the trip leader takes a roll call to ensure all registrants are present prior to departure. If for some reason a registrant cannot attend the departure meeting, he/she must call the trip leader in advance. At the meeting the trip leader will brief members about the trip and answer their questions. Generally, the meeting time is 15 minutes prior to departure, so it is important for members to be prompt. Trip departure meeting locations are the Laurel Manor Recreation Center, for trips heading north, and the Eisenhower Recreation Center for trips heading south.

**5. Drive to destination** – Registrants will receive appropriate maps to the destination in the final announcement and are expected to copy the maps and bring them to the departure meeting. The directions are generally not the fastest route, but typically the more scenic. Main highways are usually avoided. Members are requested to follow the map directions, rather than set their GPS for the destination. We do not caravan in the VCC, whereby cars closely follow each other. It is impossible to keep cars together and attempting to do this is a safety hazard. Rather, each trip registrant is individually responsible to arrive at the destination using the maps. The return home trip directions are up to the registrant and are generally not provided by the trip leader.

**6. Arrival at destination** – The trip leader is responsible for meeting the contact person at the destination and assembling the club members as appropriate. If not paid in advance, the trip leader will pay the venue for either the committed number of attendees, or the actual number attending depending on the situation. Typically, arrival at the venue requires some time for the trip leader to accomplish his/her responsibilities, so we ask for patience from club members at that time.

**7. When in doubt** – Check the trip web site information again, and if there are still questions contact the trip leader.

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