

On The Road with SVCC's Touring Receptionist

What if you could take a vacation without worrying about parking spaces, hotel accommodations or how to see all the sights? If that is your idea of fantastic, worry-free travel, Southside Virginia Community College has a deal for you!!

For the past 25 years, Louise Ogburn, the face and voice of SVCC as the official receptionist, has also had the role of the tour guide. She has arranged and guided almost 30 trips with Diamond Tours alone since 2007 involving more than 1,200 sightseers. Before this, she started arranging trips in the early 1990s, often with a travel company called Signatures; a fact that adds another 20 plus trips.

A travel and people lover, Ogburn has taken Southside Virginians all over the United States and Canada. These bus trips have included seeing the sights of New Mexico, South Dakota, Branson, Missouri, Key West and Miami, Florida, Las Vegas and the Grand Canyon, Myrtle Beach, New York City, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick in Canada, Cape Cod, Mount Rushmore and the Badlands, Toronto, Biltmore in Ashville NC, and so many others. Even the home of the King....Elvis Presley's Memphis became a destination along with Lancaster, Pennsylvania's Dutch Country.

For each trip, Ogburn plans carefully providing movies, games, snacks, and quizzes to keep the travelers occupied. There is usually a group of card players in the back of the bus and others who grab the seats near the front. The tours always offer step-on guides to help travelers explore the cities and areas they visit and generally, they keep moving from early morning to nightfall so as not to miss a single attraction.

The cost of the trips is reasonable due to the number of travelers and some meals are usually included as well as the cost of the museums, concerts, or tours.

Amelia Poythress of South Hill has accompanied Ogburn on every single trip!

She explains, "The trips are wonderful. Louise is gifted. She makes everyone feel comfortable and so much like a family. We see interesting things and feel comfortable and at ease the whole time."

She also related that one frequent traveler says the group has so much fun on the bus there is no need to get off.

Recently, the travelers were off to Niagara Falls. In October, there is a trip to Nashville and she will end the travel season with a trip to Washington, DC in December.

Ogburn, who has worked at SVCC for the past 30 years, has a passion for people and a true dose of Southern hospitality to make these trips entertaining, enlightening and fun. Get on board with her and one of these exciting trips and arrive at your destination entertained and informed with a whole lot of fun in between.