

Kicking Off the Christmas Season

What better way to kick off the Christmas season than to visit the Opryland Hotel, take a riverboat cruise and enjoy a performance of the Radio City Rockettes? On December 11 & 12, 2012, a group from the Aquadome Lunch Bunch was invited to Nashville, Tennessee to take part in what has become a tradition for many folks during Christmas; a Country style Christmas.

The day began with an afternoon of Christmas shopping at the Opry Mills Mall which only reopened this past spring after a flood of the Cumberland River in May of 2010. You would never know that the building was touched by the Wrath of Mother Nature because the facility sparkled with tinsel and lights of the season. And of course, all the men made a dash for the Bass Pro Shop.

The group later met to eat an early dinner at the Rainforest Café. The atmosphere was filled with the sounds of the rainforest and animals of the jungle. Everyone was pleased with their meal, as the food was awesome and the service was spectacular, even for the group consisting of 41 people.



After dinner, the gang loaded the bus to head to the Opryland Hotel for check-in. We were greeted at the hotel by staff that explained what arrangements had been made and what we should see while staying there. We were escorted to our rooms to make sure everyone had no problems getting in and to insure our needs were met. To our surprise, the rooms had French doors that opened onto a balcony overlooking the decorated Garden. What a wonderful way to get into the Christmas spirit!



After a few hours of rest and relaxation, it was time to proceed to the Grand Ole Opry House for the spectacular Christmas show of the Radio City Rockettes. This two hour show literally KICKED off with Santa as the MC, traditional Christmas music and song, and a high stepping performance by the Rockettes. The audience was given glasses to wear during a 3D film where Santa was driving his sleigh and reindeer through the sky scrapers and parks of New York City. The special effects were amazing; snowflakes, geese and reindeer all but hit you in the face. The show ended with a reading of scripture from the Bible, describing the birth of the baby Jesus. A live nativity scene that included camels, calves donkeys and lambs allowed you to experience a glimpse of what it was like when God entered this world as man and how the world gave reverence to the new born KING. What an inspiration for hope and peace for mankind.



After the Rockettes show, everyone headed back to the Opryland Hotel. This was free time to go about the hotel and grounds to see what wonders could be discovered. The Hotel has been completely refurbished and showed no signs of the flood that devastated the Nashville area two years earlier. Thousands of ornaments and lights adorned both the interior and exterior of the building, and potted poinsettias were stacked to form Christmas trees. It was mind boggling to see firsthand the wonders of this place! It was difficult to make yourself go to bed for some much needed sleep.



After a relaxing morning, it was time to head over to the Cumberland River to have a lunch cruise on the General Jackson Riverboat. As the General Jackson began the cruise, the group was entertained by Steve Hall & Shotgun Red (a puppet), creating an atmosphere of extreme humor, amazing music and great food. Lunch was a delicious meal of roasted turkey breast,

steamed green beans, dressing, sweet potatoes and rolls. Dessert was strawberry topped cheesecake. Yum-O.



Once the group returned from the cruise, it was time to load the bus to head back to Decatur, AL. It was a whirlwind road trip; however, everyone had a wonderful time and it was filled with Christmas joy. The million dollar question was, “Are we coming back next year?”