



Trail Days 2025 Schedule of Events

The schedule is subject to change. To see the most current schedule, visit www.VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays.

Trail Days Weekend at a Glance (May 16-18)

Thursday 9am to Sunday 6pm: Tent City open for camping.

Thursday 9am to Saturday 5pm: Free Gear Repairs at the Manufacturer Rep Area by Tent City from Thursday to Saturday with Big Agnes, Crazy Creek, Etowah Outfitters, Gregory Mountain Products, LEKI, MSR, NEMO Equipment, Oboz, Osprey, Therm-A-Rest. Reps are on-site to assist hikers with gear repairs, expert fitting, advice, and other specialized services to the AT Community. Any brand – any item. ALL repaired items must be picked up by 5pm on Saturday. We hope you'll take advantage of this FREE service, but even if you don't need anything repaired, stop by and thank them for what they do!

Thursday to Saturday: Free Hiker Services by the Trail Days Ministry Team at One Way Ministries and First Baptist Church.

Friday 10am to Sunday 4pm: Shop with over 120 vendors of handmade goods and some of the best outdoor gear in the industry at the Town Park and beyond from Friday to Sunday. Learn more about nonprofit supporters of the trail at our three nonprofit areas: by the Caboose, the Damascus Trail Center, and the Library.

Friday 10am to Sunday 5pm: Damascus Trail Center - Open daily with local partners on the lawn and programs in the classroom on Friday and Saturday. Helene Hardcore volunteer trail projects on Sunday. Become a member of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), pick up your hiker hangtag, learn more about outdoor recreation in Southwest Virginia...and more!

Friday 10am to Saturday 6pm: Authors' Area at the Damascus Library conference room on Friday & Saturday. Meet trail authors, get your books signed, and pick up your next favorite read.

Friday 12:30pm to Sunday 4:00pm: Live Music at the Town Park Stage. Bring your own chair or picnic blanket and stay awhile! Listen and dance to a sampling of regional artists all day from Friday to Sunday. Food vendors nearby.

Friday 2:30pm to Sunday 1:30pm: Programs & Presentations at the Rock School Auditorium and Old Mill Conference Room. Find information and inspiration from a packed schedule of presentations, trail tales, and discussions by trail personalities.

Saturday afternoon: Trail Days Hiker Parade, Live Auction to benefit The Place Hostel, Hiker Talent Show

Saturday, May 10th

7am-3pm: TOWN-WIDE YARD SALE... Bargains on every street!

10am-noon at the Gazebo in the Town Park: **Rabies Vaccine Clinic** by Dr. John Roberts of VCA Highlands Animal Hospital. Other routine vaccines will also be available at a discounted price! Please bring dogs on leashes and cats in crates. vcahighlandsva.com.

7am-2pm at the Damascus Senior Citizens' Center: **Senior Center Fundraiser**, with breakfast biscuits and coffee in the morning from 7 to 10am, then a bean dinner 10am to 2pm (or until sold out). Located at 209 North Legion Street.

Wednesday, May 14th

9am-1pm: "The Place" 11th Annual Work Day. Come and lend a hand in taking care of the oldest hostel on the Appalachian Trail. Free lunch is provided for the first 25 volunteers. Volunteers are welcome to stay at The Place Wednesday to Sunday night during Trail Days. For more information and to make donations, contact roy_hiking@yahoo.com or www.facebook.com/theplacehostel.

1pm: "The Place" 50th Anniversary Party. Come by The Place Hostel for cake and ice cream for ALL until it runs out. Celebrate 50 years with us!

6pm at One Way Ministries: **Cookout & Music with the Trail Days Ministry Team.** Everyone is welcome. (If it rains, this event will be canceled.) NOTE: Change of location to One Way, not at the Town Park.

Thursday, May 15th

Thursday Hiker Services by the Trail Days Ministry Team

Stop by the Ministry Team's Welcome & Information Tents, 12-4pm, located at First Baptist Church, by the Library, and along the trail toward Tent City.

At One Way Ministries: *OPEN 8:30am to 10pm with drinks, snacks, and charging stations.*

8:30-4pm: Haircuts (at One Way), Free Showers & Laundry (across the street).

12-4pm: "Porch Picking" on the Front Porch – come and play your favorite instruments!

At First Baptist Church:

8:30am-4pm: Free Showers at the Town Pool (behind First Baptist).

3-11pm at The Tipsy Bear: **Trail Days Kick Off Party** with live music by Rurnt, plus raffles, games, and prizes.

4-7pm at Laurel Creek Park: Stop by the **Damascus Farmers Market** for fresh and local produce, meats, eggs, baked goods, craft items, and more. Laurel Creek Park is located downtown by the Post Office.

5:30-8pm at One Way Ministries: **Hiker Feast.** Free tickets are required – get them at Info Tents or One Way.

7-10pm at One Way Ministries: **Coffee House** with LIVE band, dancing & food.

Friday, May 16th

Friday Hiker Services by the Trail Days Ministry Team

Stop by the Ministry Team's Welcome & Information Tents, 8:30am-4pm, located at First Baptist Church, by the Library, and along the trail toward Tent City.

At One Way Ministries: *OPEN 8:30am to 10pm with drinks, snacks, and charging station.*

8:30am-4pm: Haircuts (until 5pm), Free Showers & Laundry (across the street), Small Supplies ministry.

8:30am-4pm: "Porch Picking" on the Front Porch – come and play your favorite instruments!

10am-1pm: Hiking dog check-ups by Dr. John Roberts of VCA Highlands Animal Hospital and Dr. Dean Baird of Mountain Empire Small Animal Hospital.

10am-2pm: Put your mug on a Postcard @ One Way.

At First Baptist Church parking lot: *OPEN 8:30am-4pm with drinks and snacks.*

8:30am-4pm: Free Showers at the Town Pool (behind First Baptist).

9am-4pm: Medical Team, foot washing/massages; Narcan training & medication dispensation.

8am at One Way Ministries: **Prayer Gathering.** Everyone is Welcome!

10am at One Way Ministries: **Cornhole tournament**

10am at the Damascus Trail Center: **Ticks on the Trail: Practical Prevention for Hikers.** Ticks are a common health hazard on the Appalachian Trail, and prevention can look different for hikers compared to the public. This presentation will cover evidence-based prevention measures with a focus on what's realistic and accessible for long-distance hikers. Learn practical, trail-friendly strategies to reduce your risk of Lyme disease and other tick-borne infections—without adding unnecessary weight to your pack. appalachiantrail.org.

10am-1pm at the Damascus United Methodist Church: **Basket Weaving with Beth White.** Learn to hand-weave a small basket in traditional Appalachian style.

10:45am at the Damascus Trail Center: **ATC gear raffle!** Stop by to toss your name in the raffle. Must be present to win. appalachiantrail.org.

11am-1pm at the Damascus Trail Center: **Trail Days Watercolor Workshop.** Join Sketching Summits for an in-person watercolor painting workshop, great for beginners and experienced artists alike! Day-of sign ups at the event will be available if space allows. This event is indoors and appropriate for most ages, including kids 10 or older. Cost \$35.00 - \$65.00. More info and register in advance at sketching-summits.square.site.

11:30am at The Trek / Backpacker Radio booth in the Town Park: **Air Guitar Competition.** Unleash your inner shred lord, no guitar necessary. Join The Trek's Air Guitar Competition for a shot at some epic backpacking prizes. Limited spots available; priority goes to 2025 AT thru-hikers. Bring the funk! thetrek.co.

11:30am-1pm at the Rock School Auditorium: **Annual ALDHA Hiker Reception.** ALDHA is the Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association. Come to enjoy the camaraderie and food. ALL ARE WELCOME, hikers, hikers' friends, and dreamers. Volunteers are needed and food donations are greatly appreciated. aldha.org.

12:30-2:30pm at the Town Park Stage: **Live Music by Alpine Motel!** Alpine Motel is an Indie rock band from Abingdon, Virginia. Influenced by music both new and old, their sound consists of nostalgic soundscapes, vintage vibes, and wistful soundtracks for late night drives.

12:30pm at the Astral Booth in the Town Park: **The Sandbagger Championships** will pit thru-hikers against one another to find the ultimate Sandbagger of AT Days. Champion Sandbaggers will be crowned based on most hacks, best tricks, crowd favorite and more. Winners will go home with shoes, apparel and gear from Astral. Sandbags (aka - hacky sacks or foot bags) will be provided. astraldesigns.com.

12:45 pm at the Damascus Trail Center: **ATC gear raffle!** Stop by to toss your name in the raffle. Must be present to win. appalachiantrail.org.

1pm at One Way Ministries: **Eating Contest** - Great prizes! Registration starts at 1pm - eating starts at 2!

1pm at the Damascus Trail Center: **BearVault's BearPong Tournament!** Bring a friend and compete head to head in BearPong to win a BearVault and a \$50 gift card to Damascus Outfitters while learning about food storage and bear safety. appalachiantrail.org.

1pm at Allyn 'Fix it Man' Morton's Flyin' Pig Repair Center in the Manufacturer Rep Area at Tent City - **Musical Chairs with Crazy Creek**. 1 winner and prize per event - 1 Crazy Creek Chair! Like when we were kids. Dance around Crazy Creek chairs until the music stops!

1pm at the Sawyer Booth in the Town Park: **A Sawyer Spin on Rock, Paper, Scissors**. Gather at the booth for this classic game with a twist: your weapons of choice are a filter, human, or giardia. In our game, filter beats giardia, human beats filter, and (as you can guess) giardia beats human. If you make it past the 2nd round you'll earn some sweet Sawyer swag! Ice cream sandwiches provided once the ruckus concludes.

2pm at Tent City: **Billville Leki Pole Throw Contest** with prizes in field near Billville camp.

2pm at the One More Day on the AT booth: **One More Day Raffle** with drawings throughout the day on Friday and Saturday. Win a \$100 gift certificate to Damascus Outfitters at 2pm, must be present to win. To enter, stop by the booth and sign up for FREE! onemoredayontheat.com.

2-3pm at the Damascus Public Library: **Tails on the Trail: A Roaming Reptile Roundup**. Join Avery Smith, lead naturalist from Hungry Mother State Park, to learn about amazing reptiles both in Appalachia and throughout the world. Learn about identifying and safely interacting with our scaly friends on their own turf.

2:30-3:30 pm at the Rock School Auditorium: **Grandma Gatewood Takes A Walk**. Actress Anne Van Curen transforms into Emma "Grandma" Gatewood to describe what it was like to be the first woman to solo hike the AT in 1955, at the age of 67. Based on the book "Grandma Gatewood's Walk" written by Ben Montgomery. mountainstorytelling.com.

2:45pm at the Damascus Trail Center: **ATC gear raffle!** Stop by to toss your name in the raffle. Must be present to win. appalachiantrail.org.

3-5pm at the Town Park Stage: **Live Music by Daniel Byrd's Boogie Machine!** While Byrd's solo work lends more to soul-driven folk and Americana, his band is a heavier-hitting, funkier creation altogether. His Boogie Machine, featuring Jacob Tipton (Loose Leaves) on bass, and Kip Borodzik (ADC, Flame Azalea) on drums, is aptly billed as Groovy Blues and Electric Soul for the People. The band is currently working on new and inspired creative collaborations, as well as recording their first full-length album.

3pm at the Damascus Trail Center: **Sketches and Snapshots: A Long Distance Hike as a Creative Act**. Join visual artist and LASH'er Mark "Sketch" Wurman (author of A Sketch and a Prayer) and photographer, documentarian, and NOBO 2024 thru hiker Laura "Half Pint" Partain for an inspiring conversation centered on long-distance hiking and art-making. Learn the power of incorporating creative practices on a hike and why the extra pack weight (yes, even for a thru-hike) might make your long journey an especially meaningful one.

4pm at Allyn 'Fix it Man' Morton's Flyin' Pig Repair Center in the Manufacturer Rep Area at Tent City - **Musical Chairs with Crazy Creek**. 1 winner and prize per event - 1 Crazy Creek Chair! Like when we were kids. Dance around Crazy Creek chairs until the music stops!

4pm at the Damascus Trail Center: **The Lost Trail of Virginia**. When the Appalachian Trail began, the route it followed from Damascus to McAfee Knob was entirely different from the route it follows today. Historian Mills

Kelly tells the story of the trail's original route and how people who live along that route still remember the trail, even though it left more than 70 years ago. appalachiantrail.org.

4-5:15pm at the Rock School Auditorium: **Trail Epiphanies with Warren Doyle**. Receiving the gifts that the trail provides, IF you are aware of and open to receive them (there will be no mention of ounces/pounds; equipment; Far Out; or, hostels/shuttles) warrendoyle.com

4pm at the Granite Gear booth in the Town Park: **Granite Gear's "What's-Your-Trail-Name" raffle!** Swing by anytime on Friday to get entered into 30 minutes of pure gear-giving-away! Simply stop by and pick up your "Trail Name" sticker and drop your name in the hat. It's that easy! Participants must be wearing the corresponding Trail Name sticker at the time of the event and be present to win. granitegear.com

4-5pm at the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference booth by the Library: **Protect the AT While Hiking**. Take a walk about 1.5 miles south on the AT and learn how you too can help protect our National Scenic Trail. There is so much you can do while hiking to protect the trail. Learn about trail maintenance and monitoring to be a guardian of the AT. Please wear solid hiking footwear and bring your own water and snacks.

4pm at the Black Diamond booth in the Town Park: **Black Diamond raffle**. Stop in for a raffle ticket for your chance to win a Fineline Stretch Rain Jacket or an Alpenglou Pro Sun Hoody, must be present to win!

4pm at the Town Park by the Veterans Memorial: **River baptism** service with the Trail Days Ministry Team.

5:30-7:30pm at the Town Park Stage: **Live Music by The Great Big Hug!** Not just a band, The Great Big Hug is a musical force blending the raw emotion of Southern Rock with an Americana Blues twist. Whether it's their soaring anthems, intimate ballads, or the undeniable chemistry of their performances, they offer a transcendent musical experience, blending heartfelt storytelling with a sound that resonates across generations.

6pm at Tent City - **Billville Soup and Chili Contest**. Hikers, please come and taste and vote for your favorite of each: soup and chili. Entries, please bring your own table so we can spread out. In the field by Billville camp.

7-10pm at One Way Ministries: **Coffee House** with LIVE band, dancing & food.

7-11pm at The Tippy Bear: **Karaoke night!** Weekly on Fridays.

7-7:50pm at the Rock School Auditorium: **Beginners' Contra Dance Lesson**. Warren & Terry Doyle (AT thru-hikers) will offer patient, fun instruction so you don't look too foolish at tonight's dance. Don't worry, you don't have to know your left foot from your right foot to contra dance.

8-11pm at the Rock School Auditorium: **Annual Trail Days Contra Dance**. Enjoy dancing to some mighty-fine musicians and with patient, clear dance calling by Warren & Terry Doyle, and it's FREE! For new dancers, please come to the beginner's lesson at 7pm. "Contra dancing is the most fun you can have standing up!" No partner or fancy duds needed. Please attend sober. contradancersdelight.com.

8-10pm at the Town Park Stage: **Live Music by Fritz & Co!** Fritz & Co is helmed by Abingdon based singer-songwriter Logan Fritz. Anchored by founding member of Holy Ghost Tent Revival Matt Martin on bass guitar and vocals, Wise County native McKenna Blevins on vocals and auxiliary percussion, and F&C founding drummer, Tyler Seagraves, returning to his spot on stage, the band brings the fun with genre-defying exciting original material and a few beloved covers.

Saturday, May 17th

Saturday Hiker Services by the Trail Days Ministry Team

Stop by the Ministry Team's Welcome & Information Tents, 8:30am-12pm, located at First Baptist Church, by the Library, and along the trail toward Tent City.

At One Way Ministries: *Charging station opens at 8am. OPEN 10:30am to 10pm with drinks and snacks.*

8:30-12 Haircuts, 8:30-1 Free Showers & Laundry (across the street), 8:30-4 Small Supplies ministry.

8:30am-12:30pm: "Porch Picking" on the Front Porch - come and play your favorite instruments!

9am-12pm: Hiking dog check-ups by Dr. Dean Baird (Mountain Empire Small Animal Hospital).

10am-2pm: Put your mug on a Postcard @ One Way.

At First Baptist Church: *OPEN 8:30am to 2pm with Starbucks coffee, cold drinks, and snacks.*

8:30am-1pm: Free Showers at the Town Pool (behind First Baptist).

9am-12pm: Medical Team, foot washing/massages.

9am-4pm: Narcan training & medication dispensation.

7-10am at One Way Ministries: **All you can eat Pancake Breakfast for \$5**, youth fundraiser.

8am at One Way Ministries: **Prayer Gathering** - Everyone is Welcome!

8:30am-1pm at First Baptist Church: **Blood Drive** with Marsh Regional Blood Center.

9-10:30am at the Rock School Auditorium: **How Has AT Thru/Section-Hiking Changed Over the Last 50 Years.** Talk and discussion moderated by Warren Doyle. warrendoyle.com.

9:30-10:45am at the Old Mill Conference Room: **Iris and the Triple Crown Classroom.** Iris and the Fabulous Firsties begin each year at basecamp (i.e. first grade) ready to set off on a thrilling virtual thru-hike! They weave the wonders of the outdoors and spirit of backpacking culture into classroom adventures. Come to learn how they make this magical adventure happen.

10am at the Damascus Trail Center: **A Hiker's History of the Appalachian Trail.** What did AT hikers eat, wear, carry, or sleep in back in 1930, 1950, 1970, or 1990? In this talk, AT historian and podcast host Mills Kelly will preview his forthcoming book, "A Hiker's History of the Appalachian Trail," with answers to these questions and more. appalachiantrail.org.

11-11:30am at the Damascus Public Library: **Trail Days Storytime.** Join us at the library for a trail-inspired storytime! Open to all small children and their caregivers.

11am-12:15pm at the Rock School Auditorium: **The Wonder of Woods Hole**, a special place along the trail south of Pearisburg. Find out what makes this spot like no other. Neville Harris, the guiding spirit behind this oasis, will share her thoughts/feelings on Woods Hole's past, present and future. woodsholehostel.com

11am-12:15pm at the Old Mill Conference Room: **The Everest Base Camp Experience.** Mark Johnson will take you on an audiovisual journey to Everest Base Camp in Nepal and share with you everything you need to know about the trip. hobnailtrekkingco.com

11am-12pm at the Altra Running booth in the Town Park: **Meet & Greet with Tara Dower and Raffle.** Come to the Altra tent to meet Tara Dower, Altra Elite Athlete and current record holder for the Fastest Known Time on the Appalachian Trail!

11am at the Black Diamond booth in the Town Park: **Black Diamond raffle.** Stop in for a raffle ticket for your chance to win a Finline Stretch Rain Jacket or an Alpenglow Pro Sun Hoody, must be present to win!

11:15am at the Damascus Trail Center: **ATC gear raffle!** Stop by to toss your name in the raffle. Must be present to win. appalachiantrail.org.

11:30am-12pm at the Damascus Trail Center: **The Bear Basics.** Staying safe and respecting bears on the Appalachian Trail. appalachiantrail.org.

12 to 5pm at Wicked Chicken Winghouse & Tavern: **Live music by Ed Main** on the porch.

12pm at Allyn 'Fix it Man' Morton's Flyin' Pig Repair Center in the Manufacturer Rep Area at Tent City - **Musical Chairs with Crazy Creek.** 1 winner and prize per event - 1 Crazy Creek Chair! Like when we were kids. Dance around Crazy Creek chairs until the music stops!

12pm at the Damascus Library: **Foraging for Edibles on the Trail with Ben Casteel.** Join horticulturist Ben Casteel on a foraging walk and talk. Ben will explain plants on the trail that can safely be foraged, as well as plants that should be avoided! (A very popular event!)

12pm at the HFMH Tent at the Trail Center: **2025 Gear Package Raffle** with HIKE for Mental Health. Stop by the booth to register for your chance to win the 2025 gear package! Must be present to win. ihike.org

12 to 8pm at Appalachian Heritage Distillery & Brewery: **Parking Lot Beer Garden.** San Taco and Patriotic Pitmaster BBQ food trucks on-site. ahddamascus.com.

12:30-2:30pm at the Town Park Stage: **Live Music by Breadfruit!** Breadfruit is a local reggae band made up of several different artists from several different bands from throughout the Appalachian regions of Southwest Virginia and Northeast Tennessee, including members of The Soulamanders and the Post Bop Jazz Band.

12:30-1:45pm at the Rock School Auditorium: **Increasing Your Success on Completing the AT.** Valid and time-tested tips and advice to complete a thru- or section-hike by a wise, old man who has traversed the entire AT 18 times - Warren Doyle. Includes FREE one-page 'book'. warrendoyle.com.

12:30-1:45pm at the Old Mill Conference Room: **Greybeard's 2025-26 AT Challenge at 90 years old.** Do you want to be active into old age? Come listen to F. Dale Sanders "Greybeard" as he attempts to answer this question by attempting to become the oldest thru-hiker. greybeardadventurer.com.

12:30pm at the Damascus Trail Center: **Appalachian Trail Conservancy Centennial Celebration** with music, networking, and more. appalachiantrail.org.

12:30pm at the Granite Gear booth in the Town Park: **Granite Gear's "What's-Your-Trail-Name" raffle!** Swing by on Friday or Saturday to get entered into 30 minutes of pure gear-giving-away! Simply stop by and pick up your "Trail Name" sticker and drop your name in the hat. It's that easy! Participants must be wearing the corresponding Trail Name sticker at the time of the event and be present to win. granitegear.com

12:30pm at the Astral Booth in the Town Park: **The Shoey Championships** will pit thru hikers against one another to find the ultimate Shoey Champion of AT Days. Root beer provided for registered contestants. Fastest Shoey goes home with enough shoes to hike the AT. Astral is not responsible for any after effects of doing a shoey, both for the competitors or spectators. astraldesigns.com

1:15pm at Damascus Trail Center: **Appalachian Trail Conservancy Centennial Raffle** appalachiantrail.org.

1:30pm at the Damascus Trail Center: **BearVault Trivia & Blindfolded Opening Contest.** Test your food storage knowledge and try your skills to win a BearVault and other prizes. appalachiantrail.org.

Saturday Afternoon

1:30pm: Trail Days Hiker Parade Line-Up in front of Sundog Outfitter.

2pm: Trail Days Hiker Parade from Sundog Outfitter to the Town Park.

3pm at the Town Park Stage: **Trail Days Live Auction to benefit The Place Hostel.** Outdoor gear, crafts, books, and more! Also on auction will be lodging, bike shuttles, meals, and other gift certificates. All proceeds benefit "The Place" Hostel, operated by the Damascus United Methodist Church, the oldest hostel on the Appalachian Trail. Donations are requested by noon on Saturday; please bring donations to the auction tent in the Town Park. The auction is sponsored by Laurel Family Drug and this year's auctioneer is provided by A OK Auction Gallery, LLC of Damascus, VA. Contact TK Waters at tkpratt47@gmail.com for more information and/or to make donations.

4pm at the Town Park Stage: **Hiker Talent Show!** Sign up in the Town Park after the Hiker Parade. Time limit 4 minutes each.

2pm at the One More Day on the AT booth: **One More Day Raffle** with drawings throughout the day on Friday and Saturday. Win a \$100 gift certificate to Damascus Outfitters at 2pm, must be present to win. To enter, stop by the booth and sign up for FREE! onemoredayontheat.com.

2:30pm-4:30pm at the Damascus Library: Join us at the **Damascus Library** as we welcome the Songwriters of Highlands Appalachia (SOHA)! These talented musicians will share their love for music as they perform during this free event.

2:45-3:45pm at the Old Mill Conference Room: **Story Time with Black Bear.** Bring children by for a reading of Black Bear's Adventure children's book along with a book-related activity. EmilysEscapades.com.

3pm at the Hyperlite booth in the Town Park: **Hyperlite Mountain Gear's Famous Raffle** with a full kit as the grand prize, including a pack, shelter, quilt, and other accessories, plus several other items! Enter to win before Saturday at 2pm; entries will be cut off thirty minutes before drawing names. hyperlitemountaingear.com.

3pm at DryFoxCo Booth: **DryFoxCo Packing Challenge** - Come learn how to pack a super lightweight day pack using our ultralight hiking gear. Win a prize for holding our towels into their attached pocket! dryfoxco.com

3pm at Allyn 'Fix it Man' Morton's Flyin' Pig Repair Center in the Manufacturer Rep Area at Tent City - **Musical Chairs with Crazy Creek.** 1 winner and prize per event - 1 Crazy Creek Chair! Like when we were kids. Dance around Crazy Creek chairs until the music stops!

3pm at the Damascus Trail Center: **Helene Info Session.** Join us for a look at how the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) responded to Hurricane Helene, assessing damage and assisting recovery efforts to restore the A.T. Through dedicated stewardship and conservation, discover how the ATC ensures the trail's resilience, protecting its future while keeping it accessible for generations. appalachiantrail.org.

3:30pm at The Trek / Backpacker Radio's booth in the Town Park: **A Raffle to End All Raffles.** Swing by the booth anytime on Friday or Saturday morning to snag a ticket! Drawing will begin at 3:30pm. thetrek.co

3:30pm at the Damascus Trail Center: **BearVault's BearPong Tournament.** Bring a friend and compete head to head in BearPong to win a BearVault and a \$50 gift card to Damascus outfitters while learning about food storage and bear safety. appalachiantrail.org.

4-5:30pm at the Rock School Auditorium: **Solo: Hiking the Arizona Trail Unsupported.** Come hear Heather Anderson share her story of and lessons learned from hiking the 800-mile Arizona Trail completely

unsupported during the Spring of 2024. She began her hike with all her food and gear completing the trail in 24 days without resupplying or going into town. [wordsfromthewild.net](https://www.wordsfromthewild.net)

4pm at the Damascus Trail Center: **A 35mm Thru Hike**. Shooting over 250 rolls of 35mm film on her 2024 thru-hike, Laura "Half Pint" Partain shares her photographs and her story of putting her career in commercial photography on hold to thru-hike the Appalachian Trail with one of her cameras - and what her NOBO traverse taught her about her love of photography, her artist's journey, and herself. [appalachiantrail.org](https://www.appalachiantrail.org).

4-5:15pm at the Old Mill Conference Room: **Hiking With a Dog**. Join Maria Wishart (Wheezy Pee) as she shares how to hike responsibly with a dog. She will cover nutrition, logistics, training, gear, etc. There is an emphasis on responsibility and management including leashing up and practicing leave no trace.

4-5pm at the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference booth by the Library: **Protect the AT While Hiking**. Take a walk about 1.5 miles south on the AT and learn how you too can help protect our National Scenic Trail. There is so much you can do while hiking to protect the trail. Learn about trail maintenance and monitoring to be a guardian of the AT. Please wear solid hiking footwear and bring your own water and snacks.

4pm at the Town Park by the Veterans Memorial: **River baptism** service with the Trail Days Ministry Team.

5pm at the Damascus Trail Center: **ATC gear raffle!** Stop by to toss your name in the raffle. Must be present to win. [appalachiantrail.org](https://www.appalachiantrail.org).

5:30-7:30pm at the Town Park Stage: **Live Music by Florencia & The Feeling!** Johnson City-based pop-funk fusion band, Florencia & the Feeling, delivers an amazing live show with their upbeat funky grooves, heartfelt songwriting, soaring 4-part harmonies, and all-around good vibes, culminating in a unique sound with hints of jazz, and Latin roots. Radio Bristol praised the band's "tight rhythmic jams and groovy guitar riffs," while the Bristol Herald Courier called their sound "happy music" and "joyful noise," and went on to say "their songs compel smiles on faces and dancing from feet."

5:30-6:45pm at the Old Mill Conference Room: **AT-Inspired Devotions**. Come and learn how the trail inspires a deeper understanding of faith. [EmilysEscapades.com](https://www.EmilysEscapades.com).

6-7:30pm at the Rock School Auditorium: **Setting the Fastest Known Time on the Appalachian Trail: A Love Story between the runner and Chump Change**. 2197 miles in 40 Days 18 Hours and 6 minutes - The fastest time ever on the Appalachian Trail. Come listen to the account of how history was made on the AT through pure equanimity, chaos, friendship and a whole lot of trail magic. Rascal and Candy Mama comedically and somewhat seriously retell the story of the 2024 record breaking hike that inspired millions around the world. [Tara-Treks.com](https://www.Tara-Treks.com)

6pm at The Damascus Brewery: **Live music by the Soulamanders**, the best in Reggae/Funk/Soul/Rock! Free show, all ages welcome. Silly Willy Pizza Dogs on-site all weekend!

7-11pm at The Tippy Bear: **Live music by the Moonshine Outlaws** for the Trail Days Tippy Bear Festival.

7-8:15pm at the Old Mill Conference Room: **Life After Post-Trail Depression**. Emily will discuss how the trail changed her, how she suffered after her hikes, and how she recovered. [EmilysEscapades.com](https://www.EmilysEscapades.com).

7pm at Tent City: **Billville Useless Gear Contest** with prizes. Be creative and enter or just come and watch the fun!

8-10pm at the Town Park Stage: **Live Music by The Alabama Heathens!** After co-headlining "Alabama Smokeshow" at Mars Music Hall in July of 2024, The Alabama Heathens have established themselves as one of the fastest-rising groups in North Alabama. The Heathens focus heavily on delivering genre-bending performances, wearing their influences on their sleeves. At the core, they are Southern Rock, focused on writing great tunes that captivate the listener's ear at a much deeper level than your ordinary chart topper.

8-9:30pm at the Rock School Auditorium: **23 Ways to Drink in Life on the Appalachian Trail.** In this documentary by Maddie Zickel, 23 traditions, hallmarks, and milestones that many hikers experience are discussed as we follow one hiker on her journey northbound. Many hikers are interviewed both formally and informally throughout, giving the viewer a sense of what's different and similar for each person's hike.

1am: Town-wide quiet hours begin at midnight on Friday and 1am on Saturday. No exceptions.

Sunday, May 18th

8:30am at the Damascus Trail Center: **Helene Hardcore** - Join Appalachian Trail volunteers and land managers for a day of giving back to the Trail. Volunteers will meet at the Trail Center at 8:30am to spend a full day on trail work. All transportation, equipment, and meals are provided. Once finished, volunteers will be treated to a spaghetti dinner sponsored by ALDHA. Limited space available. Inquire and register at the Tennessee Eastman booth at the Trail Center on Friday and Saturday.

9-10am at the Rock School Auditorium: **Altered on the Appalachian Trail.** Join Mike Rayder as he discusses his new book about his 1973 AT thru-hike and how the trail changed his life and the gifts he received from his journey.

10-11am at the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference booth by the Library: **Protect the AT While Hiking.** Take a walk about 1.5 miles south on the AT and learn how you too can help protect our National Scenic Trail. There is so much you can do while hiking to protect the trail. Learn about trail maintenance and monitoring to be a guardian of the AT. Please wear solid hiking footwear and bring your own water and snacks.

10:30am-noon at the Rock School Auditorium: **Blood Sweat Tears: Women+ on Trail.** Come for a panel discussion with author Christine Reed, Meaghan Martin, Belinda Arndt, and endurance hiker Heather Anderson, on the specific challenges faced by women+ on trail and some tips and tricks for dealing with them.

10:30am-noon at Laurel Creek Park: **Praise & Worship Service** (bring your own chair or mat). River baptism at the end of the service. Hyperlite 3400 Windrider Backpack giveaway - Drop your name in the bowl at City of Light inside Tent City Thurs-Sat for the drawing. NOTE: If it rains, this event will move to One Way Ministries.

10:45am at the Damascus Trail Center: **ATC gear raffle!** Stop by to toss your name in the raffle. Must be present to win. appalachiantrail.org.

11am on the Creeper Trail by the Town Park: **Osprey Packs Trail Days 5K & Kids' 1K** - The course is a certified out-and-back 5K on the Virginia Creeper Trail with electronic B-tag timing by We Run Events. Awards for 5K overall winners and by age group. All Kids 1K participants will receive a medal and t-shirt. 11am start for the 5K with the Kids 1K to follow. Register online at athlinks.com.

11am at the Damascus Trail Center: **Art Making and Hiking** - How has the AT inspired you as a creative? Bring your favorite photos, illustrations, paintings, guitar playing, and more, and join 2024 thru-hiker and photographer Laura "Half Pint" Partain for an informal and inspiring group-led conversation on hiking as artists and the work we make along our journeys. This conversation is geared towards AT hikers of all kinds who create art on the trail, with an end goal to inspire and affirm those who find their creative voices on the AT.

11am-3pm at The Topsy Bear: **Bloody Mary Bar** weekly on Sundays!

11:45-1:45pm at the Town Park Stage: **Live Music by The Deer Run Drifters!** More than a decade later, The Deer Run Drifters are back. With a new lineup, a renewed sense of purpose, and fresh songs that embrace their traditional roots, the band is rekindling their connection with fans and doubling down on the grit and authenticity that made them a standout name in Americana music. They're kicking off 2025 with a string of shows, and—rumor has it—working on new music. Fans can expect the same soul-stirring lyrics, dynamic instrumentals, and storytelling charm, infused with the wisdom and growth of a decade away from the spotlight.

12pm at the Mosaics By Rose booth in the Town Park: **Stained Glass Raffle**, valued at \$600. Raffle tickets for sale all weekend, \$5 each or 5 for \$20. Half of the proceeds will be donated to the ATC Resiliency Fund.

12:30- 1:30pm at the Rock School Auditorium: **Altered on the Appalachian Trail**. Join Mike Rayder as he discusses his new book about his 1973 AT thru-hike and how the trail changed his life and the gifts he received from his journey.

1pm at the Damascus Trail Center: **In My Boots: Book Talk and Signing** with Amanda "Tamarack" Jaros, author of *In My Boots: A Memoir of Five Million Steps Along the Appalachian Trail*, a coming-of-age tale just released in February 2025 from Black Rose Writing. In 1999, Amanda embarked on a trek of the Appalachian Trail, wondering who she is and how she fits in the world, and leaving behind a childhood with a volatile and unstable father. After a physically and emotionally taxing journey, Amanda uncovered who she can be - herself.

1:30pm at One Way Ministries: **Free Shuttles North and Southbound** leave for Erwin and Bland - sign up at One Way Ministries to reserve your spot.

2-3:45pm at the Rock School Auditorium: **My 57 y.o. Love Affair with the AT**. Come be regaled by Warren Doyle, member of the AT Hall of Fame, who has attended all the Trail Days. His AT hiking exploits speak for themselves. Be prepared to be entertained, amused, agitated, enlightened and/or pushed out of your comfort zone (just like the trail does to its pilgrims). The question of "What motivates someone to walk the entire trail 18 times?" might be answered by the end of this program.

2:30-3:30 at the Town Park Stage: **Live Music by The Kody Norris Show!** This talented group, made up of frontman Kody Norris, Josiah Tyree, Mary Rachel Nalley-Norris, and Charlie Lowman, finds themselves with a growing legion of fans craving the comfort that comes from their retro look, but equally craving dynamic instrumentation and thought-provoking lyrics – all of which can be heard throughout their epic new album *Rhinestone Revival*. "There is a whole chapter of country music that's just kind of faded away," The Kody Norris Show's frontman once said. "I believe The Kody Norris Show has been instrumental in bringing back some of that nostalgia and classic look that country music and bluegrass music used to have."

6-9pm at The Tipsy Bear: **Live music** on Sunday night!

6pm: Tent City closes on Sunday at 6pm. If you try to stay late, you will be asked to leave the premises immediately. See you next year!

Monday, May 19

4-6pm from the Town Park: **Damascus Litter Cleanup with SAVE** (Student Ambassadors for Virginia's Environment). Meet at the Town Park for a post- Trail Days litter pickup of the Town Park, Tent City, and the Beaverdam Creek Trail. Wear closed toe shoes, dress for the weather, and bring work gloves if you have them. RSVP at <https://forms.gle/7BsxycsvhpnDdDb86>.

The schedule is subject to change. To see the most current schedule, visit www.VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays.