



# FESTIVAL GUIDE

MAY 15-17, 2026



IMAGINE MILES OF SMILES.

**IMAGINE  
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BACKPACKING**

When your gear is lighter, tougher, and drier, you're free to focus on covering miles and exploring with more confidence. Built with advanced materials like Dyneema® Composite Fabrics and versatile, reliable designs, this is modern backpacking. Load up with the tools you need for an exceptional Appalachian Trail experience. Cheers to the Class of 2026 from all of us at Hyperlite Mountain Gear!

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## A LITTLE NOTE FROM THE MAYOR



Welcome to 'The Friendliest Town on the Trail' for the 39th annual Appalachian Trail Days Festival! Since its debut in 1987, Trail Days has become one of the most anticipated events. Not only does the hiking community get excited about Trail Days, but locals, visitors, vendors, and business owners all look forward to sharing and commemorating the weekend.

Damascus eagerly awaits this gathering each year to continue to celebrate the Appalachian Trail and all the folks who love it. Trail Days takes months of planning! Many thanks to the Trail Days Committee, Town staff, Town officials, sponsors, vendors, volunteers, hikers, and all those who participate.

As you can see, we are recovering from Helene. We are getting better every day! We are going to be better than we have ever been! We are forever grateful to the US Forest Service for making the decision to rebuild the VA Creeper Trail! And, we are tremendously thankful for the construction crew, Kiewit, the folks who were chosen to do so! You have become our family and we love you! DAM Right, we are OK! DAM Straight, we are rebuilding! We are mighty DAM Strong! Cheers!

**Much Love and Light, Katie Lamb**  
Mayor, Town of Damascus



## DAMASCUS, VIRGINIA, TRAIL TOWN USA

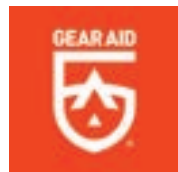
We have some of the best outdoor recreation of the Southeast right in our backyard. There's an adventure for everyone here! The **Appalachian Trail** and **Virginia Creeper Trail** pass right through the heart of Damascus, along with several other long distance hiking, cycling, and motor routes. At the edge of town, **Mount Rogers National Recreation Area** stretches as far as the eye can see, across the highest peaks in the state, over high elevation mountain balds and spruce-fir forests, trout streams, and more than 500 miles of trails. Here you'll find the five highest peaks in Virginia, all at over 5,000 feet in elevation: **Mount Rogers, Whitetop Mountain, Pine Mountain, Buzzard Rock, and Haw Orchard Mountain.**

The **trail town lifestyle** in Damascus is adventurous and creative, yet relaxed. Stop and stay awhile in our vibrant downtown, where everyone is treated like a local. **Take the time to explore all that Damascus has to offer.** From the many trails, parks, and public lands, to our shops and restaurants downtown, there is an adventure for everyone here. It's the kind of place where you'll find an adventure of your very own - one that makes you return again and again. **We cherish this lifestyle and we know you will too.**

PLAN YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE AT [VISITDAMASCUS.ORG](https://www.visitdamascus.org)



# THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!



LEARN MORE:



# EVENT INFO

## APPALACHIAN TRAIL DAYS FESTIVAL

**Trail Days is the biggest event of the year in Damascus and the world's largest celebration of the Appalachian Trail and hiker culture!** Each year in May, the town swells to an estimated 25,000 people for the festival. You can expect a grand reunion of thru-hikers past and present, over a hundred vendors of handmade goods and some of the best outdoor gear in the industry, a packed schedule of live music and events, and a large crowd of trail supporters and hiking enthusiasts. Trail Days is always the weekend after Mother's Day. The Town-wide Yard Sale is always the weekend before Trail Days. Trail Days is free to attend; there is a fee at Tent City.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

- **2026 Season: The Virginia Creeper Trail is CLOSED past Damascus.** The A.T. NOBO detour follows the Iron Mountain Trail from town and reconnects with the A.T. near Thomas Knob Shelter. Closure strictly enforced.
- Find the **Town Information Tent and First Aid Station** by the Town Park Stage.
- **Live Music:** FREE concerts at the Town Park Stage all weekend. Bring your own chair/blanket and stay awhile.
- **Alcohol is prohibited in all public spaces.** Attendees may drink responsibly in designated areas.
- **ATM locations in town:** App. Heritage Distillery, Bank of Damascus, Cowboys, Country Corner, and Food City.
- **Ride Board:** To request or offer a ride to or from Trail Days, post in the **Trail Days Ride Board** group on Facebook. The Damascus Trail Center will also have an in-person ride board to post offers and requests.
- **Content Creators:** Pick up your Trail Days media kit and talking points at the Town Info Tent!
- **Share your Trail Days photos with us!** Use hashtags #VisitDamascus, #TrailDays, and #TrailTownUSA or tag the Appalachian Trail Days Festival pages on Facebook and Instagram.

## FREE EVENT SHUTTLE

- **Trail Days Shuttle:** The free shuttle bus is **provided by People Inc.** Use this shuttle to get around Trail Days! Shuttle stops are shown on the centerfold map and marked with yard signs around town.
- **Shuttle Hours:** are Friday 5-10pm, Saturday 10am-10pm, and Sunday 10am-5pm. Additional shuttles by the Ministry Team may be available on Thursday and Friday.

## PARKING

- Public parking cannot accommodate oversized vehicles, trailers, RVs, or campers during Trail Days. This includes Tent City, the Town Park, downtown, and the long-term lots.
- Please be considerate of our residents and **do not park on private property** unless you have permission.
- Paid parking is available by Tent City at 1011 S Shady Ave, Damascus VA 24236. \$30 per car, CASH ONLY.
- The Wilson St lot by the Library is CLOSED to public parking. This area is reserved for vendor parking only.
- The town of Damascus is **highly walk-able and bike-able.** Once you find a place to park, we recommend that you travel by foot, bike, and/or shuttle as much as possible. If you are staying overnight, please try to leave your vehicle at your lodging.

*By attending the Appalachian Trail Days Festival, you consent to the use of any photos, videos, recordings, or any other record of this event with you in it for any legitimate purpose, including use by the Town of Damascus, Virginia Tourism Corporation, and other organization partners.*



Appalachian Trail  
Conservancy

# Together We Keep the Trail Alive

**Become an ATC member during Trail Days 2026  
and get an exclusive T-shirt.**



Your support advances efforts to improve and repair the Trail, protect and restore the A.T. landscape, and ensure its iconic hiking experience.

[appalachiantrail.org](http://appalachiantrail.org)



**Visit the Damascus Trail Center**  
this weekend and year-round for

- Visitor & Hiker Resources
- Gear Giveaways
- Educational Programs

209 West Laurel Ave.  
Damascus, VA

Free Wifi • Public Restrooms • Water Filling Station • A.T. Merchandise

# EVENT INFO

## TENT CITY (1011 S SHADY AVE)

Tent City is a large walk-in camping area provided by the Town of Damascus during Trail Days. There are no advance reservations and camping is first come, first served. Tent City has restrooms/portajohns and dumpsters nearby. Firewood is provided.

- An **entrance fee is required** to enter, whether you are camping or not.
- **Wristbands** are good for the whole weekend: Thursday is \$20 per person, Friday \$15, and Saturday \$10.
- Tent City is **CASH ONLY**. We do have an option to **pay by Square via QR code** with a processing fee of \$1 per person. This option is only available if you have cell service and can show proof of receipt at the gate.
- **Opens at 9am Thursday and closes 6pm Sunday**. If you arrive early or stay late, you will be asked to leave.
- No vehicles may be taken into the camping area. There is a **\$200 fine for vehicles** driven onto the field.
- Tent city is **pet-friendly** for friendly pets. Please keep pets on a leash and clean up any waste.
- **Town-wide quiet hours** begin at midnight on Friday and 1am on Saturday. No exceptions.

## SATURDAY HIKER PARADE

- **The parade is at 2pm. Parade line-up is at 1:30pm** by Sundog Outfitter. The parade ends at the Town Park. **Trestles 16 & 17 in town are CLOSED for 2026, use Laurel Avenue to get to the parade line-up.**
- Water balloons are not allowed but **super soakers** are very much encouraged! The Town expects participants to use caution and common sense.
- **Do not spray water on anyone preceding the hikers**, to include those in uniform such as the Honor Guard and Police. Do not spray water on other parade participants such as trail maintenance clubs, beauty pageant queens, scout troops, etc...unless they have a super soaker too!
- **Alcohol is prohibited in all public spaces.** This includes the Hiker Parade and Town Park.

## TOWN INFO TENT

Located by the Town Park Stage, 10-10 daily.

Stop by for:  
**Festival Guide & Local Info**  
**Lost and Found**  
**Official Trail Days merch**

Official Trail Days t-shirts usually sell out by the end of the weekend, so stop by early!

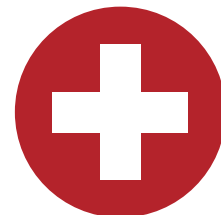


## FIRST AID STATION

Located by the Town Park Stage, 9-5 daily.

Stop by for basic first aid needs. If the First Aid Station has closed for the day, first aid supplies will be available at the Town Information Tent.

**In case of emergency, call 911.**





Swing by the GG booth  
in Town Park!

- We've got -

**2 RAFFLES!**

Friday at 4pm &  
Saturday at 12:30pm



*Just stop by before  
the drawings and grab your*

**Trail Name Sticker!**



# FRIDAY MUSIC



## LOGAN & MCKENNA

12:30–2:30 at the Town Park Stage

Logan (Fritz) & McKenna (Blevins) are a duo in every sense of the word! Harmony drenched songs in the Americana vein peppered with alt country and vintage rock & roll, they provide a rich mix of authentic, original material as well as an eclectic selection of covers you'll want to sing and dance along to. Veterans of Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion, the Virginia Highlands Festival, AVL Fest, and Appalachian Trail Days, they have shared stages with many wonderful musicians, including an opening night for Jakob Dylan and The Wallflowers.

## ADAM BOLT & THE LOCKWASHERS

3:00–5:00 at the Town Park Stage

A former grape farmer, Adam spent years working in the fields where the solitude of the land provided the perfect space for his mind to wander, creating songs that would become the soundtrack to his experiences. His music, deeply connected to the rhythms of nature, reflects his experiences in rural life.

Adam describes his songwriting as “sensationalized, cynical, and seasoned in the key of country,” influenced by the works of musical heroes such as Todd Snider, John Prine, Tom T. Hall, and Roger Miller. He recalls childhood car trips to Alabama where he immersed himself in the music of his parents—shaping the sound and soul of his songs.



**There are FREE concerts from Friday to Sunday at the stage in the middle of the Town Park. Bring your own lawn/camping chair or picnic blanket and stay awhile!**

# FRIDAY MUSIC

## BREADFRUIT REGGAE

5:30-7:30 at the Town Park Stage

Breadfruit is a 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.



## SEED PICKER

8:00-10:00 at the Town Park Stage

Seedpicker, a crew from the hills and valleys of Southwest Virginia, jams the blues, funk, soul, and reggae with fun arrangements of familiar feel-good classics and original tunes.



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**EMBRACE THE JOURNEY**



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ATHLETIC

# SATURDAY MUSIC

## JAKE & CHLOE ANGELES

12:30-2:30 at the Town Park Stage

Jake & Chloe are an acoustic duo who sing and write both original tunes and covers blending a variety of genres like folk, Americana, and reggae. Together, they create a unique style that expresses through Chloe's violin playing and vocal harmonies and Jake's rhythm guitar lead and songwriting!



## SATURDAY AFTERNOON

*2pm Hiker Parade downtown*

*3pm Live Auction at the Town Park Stage to benefit The Place Hostel*

*4pm Hiker Talent Show at the Town Park Stage*

### SHARE YOUR TRAIL DAYS PHOTOS WITH US!

USE THE HASHTAGS #VISITDAMASCUSVA, #TRAILDAYS, AND #TRAILTOWNUSA OR TAG THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL DAYS FESTIVAL PAGES ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM.

There are FREE concerts from Friday to Sunday at the stage in the middle of the Town Park. Bring your own lawn/camping chair or picnic blanket and stay awhile!

# SATURDAY MUSIC



## RAMONA AND THE HOLY SMOKES

5:30-7:30 at the Town Park Stage

Based in Central Virginia and with family roots in South Texas, Ramona and the Holy Smokes represent a new generation of honky tonk music. With powerful female vocals that cover an emotional range from determined to comic to vulnerable, and a talented backing band steeped in classic country and western styles of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, the band's repertoire includes lush emotional ballads, quintessential two-step dance numbers, gritty country-rockers, and a unique blend of honky tonk and traditional Mexican styles that the group describes as "Mexi-tonk."

## LOVE BUCKET

8:00-10:00 at the Town Park Stage

Formed in Nashville in 2026, Love Bucket brings on an exciting sound of power, passion, and down-home goodness to Music City and all over the country. Playing original music featuring strong vocals, proud instrumentals, ear catching lyrics, familiar feels, and pleasant surprises, they're influenced by the love and joy that drives their desire to make music for themselves and the people. Fans of Blues, Soul, and Rock 'n' Roll should look out for a Love Bucket show near them!



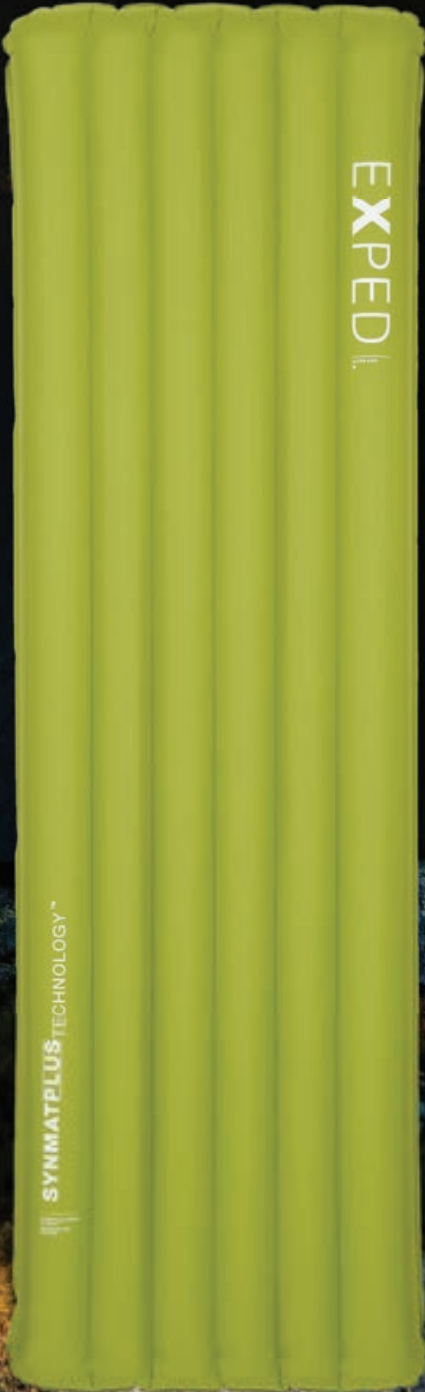
**There are FREE concerts from Friday to Sunday at the stage in the middle of the Town Park. Bring your own lawn/camping chair or picnic blanket and stay awhile!**

# EXPED

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 **SWISS  
DESIGN**



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DAILY GIVEAWAYS

TRY ON SPRING 2026 THRU-HIKING PACKS

FREE GEAR REPAIRS IN TENT CITY



# SUNDAY MUSIC

## STAGE TAKEOVER WITH JAMIE COLLINS OF THE BLUE RIDGE GIRLS

12:00-4:00 at the Town Park Stage



The Blue Ridge Girls

The Blue Ridge Girls, like their name, invoke a picturesque simplicity with their take on traditional mountain music. Jamie Collins is a singer-songwriter, bassist, and guitarist from Bristol, Tennessee. Growing up with her Dad, Tony, who was one of the area's best flat pickers, she has been surrounded by talented musicians since birth. Jamie shares her love of music by also teaching at Junior Appalachian Musicians, Inc. (JAM), and she released her first solo album in 2022.

The Sunday Stage Takeover will also feature appearances by Sola Bazaar, Kasey Williams, and more!



Kasey Williams



Sola Bazaar

There are FREE concerts from Friday to Sunday at the stage in the middle of the Town Park. Bring your own lawn/camping chair or picnic blanket and stay awhile!

## SATURDAY, MAY 9

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

10am-noon at Bad Bagel's Pet Emporium: **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. Bad Bagel's Pet Emporium is temporarily located at 106 West Laurel Avenue.

7am-2pm at the Damascus Senior Citizens' Center: **Senior Center Fundraiser**. Sausage biscuits and coffee on Saturday morning from 7 to 10am. Bean dinner 11am to 2pm (or until sold out) on Friday & Saturday. Dine in or takeout. Bake sale on Saturday. Located at 209 North Legion Street.

10am-5pm at Bad Bagel's Pet Emporium: **Petals, Paws & Mother's Day**. Flower crowns (for people AND dogs!) with Fig Tree Flower Farm, The Petal Pusher Flower Truck packed with gorgeous blooms, and more!

7-10pm at The Tippy Bear: **Live music with Phantom**. Food, drinks, and a good ol' time!



7:30-9pm at The Cardinal Music Hall: **Live music by Christa Wells**. The Nashville-based singer-songwriter brings soulful, piano-driven music and deeply vulnerable lyrics, creating a night of connection, healing, and creative awakening. Doors open at 7:00 PM, show starts at 7:30 PM.

*The schedule is subject to change. To see an updated schedule, visit [www.VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays](http://www.VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays).*

# WHERE THE LOCALS EAT!



**Hearty Breakfast • Southern Favorites • Trail-Tested Fuel**

 109 S Shady Ave • Downtown Damascus  
 276-475-5454



Steps from the  
Creeper Trail

# EVENT SCHEDULE

## WEDNESDAY, MAY 13

**9am-3pm:** “The Place” 11th Annual Work Day & 50th Anniversary of TransAmerica Bicycle Trail. Come lend a hand in taking care of the oldest hostel on the Appalachian Trail! Free lunch for the first 25 volunteers.

**5:30-8:30pm** at Appalachian Heritage Distillery & Brewery: **Western Wednesdays & Line Dancing.** FREE, Beginners lessons begin at 5:30 and dancing starts at 6. Join in on the theme and wear your western attire!

**6pm** at One Way Ministries: **Cookout & Music with the Trail Days Ministry Team.** Everyone is welcome. (If it rains, this event will be canceled.)

**7pm-11pm** at The Topsy Bear: **2nd Annual “This is Trail Days” Party.** Live music by Renegade, plus food and drink specials and more!

## THURSDAY, MAY 14

### 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.*

7:30am-6pm: Free Showers & Laundry (behind One Way), 8:30-4pm: Haircuts (at One Way).

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

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

**2pm** at the Damascus Library: **Jigsaw Puzzle Speed Competition.** Teams of 2-4 people will compete to finish identical 300-piece puzzles in the least amount of time. Call 276-475-3820 to sign up in advance; walk-ins are first-come, first-served.

**4-5pm** at the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference booth by the Library: **Protect the AT While Hiking.** Learn how you can protect the Appalachian Trail while hiking on the Appalachian Trail. This 2 mile roundtrip uphill hike will show you how. Please wear solid hiking footwear and bring your own water and snacks.

**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.

**7-11pm** at The Topsy Bear: **Emo Night Rave!**

**8-9:30pm** at the Rock School Auditorium: **My 58 y.o. Love Affair With the AT.** Start your Trail Days by being regaled by Warren Doyle, member of the AT Hall of Fame and ALDHA Founder, and who has attended all the Trail Days. His lifelong passion for the AT is obvious. Be prepared to be entertained, amused, agitated, inspired and/or pushed out of your comfort zone (just like the AT does to the pilgrims who follow it). The question of “What motivates someone to walk the entire trail eighteen times?” might be answered by end of program.

# EVENT SCHEDULE: FRIDAY

## **Friday Hiker Services by the Trail Days Ministry Team**

Stop by the Ministry Team's Welcome & Information Tents, 8:30-4pm, 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.*

7:30am-6pm: Free Showers & Laundry (behind One Way)

8:30-4pm: Haircuts, Small Supplies ministry, "Porch Picking" – come and play your favorite instruments!

9am-4pm: Medical Tent with doctors and nurses on-site and foot washing/massages

10am-1pm: Hiking dog veterinary check-ups

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

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

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

9am-4pm: 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: **Your Body is Linked Like a Chain.** You are carrying about 30 lbs on your back. Where is your weak link? Each link – arches, knees, hips, spine, shoulders, neck, and more – has it's own unique job, and if any one of them is neglected (or overworked), it impacts the whole system. Let me help you find your weak link. Dr. Tom Foltz of Trail Town Chiropractic in Damascus, 276-525-2380.

**10am-12pm** at the Damascus Methodist Church: **Basket Class** for beginners to advanced weavers. RSVP requested by May 9 to [bethwhitel2184@gmail.com](mailto:bethwhitel2184@gmail.com) or text 252-717-7137. Drop-ins welcome.

**10:15am** at the Damascus Trail Center: **ATC gear raffle!** Stop by to toss your name in the raffle. Must be present to win.

**10:30am-1:30pm** at the Damascus Library: **Nature's Hidden Details: Pelts, Bones & Taxidermy.** Visit with staff from Hungry Mother State Park at a hands-on information table. Discover how these materials help us identify wildlife and learn how taxidermy plays a role in education and conservation. Photos with our taxidermy animals are encouraged!

**11am** at the Damascus Trail Center: **Meet the Author with Steven C. Wright,** of *The Weight I Carried: Hiking Through Grief and Healing on the Appalachian Trail.*

*The schedule is subject to change. To see an updated schedule, go to [VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays](http://VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays).*



Complete ultralight meal

Just add water & go

700 calories, 43g protein

# AUTHORS AREA

OPEN FRIDAY 10-6 & SATURDAY 9-5  
AT THE DAMASCUS LIBRARY



Meet trail authors, get your books signed, and pick up your next favorite read! This year's authors are Bethany Adams, Collin Chambers, Mills Kelly, Miller Hollstein, John Turner, and Chuck Walsh.



## CUT WEIGHT, NOT CORNERS.

The new VST tent line is made for those who hike fast and light - and designed top to bottom with feedback from hikers like you.

Photo: Noah Wetzel

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#### STRING RIDGE VST 1.5

19.3oz / 547.1g

\*2 trekking poles required.

#### PITCHPINE VST 1.5

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- Designed to fit 25" wide pads
- .5 sizing adds interior space for gear
- 4,000mm water column rating thanks to HyperBead™ fabric technology
- #5 YKK DynaPel™ fly zippers

LEARN MORE



# TRAIL DAYS MERCH

AT TOWN INFO TENT IN THE TOWN PARK



Get your official Trail Days merch: t-shirts, stickers, bandanas, neck gaiters, and more! Cash only. The Town Info Tent is open from Wednesday 1pm to Sunday 5pm.



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Rab Athlete: Zelzin Aketzalla | Follow her journey on IG @zelzin\_aketzalli

WWW.RAB.EQUIPMENT

REFUGIO DEL TEVOYL IN IZTACIQUATL NATIONAL PARK, ESTADO DE MEXICO | 4,328 M (14,200 FT)



# EVENT SCHEDULE: FRIDAY

**11am-1pm** at the Damascus Trail Center: **Artisan Painting Class with Sketching Summits**. Heidi Nisbett will provide a step-by-step lesson on how to sketch out the predetermined subject matter (an Appalachian Trail landscape) and paint it in with watercolor. Workshop fee includes take-home supplies – everything you need for the workshop and to continue your creative practice at home or on the trail! A portion of the \$35 fee supports the Appalachian Trail Conservancy! 2-hour workshop; register at [sketchingsummits.square.site](http://sketchingsummits.square.site).

**11am-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.

**11:30am** at The Trek / Backpacker Radio's booth in the Town Park: **Cherry Pie Eating Contest**. No hands, no mercy, just you and a face full of cherry filling, first to finish wins. Expect carnage, red-stained faces, and a prize package so compelling, it'll be worth the stained clothing. If you've got the hunger, step up and prove it.

**11:30am-12:30** at Bad Bagel's Pet Emporium: **Traildog Free Food Drop**. Refuel your traildog with free food sample bags on Friday and Saturday (while supplies last). You can also enjoy 10% off during our magic hour.

**12pm** at the Green Mountain Club booth by the Caboose: **Vermont Raffle**. The Green Mountain Club, which maintains the AT in Vermont, will have a raffle at noon each day with Vermont-based prizes, including hats, guidebooks, maps, and other goodies.

**12:15pm** at the Damascus Trail Center: **ATC gear raffle!** Stop by to toss your name in the raffle. Must be present to win.

**12:30-2:30pm** at the Town Park Stage: **Live Music by Logan & McKenna!** Logan (Fritz) & McKenna (Blevins) are a duo in every sense of the word! Harmony drenched songs in the Americana vein peppered with alt country and vintage rock & roll, they provide a rich mix of authentic, original material as well as an eclectic selection of covers you'll want to sing and dance along to. Veterans of Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion, the Virginia Highlands Festival, AVL Fest, and Appalachian Trail Days, they have shared stages with many wonderful musicians, including an opening night for Jakob Dylan and The Wallflowers.

**1pm** at the Darn Tough booth in the Town Park: **Darn Tough Socks For Life Raffle**. Stop by the booth at 1pm every day for a chance to win Socks For Life! Must be present to win.

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

*The schedule is subject to change. To see an updated schedule, go to [VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays](http://VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays).*

# EVENT SCHEDULE: FRIDAY

**2-3:30pm** at the Rock School Auditorium: **Hearing From the Hearts of Hostels.** Come hear a panel interview of Neville Harris (Woods Hole), Bob Peoples (Kincora), and Poet & Hippie Chick (Shaws) moderated by Shayla 'Kiddo' Paradeis.

**2pm** at the Damascus Trail Center: **Artist Talk with Laura Partain.** Three photographers with three distinct styles and approaches sit down to share their experiences and unique ways of photographing the A.T., and why documenting the AT is important to its survival and protection.

**2-3pm** at the Damascus Library: **Trick Your Stick.** Join Hungry Mother State Park staff to design and decorate your own unique hiking stick. Take your new stick on your favorite trail or embark on a brand new one! All materials are provided.

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

**2pm** at the Gossamer Gear booth in the Town Park: **The Thru-Hiker Spelling Bee.** A spelling bee featuring Appalachian Trail-related words. Will include popular trail towns, hiking terms, outdoor equipment, and famous hiker names or figures. Some words may include sasquatch, Waynesboro, Appalachian, carabiner, Dyneema, etc. Trail Days attendees can sign up throughout the morning; capped at 10 participants. The winner will receive a free pack!

**3-5pm** at the Town Park Stage: **Live Music by Adam Bolt & the Lockwashers!** A former grape farmer, Adam spent years working in the fields where the solitude of the land provided the perfect space for his mind to wander, creating songs that would become the soundtrack to his experiences. His music, deeply connected to the rhythms of nature, reflects his experiences in rural life. Adam describes his songwriting as "sensationalized, cynical, and seasoned in the key of country," influenced by the works of musical heroes such as Todd Snider, John Prine, Tom T. Hall, and Roger Miller. He recalls childhood car trips to Alabama where he immersed himself in the music of his parents—shaping the sound and soul of his songs.

**3pm** at the Damascus Trail Center: **BearVault Trivia & Blindfolded Opening Contest.** Test your food storage knowledge and try your skills to win a new BV ONE bear canister + other prizes.

**3pm** at the Black Diamond booth in the Town Park: **Black Diamond raffle.** Stop by to get signed up for the gear raffle, must be present to win!

**3:15 pm** at the Damascus Trail Center: **ATC gear raffle!** Stop by to toss your name in the raffle. Must be present to win.

*The schedule is subject to change. To see an updated schedule, go to [VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays](http://VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays).*

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## 2026 A.T. THRU-HIKERS: COME TO GETTYSBURG!

ALDHA's annual Gathering will be at Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania Oct. 9-12, 2026, and if you finish the A.T. this year, you can get in for free!

See [aldha.org](http://aldha.org) for details



**Appalachian  
Long Distance Hikers  
Association**

[info@aldha.org](mailto:info@aldha.org)

- Supports hikers with information and resources
- Builds connections with trail towns and partners
- Encourages stewardship and community involvement





**BIKING & HIKING OUTFITTERS**

- 90 - Adventure Damascus (Sundog Outfitter)
- 91 - Blue Blaze Bike and Shuttle
- 92 - Damascus Outfitters
- 94 - Shuttle Shack
- 95 - The Bike Station



**PUBLIC BUILDINGS & VISITOR INFO**

- A Backer Park
- B Beaverdam Creek Park
- C Caboose: VCT Visitor Center ††
- D Damascus Branch Library ††
- E Damascus Trail Center ††
- G Gazebo
- H Holston Family Health Center
- J Laurel Creek Park ††
- K Playground
- L Post Office
- M Rock School
- N Town Hall/Police/Fire
- O Town Park
- P Town Pool ††
- Q Veterans Memorial

**TRAIL DAYS**

- Exhibitor Area
- Main Stage
- Programs & Presentations
- Tent City & Manufacturer Rep Area
- Ministry Team
- Shuttle Stops



**GOODS & SERVICES**

- 2 - Aaron's Satellites
- 3 - Bad Bagel's Pet Emporium
- 4 - Bank of Damascus
- 5 - Holston Realty
- 6 - Briar Patch Antiques
- 6 - Anderson Antiques & Thrift
- 6 - Amore Flowers
- 7 - Cardinal Furniture & Cabinetry
- 8 - Crazy Larry's (Riddle's Sales)
- 9 - Daisy Bell Children's Consignment
- 10 - Eula's Hairstyling
- 11 - Discover Damascus
- 12 - Green Cove Collective
- 13 - Fields Auto Sales/Fritz Garage
- 14 - Food City #860
- 15 - Garrett Funeral Home
- 16 - H2 Health
- 17 - Laurel Family Drug
- 18 - Ralph's Bargain Outlet
- 19 - Ron's Body Shop
- 20 - Seven is Enough
- 22 - Trail Town Chiropractic
- 23 - Trailhead Designs
- 24 - Trails ARTware
- 25 - Widener's Garage
- 28 - Stone Fly Co.
- 30 - Trail Town Adventure Golf
- 31 - Cardinal Music Hall
- 32 - Damascus Fitness
- 34 - Abington Collision and Towing



**DINING & BEVERAGES**

- 76 - Appalachian Heritage Distillery & Brewery
- 77 - Country Corner
- 78 - Cowboys
- 79 - Dairy King
- 80 - Damascus Brewery
- 81 - Damascus Diner
- 82 - Damascus Old Mill Inn
- 83 - The Coffee Thief
- 84 - Damascus Pizza
- 85 - Tippy Bear Bar & Grill
- 86 - Wicked Chicken Winghouse and Tavern
- 87 - Wilson's Café and Grill

To: Hwy 58E  
Mt. Rogers, Whitetop,  
Beartree Gap  
To: Hwy 915  
Taylors Valley  
Mtn City, TN



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# EVENT SCHEDULE: FRIDAY

**3:30pm** at the Damascus Trail Center: **The Lost Appalachian Trail with Mills Kelly**. When the A.T. first came to Southwest Virginia, it took an entirely different route from the one used today. The Iron Mountain Trail (part of the 2026 detour) was the original route of the A.T. between Damascus and the New River. Mills Kelly is the host of The Green Tunnel podcast and the author of A Hiker's History of the Appalachian Trail and Virginia's Lost Appalachian Trail.

**4-5:30pm** at the Rock School Auditorium: **A Photographer's Journey on the Appalachian Trail**. A working photographer (Laura 'Half Pint' Partain) in search of deeper meaning takes a 7 month walk in the woods (2024) from Georgia to Maine seeing the thru-hike experience through the lens of her camera. This documentary is a companion piece to a fine art photo book she is making which also includes the stories behind the pictures.

**4pm** at the Granite Gear booth in the Town Park: **Granite Gear's "What's-Your-Trail-Name" raffle!** Swing by 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.

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

**4:30pm** at the Damascus Trail Center: **Bats with Holston Master Naturalists**. Bats are Terrific! Join the Master Naturalists as we explore facts and fiction all about bats! We will have bat skeletons, DIY instructions to make a bat house, bat coloring pages, and possibly some bat treats (for people!).

**5pm** at the One More Day on the AT booth by the Library: **One More Day on the AT Raffle**. Feeling lucky? Swing by for a shot at three \$100 Damascus Outfitters gift certificates...one drawing on Friday and two on Saturday! Complete a quick and fun Bingo card. Register to enter once for all three drawings, must be present to win.

**5-9pm** at Appalachian Heritage Distillery & Brewery: **Parking Lot Beer Garden**. Yard games, music, cold beer, and tacos. Food truck on-site. Come celebrate Trail Days with good friends and a cold one or two!

**5:15pm** at the Damascus Trail Center: **ATC gear raffle!** Stop by to toss your name in the raffle. Must be present to win.

## SHARE YOUR TRAIL DAYS PHOTOS WITH US!

USE THE HASHTAGS #VISITDAMASCUSVA, #TRAILDAYS, AND #TRAILTOWNUSA OR TAG THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL DAYS FESTIVAL PAGES ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM.

# EVENT SCHEDULE: FRIDAY

**5:30-7:30pm** at the Town Park Stage: **Live Music by Breadfruit Reggae!** 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.

**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.

**6pm:** Meet at Damascus Trail Center porch for a **Run/Walk with Tara Dower.** Join Altra for a special run with Tara Dower, Altra Elite Athlete and current record holder for the Fastest Known Time on the Appalachian Trail!

**7pm** at The Tippy Bear: **Karaoke Night!** Weekly on Fridays, plus food specials and \$2 beers.

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

**7-7:50pm** at the Rock School Auditorium: **Beginners Contra Dance Lesson.** Warren & Terry Doyle (AT thru-hikers) will offer patient, simple and fun instruction so you can strut your stuff 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 live music along with patient, clear dance calling by Terry & Warren Doyle and it's FREE! "Contra dancing is the most fun you can have standing up!" No partner or fancy duds needed. Please attend sober.

**8-10pm** at the Town Park Stage: **Live Music by Seedpicker!** Seedpicker, a crew from the hills and valleys of Southwestern Virginia, jams the blues, funk, soul, and reggae with fun arrangements of familiar feel-good classics and original tunes.

*The schedule is subject to change. To see an updated schedule, go to [VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays](http://VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays).*

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# REVELATION

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SLEEPING QUILT

BY APPALACHIAN TRAIL HIKERS  
SURVEYED BY THE TREK



## APPALACHIAN TRAIL DAYS T-SHIRT DESIGN CONTEST

Be on the lookout for the 2027 Design Contest to open this November/December, then vote for your favorites in January!

The 2026 Trail Days graphic is by Stephanie "Milkshake" Goodwin.

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**"THE MOST COMFORTABLE PACK I  
HAVE EVER WORN. PERIOD."**

**-MARK**



# EVENT SCHEDULE: SATURDAY

## **Saturday Hiker Services by the Trail Days Ministry Team**

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

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

7:30am-6pm: Free Showers & Laundry (behind One Way), 10:30-4pm: Small Supplies ministry

9am-12pm: Medical Tent with doctors and nurses on-site and foot washing/massages

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

**At First Baptist Church:** *OPEN 8:30am-2pm with drinks and snacks.*

8:30am-12pm: Free Showers at the Town Pool (behind First Baptist)

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!**

**8-10am:** Meet in front of the library for a **Trail Fun Run with Tara**. Yes, THE Tara Dower (AT and LT overall endurance record holder). Join Tara on a low-key trail run up to the VA/TN border and back again. Round trip is around 7 miles.

**10am-4pm at the Damascus Trail Center: ATC Artist in Residence Pop-Up Studio with Mallory Weston.** Drop by the Trail Center garage to create a colorful, ultralight titanium spoon using the process of anodizing with artist Mallory Weston, ATC's inaugural artist-in-residence. After watching the metal shift through a spectrum of colors, participants can engrave their trail name or a small drawing for a personalized trail utensil.

**10am at the Damascus Trail Center: The Prophet of Happiness: Eiler Larsen's AT 1930-1936 with Mills Kelly.** Eiler Larsen successfully completed a hike from Maine to Georgia between 1930 and 1936. Along the way, he spread his philosophy of happiness to anyone who would listen. He loved hiking, but he loved nature and humanity more, and everywhere he went, his only goal was to spread happiness. It's also fair to say he was the original hiker trash hiker.

**10:30-11:45am at the Old Mill Conference Room: Zelzin: Footprints that Inspire.** A short film and discussion about Rab Athlete Zelzin Aketzalli, who is the first Mexican woman to complete the Triple Crown. Raised in Mexico City, shaped by adversity, power and grit, a love for the land, and a dream few believed in. The film is the cosmic reminder that when you don't see yourself reflected in the outdoors, sometimes you become the reflection. There will also be some discussion on doing the first thru-hike of Mexico's Baja Peninsula.

*The schedule is subject to change. To see an updated schedule, go to [VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays](http://VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays).*

# EVENT SCHEDULE: SATURDAY

**10:45am-noon** at the Rock School Auditorium: **A Fabulous Thru-Hike**. Derick Lugo, author of *The Unlikely Thru-Hiker*, shares a visual presentation of his new book: *A Fabulous Thru-Hike*. It is a funny, raw, and real look at 5 months living on the CDT. The story is complete with big climbs, bigger mishaps, and a cast of unforgettable trail characters.

**11am** at the Damascus Trail Center: **BearVault Trivia & Blindfolded Opening Contest**. Test your food storage knowledge and try your skills to win a new BV ONE bear canister + other prizes.

**11am** at the Black Diamond booth in the Town Park: **Black Diamond raffle**. Stop by to get signed up for the gear raffle, 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.

**11:30am** at the Damascus Trail Center: **Trail-Proven Tick Prevention**: Preventing tick-borne illness on the A.T. Hear new findings on how long-distance hikers prevent tick-borne illness, along with a review of evidence-based strategies to reduce the risk of Lyme disease and other infections. Learn what hikers are already doing well, where the biggest gaps are, and which realistic prevention measures can make the biggest difference on the trail.

**11:30am-12:30** at Bad Bagel's Pet Emporium: **Traildog Free Food Drop**. Refuel your traildog with free food sample bags on Friday and Saturday (while supplies last). You can also enjoy 10% off during our magic hour.

**12-1pm** at the Old Mill Conference Room. **Storytime with Black Bear**. Bring your children and listen to Emily Leonard as she reads from her children's book about her AT adventure, with a Q&A afterwards.

**12pm** in front of the Damascus Library: **Foraging for Edibles with Lee Borg**. Join Master Naturalist Lee Borg on a foraging walk-and-talk. Learn how to spot edible plants on the trail and how to identify those to avoid.

**12pm** 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. Play for a chance to win some sweet Sawyer swag, plus a signed copy of Sawyer Ambassador Heather Anderson's new book, *Father*. Best of all: a sweet treat will be provided once the ruckus concludes.

**12pm** at the Zenbivy booth in the Town Park: **Zenbivy Ultralight Bed Raffle**. Upgrade to the only draft-free sleep system for the trail! We'll be giving away a Zenbivy Ultralight Bed and other great prizes. Giveaway entry is available at the booth prior to the demo - must be present to win.

*The schedule is subject to change. To see an updated schedule, go to [VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays](http://VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays).*



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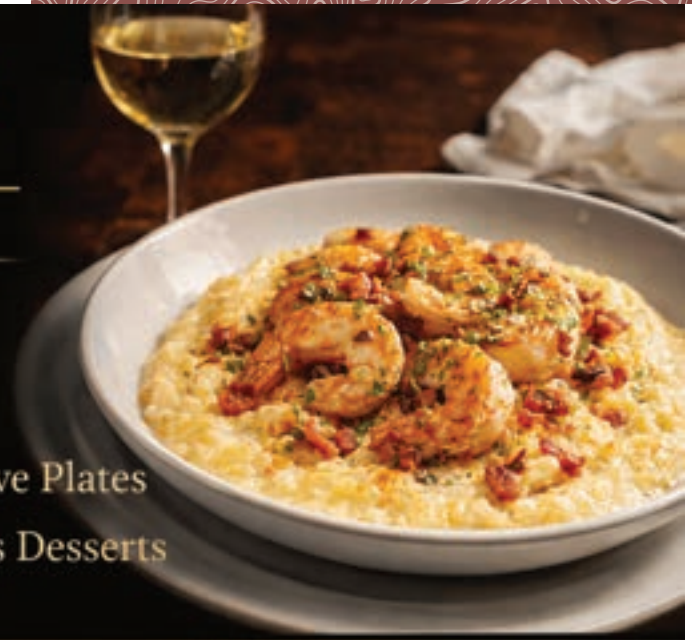
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# EVENT SCHEDULE: SATURDAY

**12pm** at the Green Mountain Club booth by the Caboose: **Vermont Raffle**. The Green Mountain Club, which maintains the AT in Vermont, will have a raffle at noon each day with Vermont-based prizes, including hats, guidebooks, maps, and other goodies.

**12pm** at the HFMH booth by the Trail Center: **Hike For Mental Health Gear Giveaway**. Come by to win great hiking gear from Dutchware, Jacks R Better, Lightheart Gear, and more!

**12-9pm** at Appalachian Heritage Distillery & Brewery: **Parking Lot Beer Garden**. Watch the hiker parade with a cold beer in your hand! Yard games, music, cold beer, and tacos. Food truck on-site. Come celebrate Trail Days with good friends and a cold one or two!

**12:15pm** at the Town Park Stage: **Saturday Kick-Off with Mayor Lamb and Cinda Waldbuesser**, the new President and CEO of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.

**1pm** at the Darn Tough booth in the Town Park: **Darn Tough Socks For Life Raffle**. Stop by the booth at 1pm every day for a chance to win Socks For Life! Must be present to win.

**1pm** at the Damascus Trail Center: **BearVault Trivia & Blindfolded Opening Contest**. Test your food storage knowledge and try your skills to win a new BV ONE bear canister + other prizes.

**1pm** at the One More Day on the AT booth by the Library: **One More Day on the AT Raffle**. Feeling lucky? Swing by for a shot at three \$100 Damascus Outfitters gift certificates...one drawing on Friday and two on Saturday! Complete a quick and fun Bingo card. Enter once for all three drawings, must be present to win.

**1:15pm** at the Damascus Trail Center: **ATC Membership Raffle!** Enter into a special raffle for ATC members! Members do not need to be present to win.

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*The schedule is subject to change. To see an updated schedule, go to [VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays](http://VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays).*

# EVENT SCHEDULE: SATURDAY

## 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.

NOTE: The upper half of the Virginia Creeper Trail is CLOSED, including the two trestles in downtown. Take Laurel Avenue to get to Sundog Outfitter this year.

**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](mailto: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.

**3-4pm at the Damascus Library: Hiker Crafternoon.** Join us at the Damascus Library for a relaxing afternoon of crafting. Make yourself a small keepsake to take with you on the trail!

**3:15-4:30pm at the Old Mill Conference Room: Why does the trail go that way?** The Fellowship (Tolbert family) is one of the largest families (nine) to ever do a thru-hike (2025). Their program will draw parallels between the trail and life. Their stories will illustrate the beautiful, challenging, and meaningful ways the AT represents journeying through life itself.

**3:15pm at the Astral Designs booth in the Town Park: Astral Sponsorship Giveaway!** Let Astral help sponsor your next big adventure. Grand Prize raffle winner will win a thru-hike's worth of footwear and hemp apparel. Entries will be cut off at 3pm. Must be present to win.

**3:15pm at the Damascus Trail Center: ATC gear raffle!** Stop by to toss your name in the raffle. Must be present to win.

**3:30pm at the Damascus Trail Center: The Bear Basics.** Learn from Grant Breidenbach about staying safe and respecting bears on the Appalachian Trail.

*The schedule is subject to change. To see an updated schedule, go to [VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays](http://VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays).*

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## 2026 TRAIL CLOSURE VIRGINIA CREEPER & APPALACHIAN TRAILS

KEEP OFF CREEPER TRAIL  
DAMASCUS TO WHITETOP  
APPALACHIAN TRAIL DETOUR  
ON IRON MOUNTAIN TRAIL

**WORK ZONE, KEEP OUT:** The upper half of the Virginia Creeper Trail from Whitetop Station to Damascus saw significant damage from Hurricane Helene in September 2024 and remains closed until it is rebuilt. Estimated completion is for late 2026.

### ADDITIONALLY CLOSED:

- Appalachian Trail - from US-58 at Straight Branch Trailhead to Grassy Ridge Road/VA 859 (NOBO 476.6.0 to 485.8)
- Whitetop Laurel Fishing Trail (FST 4645)
- Taylors Valley Spur (FST 4651)
- Trailheads - Straight Branch, Creek Junction, Green Cove, Whitetop Station

MORE INFO:



**A.T. DETOUR FOR NOBOS:** Follow the Iron Mountain Trail from Damascus. The detour reconnects with the A.T. near Thomas Knob Shelter. Closed area strictly enforced.



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# EVENT SCHEDULE: SATURDAY

**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 to enter!

**3:45-5:45pm** at the Rock School Auditorium: **Going Farther: Hiking the Calendar Year Triple Crown.** In 2018, Heather 'Anish' Anderson became the first woman to complete the Triple Crown in one year. A multiple FKT record holder (both self-supported and unsupported), multiple thru-hiker and multi-author, Heather will tell stories about this CYTC trek which is the topic of her new book 'Going Farther'.

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

**4:15pm** at the Damascus Trail Center: **Your Body is Linked Like a Chain.** You are carrying about 30 lbs on your back. Where is your weak link? Each link – arches, knees, hips, spine, shoulders, neck, and more – has it's own unique job, and if any one of them is neglected (or overworked), it impacts the whole system. Let me help you find your weak link. Dr. Tom Foltz of Trail Town Chiropractic in Damascus, 276-525-2380.

**4:45-5:45pm** at the Old Mill Conference Room: **Got pain? Techniques and tips to hike pain-free.** Get trail-tested advice from Collin Chambers, who was a GSMNP ridgerunner for a few years and now operates the WildWood Walking Company and has a new book out called: *The Mastery of Backpacking: Walking as a Path to Self-Empowerment.*

**5pm** at the Damascus Trail Center: **ATC gear raffle!** Stop by to toss your name in the raffle. Must be present to win.

**5:30-7:30pm** at the Town Park Stage: **Live Music by Ramona and the Holy Smokes!** Based in Central Virginia and with family roots in South Texas, Ramona and the Holy Smokes represent a new generation of honky tonk music. With powerful female vocals that cover an emotional range from determined to comic to vulnerable, and a talented backing band steeped in classic country and western styles of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, the band's repertoire includes lush emotional ballads, quintessential two-step dance numbers, gritty country-rockers, and a unique blend of honky tonk and traditional Mexican styles that the group describes as "Mexi-tonk."

**5:30pm** at the One More Day on the AT booth by the Library: **One More Day on the AT Raffle.** Feeling lucky? Swing by for a shot at three \$100 Damascus Outfitters gift certificates...one drawing on Friday and two on Saturday! Complete a quick and fun Bingo card. Enter once for all three drawings, must be present to win.

**6-7pm** at the Old Mill Conference Room: **Trail Ready: First Aid and Self Care for Long Distance Hikers.** Join Crystal Crowder as she reviews first aid specific to hikers. She will discuss and demonstrate soft tissue techniques to keep out on the trail.

*The schedule is subject to change. To see an updated schedule, go to [VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays](http://VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays).*

# EVENT SCHEDULE: SATURDAY

**6:30-8pm at Rock School Auditorium: Footprint of a Heart: Musical Storytelling.** Shayla 'Kiddo' Paradeis, Triple Crowner, author, and singer/songwriter, will sing folk songs from her album *On the Ground* and share songs and stories from her book describing her five thru-hikes (AT-2x; CDT; PCT; Te Araroa).

**7pm at The Topsy Bear: Live music with Quinn Crowe.** Hot food, cold drinks, and your favorite Quinn Crowe tunes on the other side of the spring-kissed Blue Ridge in Trail Town, USA.

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

**7:15-8:15pm at the Old Mill Conference Room: The Man Buried on the AT.** Nick Grindstaff's tombstone stands quietly alongside the AT about 25 miles south of Damascus on Iron Mountain. Author Chuck Walsh discusses *The Isolate*, his book based on the fascinating life of the man who has laid beneath this tombstone since 1923 and whose epitaph reads "Lived Alone; Suffered Alone; Died Alone".

**8-10pm at the Town Park Stage: Live Music by Love Bucket!** Formed in Nashville in 2026, Love Bucket brings on an exciting sound of power, passion, and down-home goodness to Music City and all over the country. Playing original music featuring strong vocals, proud instrumentals, ear catching lyrics, familiar feels, and pleasant surprises, they're influenced by the love and joy that drives their desire to make music for themselves and the people. Fans of Blues, Soul, and Rock 'n' Roll should look out for a show near them!

**8:15-9:45pm at the Rock School Auditorium: Falling Heads over Heels for the AT.** After a screening of a short video, "The Last Twelve Hours" by Emily Cameron, listen to Tara Dower (Candy Mama) and Megan Wilmarth (Rascal) speak about their AT love affairs over the years. Their team holds the overall endurance record for the AT, set in 2024 (40 days, 18 hours, 6 minutes), which is slightly under 54 miles per day average. Come hear their personal stories and how the love for this trail never ends.

**8:15-9:30pm at the Old Mill Conference Room: A Trek Thru Depression.** Trek along with Emily Leonard as she shares her struggles with post-trail depression and what she did to overcome it. This is an informal chat with time for group discussion.

**9pm at the Abstract Hikes booth in the Town Park: Dirtbag Speed Dating.** Come and meet the love of your life, a new friend, and everything in between! All are welcome to participate.

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

*The schedule is subject to change. To see an updated schedule, go to [VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays](https://VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays).*

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2027 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED SEPT 15 - NOV 30

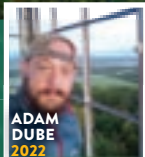


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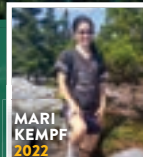
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JUSTIN TUCKER 2022



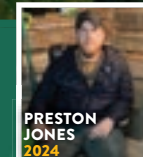
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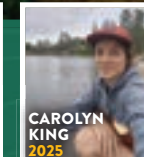
MARI KEMPF 2022



MARY WILSON + THOR 2023  
CARLY BRUNAULT 2022



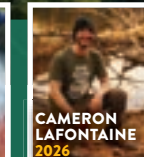
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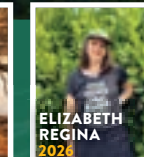
CAROLYN KING 2025



KAT BELL 2025 (HIKING 2027)



CAMERON LAFONTAINE 2026



ELIZABETH REGINA 2026

# EVENT SCHEDULE: SUNDAY

**7:30-8:45am** at the Rock School Auditorium: **Increasing Your Success on Completing the AT.** Time and trail-tested tips and advice to complete a thru- or section-hike by a wise old man who has traversed the entire AT 18 times (nine thru-hikes; nine section hikes). Includes a FREE one-page book.

**9am-12pm** on the Creeper Trail by the Town Park: **5th Annual Osprey Packs Trail Days 5K & Run Happy Kids' 1K, plus a NEW! Trail Days Half Marathon** - The courses are certified out-and-back on the Virginia Creeper Trail with electronic B-tag timing by We Run Events. Awards for overall winners and by age group. All Kids 1K participants will receive a medal and t-shirt. 9am start for the Half Marathon, 10am start for the 5K, with the Kids 1K to follow at 11am. Late registration starts at 7am on Sunday. Register online at [runsignup.com](http://runsignup.com)

**9-10am** at the Rock School Auditorium: **How to Day Hike the Entire AT.** Yes, it can be done. Find out how by someone who has day-hiked the entire AT several times.

**10-11am** at the Rock School Auditorium: **Trail Epiphanies: We see only as much as we possess.** Experiencing the gifts that the trail provides (IF you are aware of, and open to, receive them). There will be little to no mention of ounces/lbs., equipment, Far Out, or hostels/shuttles.

**10am-4pm** at the Altra booth in the Town Park: **Make-Your-Own GORP Trail Mix!** Choose your (GORP) experience! Come join Altra for a sweet and/or salty treat. Choose from pretzels, raisins, nuts, and candy, to name a few. First-come, first-served!

**10:15am** at the Damascus Trail Center: **ATC gear raffle!** Stop by to toss your name in the raffle. Must be present to win.

**10:30am-noon** at Laurel Creek Park: **Praise & Worship Service** (bring your own chair or mat). River baptism at the end of the service. Giveaway of a Ghost Whisperer jacket - 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.

**10:30am** at the Damascus Trail Center: **I Like Birds.** Join Bob Riggs for a program geared toward kids; all ages welcome. Get an introduction to what a bird is and how to identify the many birds around us.

**11am-12:30pm** at the Rock School Auditorium: **How has AT Thru/Section Hiking Changed Over the Last 50 Years.** Talk and group discussion moderated by Warren Doyle.

*The schedule is subject to change. To see an updated schedule, go to [VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays](http://VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays).*

# EVENT SCHEDULE: SUNDAY

**12pm at the Green Mountain Club booth by the Caboose: Vermont Raffle.** The Green Mountain Club, which maintains the AT in Vermont, will have a raffle at noon each day with Vermont-based prizes, including hats, guidebooks, maps, and other goodies.

**12-6pm at Appalachian Heritage Distillery: Bloody Mary Bar.** Tent City might be closing down, but the party doesn't have to stop just yet. Join us for a Build-Your-Own Bloody Mary Bar. AHD's award-winning vodka makes the perfect base to your Bloody Mary!

**12:15pm at the Damascus Trail Center: ATC gear raffle!** Stop by to toss your name in the raffle. Must be present to win.

**12:30pm at the Damascus Trail Center: Meet and greet with Kiewit,** the team rebuilding the Virginia Creeper Trail. Hear a brief project update, view images of progress to date, and celebrate the progress made. Light refreshments will be provided.

**1-2pm at the Rock School Auditorium: Grandma Gatewood's 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' by Ben Montgomery.

**1pm at the Darn Tough booth in the Town Park: Darn Tough Socks For Life Raffle.** Stop by the booth at 1pm every day for a chance to win Socks For Life! Must be present to win.

*The schedule is subject to change. To see an updated schedule, go to [VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays](http://VisitDamascus.org/TrailDays).*

**Trail Days Ride Board:** To request or offer a ride to or from Trail Days, post in the Trail Days Ride Board group on Facebook. In addition, the Damascus Trail Center will have an in-person ride board to post offers and requests.

**Hiker Shuttles to/from Damascus:** The Trail Days Ministry Team offers free shuttles north and south to Erwin, TN and Bland, VA on Sunday afternoon; sign up in advance at One Way Ministries. Many commercial hiker shuttles provide service to/from Trail Days as well.

The Town of Damascus and Appalachian Trail Days Festival assume no liability for transportation.

The greatest comfort is a light pack.



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# EVENT SCHEDULE: SUNDAY

**12-4pm at the Town Park Stage: Sunday Stage Takeover hosted by Jamie Collins of The Blue Ridge Girls!** The Blue Ridge Girls, like their name, invoke a picturesque simplicity with their take on traditional mountain music. Jamie Collins is a singer-songwriter, bassist, and guitarist from Bristol, Tennessee. Growing up with her Dad, Tony, who was one of the area's best flat pickers, she has been surrounded by talented musicians since birth. Jamie shares her love of music by also teaching at Junior Appalachian Musicians, Inc. (JAM), and she released her first solo album in 2022. The Sunday Stage Takeover will also feature appearances by Sola Bazaar, Kasey Williams, and more!

**2-3pm at the Old Mill Conference Room: How Your Body is Linked Like a Chain.** Local chiropractor, Tom Foltz, will explain how each body link - arches, ankles, knees, hips, spine, shoulders, neck, etc. - has its own unique job. If any one of these links is neglected (or overworked) it impacts the whole system.

**2-4pm at the Damascus Trail Center porch: Picking on the Porch with SOHA.** Come and enjoy picking on the porch with local singer-songwriters of the Songwriters of Highlands Appalachia.

**4-6pm at the Damascus Old Mill Inn: Back Porch Sundays,** live music with Josh Bowles.

**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!

## More Events in Damascus:

May thru October - Damascus Farmers Market: on Thursdays 4-7pm, temporarily located at The Speckled Trout Annex, 106 West Laurel Ave.

June 5-7 - Damascus Adventure Moto DAM 200: An epic dual sport adventure ride.

September 25-27 - Damascus Trout Days: New trout fishing tournament held on Laurel Creek & Beaverdam Creek within town limits twice a year. Cash prizes up to \$1,000.

October 2-3 - Damascus Festival of Miles: Timed race with 3, 6, or 12-hour options on a one-mile loop. Live music with Holy Roller headlining both nights! Organized by Run Damascus.

December (all month) - A Trail Town Christmas: Find holiday events and specials all month long! Shop local this holiday season.



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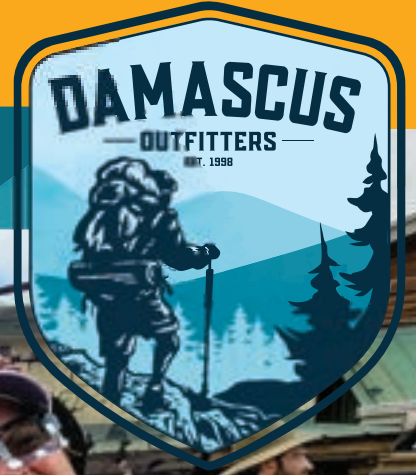
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