

# ***“The Damascus Loop”***

50 Miles on the Appalachian Trail and the Iron Mt. Trail



## **General Trip Information:**

### **Trip Agenda:**

- A. To develop a closer walk with God by setting aside six days to focus on Him.
- B. To help other men with their perspective walks with God.
- C. To look for opportunities to share Biblical truths with other hikers who are not apart of our group.
- D. To develop bonds and friendship that will last far beyond this trip.
- E. To experience God’s creation from a new perspective.
- F. To gain a new appreciation for material items God has bless you with.

### **Trip Schedule:**

- A. Monday, August 10 – Saturday August 15
- B. Personal devotions each morning
- C. Group devotions each afternoon when stopped for lunch
- D. Hike during daylight
- E. Group devotions each evening
- F. Partner prayer time each evening

**Note:** The schedule must be very flexible to accommodate the unpredictable events that will take place each day. The targeted finish time is early in the day on Saturday. However, this is hard to predict and may vary some.

### **Backpacker and Partner Info:**

- A. Each hiker will partner with another hiker for the week (making groups of 2).
- B. We will remain together as a larger group entire time – unless there is an emergency.
- C. The purpose of partnering with another man is to help in carrying and sharing gear as well as helping each other with spiritual issues.
- D. Partners will share tents, some meals and other miscellaneous gear.

### **Traveling and Meeting Arrangements:**

- A. All hikers will meet in Ripley, WV at 7:30am on Monday, August 10. We will have brief orientation and “Bag Shakedown”. During this time each hiker will have to prove that he has all the necessary food and gear for the week’s hike. Hikers will also have time to pack gear with the assistance of our guide staff.
- B. We provide a shuttle service from Ripley, WV to Damascus, VA (8 hour round trip). We will leave early on Monday morning (August 15) and plan to return to Ripley, WV around evening time on Saturday (August 23). There is no additional fee or gas charge for this service. You will want money for fast food stops along the way.

### **Preparation:**

- A. This is a very physically demanding hike and is rated as “difficult”. It should NOT be underestimated and taken as a gentle journey. Serous effort should be put into preparation.
- B. Secure the proper food and equipment.
- C. Get your body physically in shape for this trip. Your shoulders, and calf muscles will be the most important. Every pound that you are overweight is just one more pound you have to carry all week.
- D. Spiritually prepare! Stop and assess the amount of preparation that will go into your gear and body. How much more important is the spiritual aspect of this trip? We challenge you to put more preparation on that which is most important.
  - Begin praying and preparing now.
  - Pray specifically for each of the other men by name.
  - Begin asking God to show you what he would have you to share with the other men.
  - Be aware that the devil will try and hinder this trip and any one man from attending this discipleship journey.

**Devotion Time:**

- A. Bro. Jason will lead afternoon devotion time.
- B. Different men from our hiking group will be asked to lead the evening group devotion (about 20-25 minutes).
- C. One of our hikers will be assigned the role of leading us in singing.
- D. Morning personal devotions will be assigned for the week.

**Trail Info:**

- A. The Appalachian Trail, known to hikers as the AT is 2,175 miles long and touches 14 states.
- B. We will hike approximately 50 miles in the Mt. Rogers area of the trail. This is known as one of the greatest sections of the AT.
- C. There are shelters along the trail (about every 9-13 miles).
- D. You are permitted to have fires at the shelters. Shelters are three sided structures. They usually have a picnic table and sometimes a privy (outdoor restroom).
- E. Much of the trail is closed to foot traffic only.
- F. Many of the areas along the trail are rocky and have little or no place to set a tent.
- G. The section we are hiking is rated as "difficult". The terrain and elevation is most to blame for this.
- H. The first three days will be spent in an ascent to the top of Mt. Rogers, the second highest peak in all of the eastern time zone (5,700 feet). Be prepared for a VARY physically demanding journey.

**Water:**

- A. Prior to getting on the shuttle van have your water bottles full.
- B. There are plenty of good clean springs along this section of the trail.
- C. Carrying an excessive amount of water is a waste of energy.
- D. Approximately 2-3 liters of water is sufficient.
- E. Water should always be filtered or treated to avoid problems.

**Cell Phone:**

- A. Cell phones generally do not work in this remote area and are just added weight. The trail is a great place to ruin or damage a phone. All mobile phones are NOT permitted.
- B. In the event of an emergency, provision has been made to make outside contact.

***"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man  
sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."***

**-Proverbs 27:17**