The Arizona Trail Association (ATA) and Tonto National Forest are proud to announce the completion of a new 1.8-mile segment of the Highline Passage of the Arizona National Scenic Trail. Due to heavy rains, eroding soils and poor design, the trail was completely failing in several locations east of the Pine Trailhead – the most popular AZT access point in Mogollon Rim country.

In late 2014, Volunteers for Outdoor Arizona (VOAz), Pine-Strawberry Fuels Reduction (P-SFR) and ATA began designing a gentler, more sustainable route. Volunteers literally crawled through the brush in many places to check the viability of the proposed route. Payson Ranger District completed the environmental studies and cleared much of the corridor with the help of wildland firefighters while ATA volunteers cut through the thickest brush and deadfall.

American Conservation Experience carved 1.4 miles of the route with a mini-dozer and worked several crew-days finishing the trail. VOAz paid for a machine crew (YRU from Idaho) to build the upper 0.4 mile of trail with a mini-excavator.

Then REI contributed funds and many volunteer hours, putting the final touches on the trail at a June 4 work event when the segment was officially completed and open to the public.

The new route seldom exceeds 8% slope, making it ideal for mountain bikers and much easier for volunteers to maintain over time. The switchback turns are wide and gentle, with dramatic views of the Pine Valley and the eastern slope of the Mazatzal Mountains south to Four Peaks.

For a project of this magnitude to go from conception to completion in less than two years is quite remarkable, and possible only through the cooperative efforts of multiple partners with the best interest of the trail and the trail community at heart. A huge thanks to the Payson Ranger District, YRU Trail Construction, American Conservation Experience, Pine-Strawberry Fuels Reduction, REI's Tempe and Paradise Valley stores and ATA volunteers for making this project possible.

We encourage you to make the gateway community of Pine a destination in the near future. Then go for a hike, run or ride heading east from the Pine Trailhead and experience this recently transformed piece of the AZT.

Shawn Redfield is the Trail Director for the Arizona Trail Association. He works full-time as a volunteer, contributing thousands of hours per year to the maintenance, enhancement and protection of the AZT.

Shawn is being honored as a finalist in the Cox Conserves Hero award for his outstanding service. Please vote for Shawn online cox7.com/cox-conserves, and help the ATA earn $5,000 for future trail projects!
Dear Friend of the Arizona Trail,

Summer has proven to be a very exciting season for the Arizona Trail Association. In addition to helping with many meaningful trail projects in northern Arizona, we were grateful that an early monsoon season reduced fire danger during a time of year when we are typically sitting on the edge of our saddles in anticipation of forest closures and catastrophic wildfires. The scent of rain in June has never smelled sweeter.

Even with early moisture, fires are part of Arizona’s reality. As I write this, the Fuller Fire on the North Rim of Grand Canyon has caused a portion of the AZT to be closed. We are hoping for the best, both for the abundant natural and cultural resources on the North Rim and for the 500+ firefighters responding to the incident.

Near Flagstaff, the Coconino National Forest is working diligently to ensure an event like the Schultz Fire of 2010 will not be repeated. Segments of the AZT are periodically re-routed to avoid forest thinning operations in support of the Flagstaff Watershed Protection Project and the Four Forest Restoration Initiative. While nobody likes seeing their favorite trail impacted by heavy equipment and logging operations, the end result will be a healthier forest for plants, animals and trail users alike. Please respect the occasional closures and help us spread the word about the importance of these projects by sharing announcements on the aztrail.org home page, Facebook and eNews.

A huge thanks to everyone who has contributed to the Mazatzal Restoration Project (featured in the Spring edition of the Arizona Trail News). Through the generosity of individuals, businesses and clubs, we have raised $23,150. Only $14,481 to go! Please help us raise this amount before the end of the year so we can help transform trail conditions in the Mazatzal Mountains from a scary bushwhack to a sustainable trail within one of Arizona’s most incredible wilderness areas. Remember, every dollar you donate is matched by the National Forest Foundation. You can mail the ATA a check or make a donation online at aztrail.org/donate.html

Each season we hear about more and more people adding the AZT to their “bucket list” and adventure writers from around the world are helping to promote this amazing cross-state route. Earlier this year Adventure Journal named it among the top 8 “best long-haul backpacking trails” and The Guardian (UK) featured the AZT within its “10 Epic Long Distance Walks Around the World.” You can read those articles, and others recently written about the AZT, on our In the News page: aztrail.org/in_the_news.html

As the Arizona Trail gains in popularity I invite you to play a role in its stewardship. Now, more than ever before, we are in need of volunteers to help maintain and protect the trail. Interested? Just visit the Volunteer page to learn more: aztrail.org/volunteer.html

One last request – get out there and enjoy the Arizona Trail! Summertime is a spectacular season filled with fresh water, marvelous wildlife and sunsets that defy imagination.

Happy Trails,

Matthew J. Nelson
Executive Director

Arizona Trail Association
PO Box 36736 | Phoenix, Az 85067 | 602-252-4794 | www.aztrail.org
It was a gorgeous day in the Santa Catalina Mountains and 60 friends with their horses and dogs gathered to welcome Lynn Maring and Bonnie Slaten as they rode into Gordon Hirabayashi Trailhead. April 30 marked the end of a five-year journey to ride the entire length of the AZT, one passage at a time.

Finishing the Arizona Trail is notable enough on its own, but at 75, Bonnie is the oldest woman to ride the trail and Lynn is the only woman to complete it twice on horseback! Lynn, 61, rode the trail the first time from 2005-2011 with George Hay and has submitted her documentation to the Guinness Book of World Records for consideration.

Both have been Trail Stewards for years; Lynn on Passage 40b on the Kaibab Plateau, and Bonnie on Las Colinas Passage 6b. Together they rode a total of 923 miles and often had to do trail maintenance along the way, sawing and moving deadfall and hoping they wouldn't come across some impassable obstacle.

Bonnie recounts fond memories from their journey: “Marshall Lake and another chunk of the AZT completed. Horses were stripped of tack, a good roll and returned to unfinished hay. For us, it was a time to enjoy a cool drink, discuss the day and plan for our next ride. Weather, location, trail conditions always a consideration. ‘Yes, the AZT is like eating an elephant,’ we laughed, ‘and that’s what we are doing, one bite at a time.’

“Then Lynn on an early morning stroll found a tiny plastic elephant that she excitedly gave to me. ‘Nosey’ traveled with me the next five years as he shared space in my pocket with my chap stick and my Bible verse that I always took on a notecard. Our adventures ranged from amazing mountain peaks, deep valleys, thorny desert flats, welcomed water troughs, lost trails, rock cairns, surprised animals, camping challenges, and always at the end our wonderful trail angel - my husband Gary and faithful dog, Otis.

“Our last big ride was a remote section of the Mazatzal Wilderness. We had intentionally waited several years to hear that it may be possible for horses to get through. And then the time came. It was the last bite of the elephant and we were hungry to finish this giant. Thank you all who help build, maintain, fund and promote this treasure for all to use. I am so blessed to have seen it all,” she said.

“After finishing her second ride across Arizona, Lynn created a Monster List - the toughest sections of the Arizona Trail for equestrians.

1. Mazatzal Divide: Mt. Peeley to Barnhardt Trail Intersection
2. Santa Catalina Mountains: Mount Lemmon Wilderness Bypass
3. Four Peaks
4. Huachuca Crest Trail

Lynn said, “To me the AZT is enticing, addicting, unexpected, and ever-changing. It requires tenacity, planning, being self-sufficient and the ability to problem solve mid-stream. The reward is the enjoyment of being alone in the wilderness, unparalleled views, appreciation of a good horse, and development of long-lasting friendships.

I refer to it as the green-eyed dragon, never allowing me to get complacent. Just when I would it would rear its head, look at me with its glittering eyes and then, with a flick of the tail, the unexpected occurs. Whether done in segments or in its entirety the satisfaction of completing the Arizona Trail is like no other.”

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A Grand-Canyon sized congratulations to these two ladies who personify true grit! They were thrilled to receive their completion award belt buckles at the Gordon Hirabayashi Trailhead in April. If you’ve completed the AZT, whether on horse, foot or bike, make sure to visit aztail.org/completion/ to fill out the survey and claim yours. A list of AZT finishers is available for viewing at aztail.org/finishers.html.
In March, the ATA Volunteer Program introduced a new way to combine training and reward for segment stewards by hosting the first Bi-Annual Stewards Conference in Oracle. These conferences are more than just a chance to review the various tasks and forms encountered while stewarding the Arizona Trail – they’re an opportunity to build on the sense of community that comes from working together outside.

Each conference highlights one of the Arizona Trail gateway communities and gives volunteers from across the state an opportunity to learn more about the history and natural landscape of the area. The conference in Oracle highlighted the historic Kannally Ranch House and introduced participants to wild birds of prey native to the Sonoran Desert with volunteers from Tucson Wildlife Rehab. We also had an evening star party with Michael Weasner from the Cassiopeia Observatory discussing Oracle’s process to becoming recognized as an International Dark Sky Park.

The upcoming conference in Pine will include a presentation from Bryan Hughes from Rattlesnake Solutions, talking about keeping the peace with reptilian residents as well as an introduction to the work of the Pine-Strawberry Fuels Reduction program to help protect the community from wildfire. Who knows what else you might learn!

In the evening we celebrate the hard work of our stewards with an excellent meal, entertainment and fine company. The theme for our September conference is an old-fashioned cook out, with live music and camping available onsite.

Conferences are free to segment stewards – so sign up today! If you are considering becoming a steward on the Arizona National Scenic Trail, there are a number of passage segments in need of adoption, including:

- 1b: Huachuca Mountains
- 10a: Redington Pass
- 12b: Oracle Ridge
- 22b: Saddle Mountain
- 23b: Mazatzal Divide
- 24a&b: Red Hills
- 25b: Whiterock Mesa
- 26b: Hardscrabble Mesa

Co-stewardship opportunities may also be available, so if there is a piece of the trail that is near and dear to your heart, please don’t hesitate to reach out to us.

To register for the Fall 2016 Steward Conference in Pine on September 24-25, please contact the Coordinator of the Volunteer Program: Wendy Lotze at wendy@aztrail.org.

Mark and Sue Johnson work together to trim back vegetation encroaching on the Arizona Trail. Matthew J. Nelson Photo

Stewards Conferences are as much about building community as building trail. Sign up for one today!
Volunteer Vacations
2016

Mogollon Rim
October 9-15th

Early Registration

$100
ATA Members
$150
non-Members

After 9/10

$150
ATA Members
$200
non-Members

Scholarships Available

THANKS for organizing, and running, a wonderful work event! We learned much, accomplished a lot, and made many new friends - 2016 Volunteer Vacation Participant

The 16 miles that the Arizona National Scenic Trail shares with the Highline National Recreation Trail is one of the most historic trail corridors in the Southwest. Here, the pines reach to the sky and the vistas stretch out forever. We will be working to restore and maintain this Arizona treasure to keep it safe for users and sustainable for the future. This front-country adventure includes all meals, training, tools and transportation.

For more information or to register: aztrail.org/volunteer_vacations or email volunteer@aztrail.org.

Mark your calendar for April 23-29th 2017 for the next Arizona Trail Volunteer Vacation!
The Arizona Trail Association is honored to be a part of the Warrior Expeditions program that puts combat veterans on the National Scenic Trails for outdoor therapy and to help them transition back from military life. David Kurneta and Jordan Burke completed their two-month long journey on the Arizona Trail on May 21. Here are their thoughts about their experiences.

An adventure like this is difficult to distill down to just a few paragraphs. The people you meet, the hardships you endure, and the inevitable personal reflection you do are all aspects of a thru-hike worth talking about at length. But the aspect of the Arizona Trail that stood out to me the most, and one I think is unique to this trail in particular, is its diversity. The number of varied and unique landscapes you traverse over the Arizona Trail’s 800 miles rivals that of trails three times as long.

This trail’s diversity was not an unknown fact to me prior to starting, however I had not anticipated the sheer number of different environments I found myself in. I was amazed how the landscape could change around me in only a few short miles. I was initially struck by the beauty and expanse of the grasslands just north of our start at the border. How they shone golden in the morning light and seemingly went on as far as the eye could see. Climb up over a ridge and start to descend and the grasslands begin to give way to more desert plants like cacti and ocotillo. They’re sparse at first, then more prevalent until by the end of the day the trail you were on in the morning had changed into a new, beautiful and exciting desert landscape.

This metamorphosis happened more times than I could count and every time it was just as amazing. Days when dirt singletrack became a cairn-marked route over volcanic rocks or an accent through endless evergreens would open up into an isolated stand of white-trunked aspens. I vividly remember starting my day in the snow and ponderosa pines only to end it on a vast plain surrounded by alligator juniper and manzanita.

One of my favorite pictures from my thru-hike was taken near the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. To me it’s a metaphor for the diversity of the entire trip. Across the canyon you can make out the silhouette of the San Francisco Peaks that I was passing through exactly one week before. I was able to look back and see the landscape I had come through over those past seven days and reflect on how varied and amazing it was. There were so many incredible aspects of this adventure but this trail’s beauty and diversity are something that I will always be in awe of.

- David Kurneta

Going into my thru-hike of the Arizona Trail, I had no idea what to expect. The truth is that I’d never hiked in my life. What I did know is that I needed something big to help me make some changes in my life, as well as to help me bring back a lot of positive qualities that I had buried deep inside myself.

I remember the very first day of the hike down near Sierra Vista, hiking up to Miller Peak with this huge pack on. I made it only three miles before I almost collapsed. I quietly internalized how difficult this journey was going to be. I said to myself, “Wow, I have 797 miles to go…how in the world am I going to do this?” 10 kilometers took almost 10 hours.

Warrior Hikers David and Jordan catch their first glimpse of the Utah border after walking all the way from the Arizona-Mexico border. Sirena Dufault Photo
Five weeks later I was slowly becoming a warrior hiker, busting out 20-mile days. I had my first experience with the magic of the trail, not to be confused with trail magic. Coming out of Roosevelt Lake I went to bed feeling great, only to wake up with what I thought was the flu. I felt extremely weak, exhausted, and sick to my stomach. I looked in my pack to see that my Camelbak had a slow leak, and I had no water to start my day. I felt everything was stacking up against me.

The nearest water was 3.3 miles away, uphill under a very hot sun with no cloud cover. I honestly did not know if I would make it but I knew I had to try. I began to climb and things just got worse and worse and it felt like it was never ending. When I finally made it to the water I was feeling dizzy. I drank as much as I could and sat there contemplating my next move. I had a very steep climb ahead and was feeling terrible. The next water was 10 miles away and I seriously wondered how I would accomplish the next few miles. I thought about what my options were and who could help me. What I came to realize is that I had very few options and the only person who could help me was me. So at that moment I dug deeper than I ever had before. I told myself to just keep putting one foot in front of the other, I would eventually make it to the top no matter how long it took. I slogged through the heat, the steep climbing, and the psychological challenge for four hours. The whole time I was climbing my entire life was on repeat inside my head. All of the things I had been through were swimming through my mind over and over.

Eventually I made it to the top and I was immediately hit with a huge wave of emotion. All of the things I had experienced in my life, especially the past few years, had been on my mind that entire climb. But when I got to the top I felt a profound sense of peace. I felt like I had made a massive leap forward in how I process challenges and things that had bothered me for a while. I looked out over Roosevelt Lake and almost immediately my flu dissipated. It was an indescribable feeling. It was then that I experienced the magic of the trail, and at that moment I realized I will be hiking for the rest of my life.

I had similar experiences all along the trail and each one brought a part of me back that I thought was gone forever. I am truly blessed to have been given this opportunity. Now that I have the knowledge of how amazing hiking can be I will do my best to share it with other people who find themselves in a dark hole similar to the one I was in.

I just want to thank everyone I met along the trail, without all of you angels I could not have done it. I can’t wait to do my next hike, and remember, Go Big or Go Home!!!

- Jordan “Jobear” Burke

To learn more about Warrior Expeditions, visit warriorexpeditions.org David and Jordan will be speaking about their experiences at Arizona Trail Day in Flagstaff, at the Orpheum Theater on September 11th.

Jordan Burke (left) and David Kurneta (right) celebrate their Arizona Trail crossing at the Utah border with their copper belt buckles – a completion award available to all who finish the AZT. Sirena Dufault Photo
You’re just beginning your 800-mile journey on the AZT, several miles from the Arizona-Mexico border and the desert is warmer than you anticipated. Your pack is getting heavier and heavier with each mile, sweat is dripping down your back, and you’re already getting pretty sick of your freeze dried meals and Wet Wipe showers. It’s interesting how arduous adventures remind you how you normally take for granted simple things like a hot meal or a cold shower. But if you’re crossing the entire length of the state of Arizona you know these are hard to come by. That’s where Trail Angels can have a profoundly positive impact on your AZT experience.

Trail Angels are volunteers for the Arizona Trail Association. They live near different segments of the trail and offer a variety of services to people enjoying the AZT. Trail Angels can provide a roof over your head, free WiFi, good food and great company.

In the southern part of the state, Sandy West is a Trail Angel extraordinaire. She lives near the Las Cienegas Passage and offers thru-hikers and riders transportation, accommodation, WiFi and meals. An AZT hiker herself, Sandy loves hearing stories from the trail.

“You get the opportunity to meet such interesting, determined, resourceful people,” she says. “It’s intriguing to hear about their adventures and motivation for long distance hiking, biking or horseback riding. Everyone I have encountered is very grateful for something as simple as advice on where to shop or what the weather forecast is. I think there is great benefit to all involved when you help someone realize their dream.”

As a Trail Angel, Sandy is able to schedule stays and offer assistance like laundry and grocery store trips. She even makes sure there is ample water cached at the trailhead near her home.

“One great thing about being a Trail Angel is that a person can lend a helping hand according to their own schedule and resources,” she adds. “Simply choosing to cache water at trailheads can be of great help.”

Her favorite part is getting to meet the motivated people who are attempting the trail for different reasons. “Every time I talk to a traveler on the trail, I learn something new and interesting,” she says. “I once gave a ride to the beginning of the trail to a Canadian man who is a four-time Olympic Gold medal winner in speed skating. He and his girlfriend, also a speed skater, were mountain biking the trail. It was fascinating to get a glimpse into the life of someone who is training for his fourth Olympics.”

When she’s not “angeling,” Sandy likes to frequent the AZT herself, along Cienega Creek near the Gabe Zimmerman Trailhead.

“What a treasure the Arizona National Scenic Trail is! It provides a respectful, mindful way for those of us who love wild places to experience the variety and beauty of Arizona,” she says.

Angels like Sandy are lifelines along the trail. Their presence, support and guidance may be just as important as the gear strapped to your back. No matter if you’re crisscrossing the Santa Catalina Mountains or making a pit stop in Flagstaff, the Trail Angels make the deserts, mountains and canyons of the AZT feel a little more like home.

If you’d like to lend a helping hand for AZT’s thru-hikers and riders, register for the Trail Angel program online at aztrail.org/trail_angels/registration.html

And if you’re planning your journey on the AZT, set up a visit with a Trail Angel here: aztrail.org/trail_angels/list.html

A native Arizonan, Natalie Muilenberg blends her love of nature with writing as a volunteer author for the Arizona Trail News. When she’s not working on her laptop, Natalie is exploring the desert and mountains of her home state.
On May 8, 23-year old Jack Mahler from Bend, Oregon rode into the Stateline Trailhead and Arizona Trail history by becoming the first person to pedal from Mexico to Utah...on a unicycle! His journey took 23 days, 1 hour and 49 minutes through rocks, heat, cactus, pines, snow and mud. The ride was entirely self-supported and he resupplied in the gateway communities near the trail. Jack averaged 33 miles a day; the shortest was 17 miles and the longest was 62 miles.

Jack has been riding and racing bikes for many years and started riding a unicycle six years ago. He got the idea to ride the Arizona Trail after hearing about a unicyclist that had completed the Colorado Trail. He was looking for a longer journey, despite the fact that the longest trip he’d done previously was five days. “With a longer trip, I was able to get into the rhythm of the ride,” he said. “After one week it was mentally tough. I had to keep finding new points of interest or goals to motivate myself.”

He estimates he was able to ride 60% of the trail on his Kris Holm 29er unicycle. “The technical terrain was tough, lots of falling off and stop-and-go that slowed my pace. I felt I had to at least try the technical stuff instead of just walking.”

Since a unicycle provides limited real estate to attach bags to, Jack carried most of his gear in a 35-liter backpack. Adding to the difficulty was the fact that each resupply of water and food changed the weight of his pack, and therefore his balance.

Conventional wisdom says that once you hit the ponderosa pines of the Mogollon Rim, you’ve got it made and travel is much easier in the northern part of the state. That is, unless it’s been raining and snowing, turning a pleasant day in the pines into a struggle with deep mud. Jack said that was definitely the low point of the trip.

His favorite parts were the Coconino Rim north of Flagstaff and his crossing of the Grand Canyon. At the South Kaibab Trailhead, he strapped his 17-pound unicycle on his backpack and made it to Phantom Ranch in only 3 hours, completing his rim-to-rim in just 10 hours!

His advice to others looking to unicycle the trail: “You need a baseline riding ability to complete the trail. It’s important not to overestimate mileage and practice mental fortitude. Because at some point it becomes a mental rather than a physical challenge.”

Jack is back in Bend after his epic journey across Arizona, working as a landscaper and planning his next adventure — a long bike-packing trip along the Australian coast.
As summer temperatures soar and the cicadas buzz so loudly that you think you’re going to lose your mind, it’s time to head for cooler climes and greener pastures. The highest elevation along the Arizona National Scenic Trail is on the Kaibab Plateau north of Grand Canyon National Park. The trail through here is simply sublime and is worth spending a day or a week or longer. Average daily temperatures range between 55 and 88 degrees. Sound good yet?

Now, imagine not carrying a pack as you hike, run or ride through the dense forests in search of bison, porcupines and peregrine falcons. Just enjoy your day on the trail and all your food and camping gear will be waiting for you when you arrive at camp. This is one of the benefits of hopping on an AZT Expedition.

Over the past year the Arizona Trail Association has been partnering with AZT Expeditions to offer self-guided trips that allow hikers, runners and mountain bikers opportunities to enjoy some of the most scenic segments of the Arizona Trail without carrying the weight. These self-guided adventures are ideal for individuals, couples, families and groups of friends who are independent and adventurous enough to travel long distances on the Arizona Trail without a guide, but who would rather not carry all of their food, water and camping gear to each day’s destination. Just grab what you need for the day and hit the trail. An AZT Expeditions leader drives all your food and gear to camp each night, sets up a deluxe kitchen and bathroom, and waits for you to arrive. You move along the trail at your own pace, assemble your own tent, cook your own food, and create your own AZT experience.

Summertime is the ideal season to gather some friends together for a four-day trip across the Kaibab Plateau. Whether you’re hiking, running or mountain biking, these northern passages of the Arizona National Scenic Trail are absolutely magnificent. Featuring dense forests, abundant wildlife and breathtaking views, many AZT aficionados agree that this part of the AZT is one of the gems.

Everyone meets in Flagstaff on the first day of the expedition, then boards the AZT Expedition van for a ride across the Navajo Nation and toward the North Rim of Grand Canyon. Mountain bikers start riding from the North Kaibab Trailhead and average 20 miles per day while trail runners and hikers begin at the East Rim View and average 14 miles per day. Here are just a few of the highlights (from the hiking/running itinerary):

**Day One**
The adventure begins at the East Rim View where you gaze out across Saddle Mountain Wilderness, Marble Canyon, Vermilion Cliffs and Navajo Mountain in the distance. Once you’ve soaked it all in, start hiking along excellent singletrack to the north. The trail just keeps getting better as you pass Dog Lake and the lush open meadows of Táter Canyon. Hiking through here is picturesque and enchanting, and the trail continues to climb and descend through minor canyons until you pass Crane Lake and approach camp near Telephone Hill.

**Day Two**
Today begins a gradual descent along the sloping Kaibab Plateau along the AZT. You’ll leave the spruce, fir and aspen forests behind and enter the ponderosa pine zone. Aspens can still be found here, and are the only signs of life after the Warm Fire obliterated the forest in 2006. You’ll enjoy great views to the east and feel like you’re flying for the final miles into camp – the trail descends nearly 1,000 feet within the last five miles.

**Day Three**
Another outstanding day of hiking through the Kaibab National Forest. The trail undulates through dense forest, descending very gradually throughout the day. Deer outnumber people here 1,000 to 1, and since mountain lions like deer you can count on sharing the forest with a few big cats.

**Day Four**
The final day of this adventure may be the finest, as you hike from the pinion-juniper forest down across the sagebrush flats of southern Utah. The trail rises and falls for the first five miles, and after creating one small rise you’ll catch your first glimpse of Coyote Buttes, Buckskin Gulch and the otherworldly sandstone formations to the north. Today’s route goes quickly, especially at the end. You’ll descend 1,500 feet on excellent trail, with most of that happening in the last three miles. The trip concludes at the State Line Campground at the border of Arizona and Utah – the northern terminus of the Arizona National Scenic Trail. The drive back is equally impressive, beneath the Vermilion Cliffs and across the Navajo Nation.

To register for an upcoming AZT Expedition and to review the other itineraries offered throughout the state, please visit [aztexpeditions.com](http://aztexpeditions.com)
As a friend of the Arizona Trail Association, we’d like to invite you to attend our Arizona Trail Day events this fall. In September we offer a full weekend of celebrating the trail in Flagstaff and in November the party is happening near Tucson at Colossal Cave Mountain Park. Mark your calendar and we hope to see you there!

**September 9: The Grandest Walk with Rich Rudow and Chris Atwood**
Our weekend celebration of the Arizona Trail in Flagstaff is full of activities sure to delight and inspire. Join us when Rich Rudow and Chris Atwood present “The Grandest Walk” about their 57-day Grand Canyon thru-hike from Lee’s Ferry to Pearce Ferry. A half-hour social with free refreshments will follow the talk at the Coconino Center for the Arts.

**September 10: Arizona Trail Day at Buffalo Park**
Arizona Trail Day returns to beautiful Buffalo Park from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. with music by Viola and the Brakemen, food by The McMillan, and a beer garden featuring local brews from Wanderlust Brewing Company and Arizona Trail Ale. There's face painting and activities for kids, “Walk the Walk” with Jack Welch, an outdoor expo, gear swap, and more right on the Arizona Trail!

**September 11: Honoring our Heroes - Almost Sunrise Film Premiere**
We conclude the weekend on Sunday, September 11 with Honoring our Heroes at the Orpheum Theater, with doors opening at 5 p.m. Combat veterans David Kurneta and Jordan Burke from this year’s Warrior Hike program will talk about their experiences thru-hiking the Arizona Trail. Following the talk, we are proud to be hosting the public premiere of the film *Almost Sunrise* which follows two Iraq veterans tormented by depression for years after they returned home and pushed to the edge of suicide. The two embark on an extraordinary journey – a 2,700-mile walk across the country from Wisconsin to California, in order to reflect on their haunting experiences of war and ultimately, saving themselves. To see a preview and donate to help them spread their message, visit [sunrisedocumentary.com](http://sunrisedocumentary.com)

**November 12: Arizona Trail Day at Colossal Cave Mountain Park**
The Colossal Vail 50/50 presented by Fleet Feet Sports-Tucson is quickly becoming one the most popular ultrarunning events in the Southwest. This year we’ve decided to add to the fun and excitement by combining it with one of our Trail Day events. From 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. join us for music by Hey Bucko!, delicious eats from It’s Greek to Me and Arizona Trail Ale at Colossal Cave Mountain Park. There's a Path of the Ancestors fun run for kids at 11 a.m., talks from local trail experts, an outdoor expo and more. Bring the whole family to cheer on runners finishing their 50K and 50-mile distances and enjoy a day full of exciting happenings.

Details on all Arizona Trail Day events can be found at [aztrail.org/trail_day/](http://aztrail.org/trail_day/)
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Jade Grill Asian BBQ
Jim Click Automotive Team
Jorden, Bischoff & Hiser, PLC
Just Roughin’ It Adventure Company
Local First Arizona
M & B Sedan
Mountain Bike Association of Arizona
National Geographic Visitor Center - Grand Canyon
Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust
Old Time Pizza - Kearny
Oracle Ford
Oracle Land & Homes/A Diamond Ranch
Oracle Patio Cafe
Ovens of Patagonia
Page Lake Powell Chamber of Commerce
Peace Surplus
Pima Trails Association
Pink Jeep Tours
Pinnacle Auto Glass
Pioneer Title Agency
Porter’s Cafe - Superior
PowerFilm Solar
Priority Lending
Recreational Equipment, Inc.
Reevis Mountain School Pak Foundation
Saddlebrooke Hiking Club
Sidewinders Tavern & Grill
Southwest Solutions AZ
Southwest Trekking
Stage Stop Inn
Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative
Summit Hut
Sunnyside Medicenter, P.C.
Superior Chamber of Commerce
THAT Brewery
The Damion Alexander Team
Thunder Mountain Cleaning Service
TransCanyon Shuttle
Tucson Electric Power/Unisource
Tucson Saddle Club
USDA Forest Service
Visit Tucson
Wanderlust Brewing Company
We Cook Pizza and Pasta
Westwind Solar Electric
Wildland Trekking Company
Zero Day Resupply