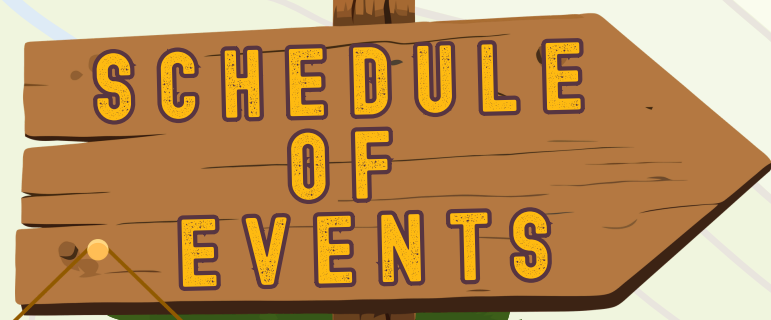


MAP



-OLD FORT, NC- TRAILS & TRAINS FESTIVAL



2026

DAILY

MOUNTAIN BIKING & HIKING ART EXHIBIT

ARROWHEAD GALLERY

View the artistic expressions of this special exhibit that reflects the heart of the festival.

DAILY

MAGGIE JONES

NANU GALLERY

A retrospective celebrating 55 years of clay.

DAILY

WHERE IS HENRY THE HIKER?

VISITOR CENTER AND ARROWHEAD GALLERY

Pick Up Your Scavenger Hunt Guide at the Destination McDowell Visitor Center or Arrowhead Gallery and begin your hunt at local downtown businesses. Turn in your completed cards on Saturday at the Kid Zone by 4pm to pick up your prize!



THURSDAY, JUNE 4TH

7:30AM

SUNRISE YOGA HIKE

FOOTHILLS WATERSHED

Jordan Laney leads a hike and a yoga session down by the pond off the Catawba River.

1-6PM

TRAIL CLOTHING AND GEAR

THE WISE MULE

Everything is free! Find the bus located across from Euda Wine.

6:00PM

JOHN KELLY, KEYNOTE SPEAKER

EUDA WINE

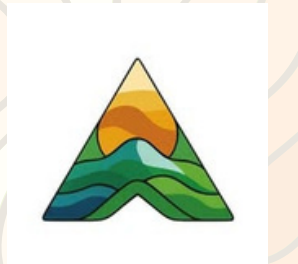
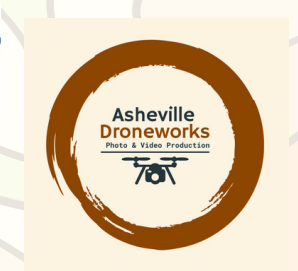
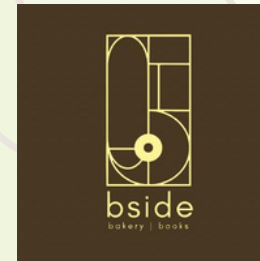
Come hear ultra-runner John Kelly speak about the resilience of tackling some of the most difficult trail runs in the country. You might want to check out the film "The Barkley Marathon: The Race That Eats Its Young," before you come.

7:15PM

TRIVIA NIGHT

EUDA WINE

Form teams, test your knowledge and enjoy a fun and fact-filled evening with host PJ Miller.





-OLD FORT, NC-
**TRAILS & TRAINS
FESTIVAL**

SPONSORS



FRIDAY, JUNE 5TH

6:30AM

EARN YOUR BREAKFAST BIKE RIDE

STILT HOUSES BEHIND WHALEY FARM BREWERY
Join leader, Neekis Hammond, for this bike ride that starts in town, creekside at the stilt houses behind Whaley's. The ride heads down Mill Creek, climbs Star Gap to Lower Heartbreak, descends Copper Ridge and returns to town for breakfast.

8:00AM

BIRDING HIKE

MEADOWS LOOP AT GATEWAY TRAILS
Birder Matt Eldridge leads a hike around the loop where you will learn to spot and hear as well as identify birds that inhabit Old Fort.

9:00AM

COPPER RIDGE HIKE

ALLISON PARKING LOT, MILL CREEK ROAD
Hike with leader Shelly McKechnie, Executive Director of Friends of the Fonta Flora Trail, on this moderate hike travelling up Copper Ridge to the newly reopened Lower Heartbreak with great views.

9:00AM

DOG WALK

MAUNEY PARK
Bring your leashed dog to Mauney Park and hike through town with Purrfectly Pampered Pets owner, Tori Dowdy.

10:00AM

BIRD FRIENDLY GARDENING

MAUNEY PARK
Meet with Dana Owen, gardening expert and co-owner of Painters Greenhouse, as she discusses bird-friendly gardening.

10-6PM

2 YEAR CELEBRATION

COMMON PINE

11-9PM

GRAND OPENING

APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN BREWERY OUTPOST AT MODERN ALCHEMIST

FRIDAY, JUNE 5TH

12-4:30PM

G5 TRAIL COLLECTIVE WORKDAY

GATEWAY TRAIL SYSTEM

Join G5 Trail Collective for a trail workday on Gateway Trail. Volunteers will meet at the Meadows Loop Parking Area to help clean drains and clear a root ball. Please wear long pants and sturdy closed-toe shoes. Give back to the trail, then stick around for the trailhead ribbon cutting celebration.

1:00PM

TREE IDENTIFICATION HIKE

OLD FORT PICNIC AREA

Find out which characteristics help identify trees. Hike one of Old Fort's newest trails, the Stagecoach Trail, with local arborist, John O'Dell.

4:30-6PM

GATEWAY TRAILHEAD RIBBON CUTTING

GATEWAY TRAIL SYSTEM

Join the U.S. Forest Service and G5 Trail Collective for the Gateway Trailhead Reopening Celebration. While Hurricane Helene caused significant damage to the trail system, the completion of the new parking area marks the final milestone in fully reopening the Gateway Trails to the community.

4-7PM

BIKING & HIKING ART RECEPTION

ARROWHEAD ART GALLERY

Check out Arrowhead Gallery's "Biking and Hiking" Art reception featuring music by "The Traveling Transylvanians" (folk, bluegrass and the blues).

4-8PM

THE SCREAM

ARROWHEAD ART GALLERY PARKING LOT

Stop by and try The Scream's handcrafted ice cream including specialty flavors named "Catawba Falls Trail" and the "Chew Chew Train".

5-7PM

MAGGIE JONES RETROSPECTIVE

NANU GALLERY

Music with Mike Holstein, Jazz Guitarist

5-7PM

LIVE MUSIC-HAPPY ENCHILADAS

EUDA WINE

SATURDAY, JUNE 6TH

3:30PM

THRU HIKING IN YOUR GOLDEN YEARS

MCDOWELL TECH WORKFORCE EDUCATION CENTER

Come visit with hikers who have traversed trails such as the Appalachian Trail, Foothills Trail, John Muir Trail, the Mountains-to-Sea Trail in their 60's and beyond. Find out their strategies and why it's never too late to attempt or complete a long distance hike.

3:30PM

DUCK RACE

VENDOR VILLAGE



Throughout the day you will have the opportunity to purchase ducks. At 3:30, the ducks will enter Mill Creek. At the finish line, the person who purchased the winning duck will be awarded one half of the proceeds, with the other half going into the Trails and Trains Festival general fund for next year.

5:30-10PM

Rhythm & Rails Bluegrass Night

FEATURING THE TRAVELIN' McCOURYS

THE HAYLEY KING TRIO

ZOE & CLOYD BACKLINE

FAMILY FRIENDLY

BRING A CHAIR

DOWNTOWN OLD FORT

FREE EVENT PRESENTED BY



OLD FORT, NC TRAILS & TRAINS FESTIVAL

SATURDAY, JUNE 6TH

10:30AM

SENTENCED TO HARD LABOR: THE HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY OF INCARCERATED WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA RAILROAD WORKERS

MCDOWELL TECH WORKFORCE EDUCATION CENTER

Cayla Briann presents her research on "Sentenced to Hard Labor: The History and Archaeology of Incarcerated Western North Carolina Railroad Workers".

11:45AM

"A DREAM FOR THE FUTURE" FILM

MCDOWELL TECH WORKFORCE EDUCATION CENTER



Foothills Conservancy has been the driving force in preserving land in McDowell County, including access to Catawba Falls. See what they have accomplished in 30 years and get a glimpse of future projects.

12:00PM

CONVICT TALK BY STEVE LITTLE

VENDOR VILLAGE

This is a riveting account of those who sacrificed everything to open the railroad from Old Fort to points west.

12:30PM

"MOUNTAINS-TO-SEA-TRAIL" FILM

MCDOWELL TECH WORKFORCE EDUCATION CENTER



Come enjoy the beauty of this 1,200 mile trail that travels from the Smoky Mountains to the Outer Banks, with approximately 20 miles traveling through McDowell County. Written and produced by Julie Gayheart and Austin DuFresne.

1:30-3PM

THE HAPPY ENCHILADAS

VENDOR VILLAGE



Enjoy an eclectic mix of covers and originals.

2:15PM

G5 TRAIL FILM AND UPDATES

MCDOWELL TECH WORKFORCE EDUCATION CENTER



Join G5 leadership for a conversation on trail recovery efforts in the Grandfather Ranger District and updates on the Old Fort Trail Project, followed by a screening of Rebuilding Trails and Community After Hurricane Helene, produced by onX and Toyota. See what's been accomplished—and what's ahead.

FRIDAY, JUNE 5TH

6:00PM

"BEST DAY EVER" FILM

FOOTHILLS WATERSHED



A film about Freedom, Friendship and the Power of Possibility. Come see this award winning film to celebrate these amazing athletes. Free event.

6-9PM

LIVE MUSIC

WHALEY FARM BREWERY



FRIDAY & SATURDAY

Look for **Randall Thompson and His Mountain Circus Act** juggling, clowning and doing magic around the festival.



SATURDAY, JUNE 6TH

7:00AM

TANAWHA ADVENTURES 50K, HALF MARATHON OR 10K

CAMP GRIER

Test your ability to negotiate and enjoy the beauty of Old Fort's trails systems by participating in one of these races.

8:30AM

DEEP COVE HIKE

GATEWAY TRAIL SYSTEM

Hike with McDowell Trails Association Board Member, Vanessa Marsden. You will climb through rhododendron and laurel thickets on one of our newer trails, Deep Cove and descend on Jarrett Creek Road and the Salt Gap Trail. This moderate hike covers appropriately 6 miles.

9:00AM

CYCLE OLD FORT

MAUNEY PARK

Meet at the vendor village with Mark Burton and explore the beautiful surroundings of Old Fort. The ride will follow yellow blazes (road markings.)

SATURDAY, JUNE 6TH

9-3 PM

YOGA FEST

OLD FORT YOGA

Enjoy stretching yourself mentally, physically and spiritually with Old Fort Yoga instructors. Check out their website for classes, instructors and times. www.oldfortyoga.com

9:00AM

PLEIN AIR PAINT OUT

MTN GATEWAY AMPHITHEATER

This is a non-competitive event open to artists of all skill levels to join our community for a morning of creative connection and outdoor inspiration.

10-11:45AM

THE HAPPY ENCHILADAS

VENDOR VILLAGE

Enjoy an eclectic mix of covers and originals.



10-1 PM

INTERACTIVE TRAIL EXPERIENCE FOR FAMILIES BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE FRIENDS OF THE FONTA FLORA STATE TRAIL

MEADOWS LOOP-GATEWAY TRAIL SYSTEM

Enjoy a fun, interactive trail experience along the Meadows Loop while learning more about the growing Fonta Flora State Trail vision connecting communities, recreation, and nature across Western North Carolina. Families, kids and four-footed hikers are encouraged to attend.

10-2PM

HICKORY BRANCH TRAIL MAINTENANCE

CURTIS CREEK CAMPGROUND

Join G5 Trail Collective and the U.S. Forest Service for a National Trails Day workday on Hickory Branch. Volunteers will help with a variety of trail projects, including pruning, digging, and rockwork — with something for everyone, no matter your experience level. Please wear long pants and sturdy closed-toe shoes. Meet at Curtis Creek Campground.

10-2PM

RELAX AT SEEKER COFFEE

SEEKER COFFEE



Relax and enjoy music with a local DJ

SATURDAY, JUNE 6TH

10-3:30PM

WUNDERLAND RESORT BOOTH

VENDOR VILLAGE

Visit the Wunderland Resort Booth. They can direct you to their retreat and enjoy their pond, sauna, cold plunge and tours.

10-4PM

RAILROAD VILLAGE

OLD FORT DEPOT

Visit the railroad village featuring an Old Fort model train setup, vendors, tours and interactive historic talks. Also, don't miss the Hurricane Helene reconstruction display featuring a video presentation and an exhibit presented by RJ Corman.



10-4PM

VENDOR VILLAGE

MAUNEY PARK

Vendors include our outdoor non-profits, exhibitors and local artists. Enjoy food and snacks, demonstrations and so much more.

10-4PM

KID ZONE

OLD FORT LIBRARY CHILDREN'S AREA

Join Henry Hiker at the newly dedicated Kid Zone for a day filled with interactive activities, inspiring creative crafting and learning while celebrating the trails and rail history of our community.

10-4PM

FLY FISHING DEMOS

VENDOR VILLAGE

Cameron Austin will be on the banks of Mill Creek offering fly fishing demos.

10-4PM

FOOTHILLS FOOD HUB

MCDOWELL TECH WORKFORCE EDUCATION CENTER



Shop fresh, local foods and produce, and healthy snacks with Foothills Food Hub. Come share our love of local foods, farms and festival goers!

10-8PM

THE SCREAM

ARROWHEAD ART GALLERY PARKING LOT

Stop by and try The Scream's handcrafted ice cream including specialty flavors named "Catawba Falls Trail" and the "Chew Chew Train".