

Bonjour

Ce document s'adresse à ceux qui ont l'intention de parcourir une partie ou l'ensemble du sentier des Appalaches aux États-Unis. Jack Tarlin's, connu sous le nom de « Baltimore Jack » a parcourus 7 fois consécutifs le sentier, et pour cela il est dans le livre des records. J'ai eu le plaisir de le connaître et de marcher avec lui et je crois que son expérience peut vous aider.

S'il y a une demande suffisante je pourrais traduire le document, mais pour l'instant il est en anglais.

Bonne lecture et bon voyage.

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Springer Mtn., GA to Damascus, VA

1 – I generally start with 3 – 4 days of food / supplies, which is more than sufficient to get from Amicalola Falls State Park to Neels Gap, a distance of just under 40 miles. The amount you start with depends, of course, on whether you're going to take a full day hiking the Approach Trail to Springer, and also how many miles you anticipate per day for your first week.

2 – The Walasi-Yi Center, Neels Gap. (30.7 miles from Springer) A great place for a small maildrop, though not entirely necessary as they sell sufficient food to get you through the next stretch. Also, a great place to field-strip your pack and send home stuff you discover you don't need.

3 – Dick's Creek Gap / US 76 (36.1 from Neels Gap). This is the road that leads to the nearby town of Hiawassee. The hitching is easy; avoid the local who makes an annual appearance by offering you a ride to town and then lets you know in Hiawassee that he expects to be paid. You shouldn't have to pay for a ride, either here or anywhere else, unless you want to offer gas money to someone taking you a very long way. Hiawassee is a great trail town, 2 good supermarkets, other services available as well. Some of the motels will accept mail drops, but check with them first; this will enable you to bypass the post office. As always, though, if you ever send mail to a non-post office place (business, motel, hostel, etc.) and if you end up NOT staying there for some reason (like your friends are staying elsewhere, or you decide not to overnight in town, or whatever) offer the folks a few dollars for safeguarding and holding your mail. In most cases, they'll turn you down, but it's a nice gesture.

4 – Some folks resupply in Franklin, NC (Winding Stair Gap, just over 40 miles from Hiawassee); some go to Rainbow Springs Campground just before there (the crossing is at Wallace Gap). On my last hike I did neither, since I didn't need resupply. Whether or not you layover here is largely dependent on how the weather has been treating you, and how badly you need a night under a roof and real food.

5 – The Nantahala Outdoor Center on the trail (universally known as the NOC) at US 19 (about 27 miles past Franklin) is a great place to resupply. They hold mail, plus they have a fairly good selection of trail food. Very well run, very thru-hiker friendly place.

6 – Fontana Dam (27 miles later, or 161.7 from Springer). You will need re-supply here before entering the Smokies. If you're staying out at the dam in the big shelter, or in Fontana Village, I absolutely suggest a good maildrop as the resupply offered at the Fontana Village store is spotty, overpriced, and incomplete, especially as hordes of starving thru-hikers have most likely pillaged the place before you got there. Other idea; if you stay at the very friendly Hike Inn Motel, the owners will shuttle you to nearby Robbinsville, where there's a real market. In any case, how much food you pack out of Fontana Dam is up to you, and primarily depends on whether you intend to go right thru the Smokies. If you don't plan to leave the Park for supplies

at Gatlinburg, you will have to pack 5 – 7 days worth of food from Fontana, and the first day out is a killer. Make sure you know what your itinerary is when you leave Fontana Dam, and plan accordingly.

7 – Just outside the Park (Great Smoky Mountains) you can resupply, or stay over, at Mountain Momma's. I generally do neither, preferring to keep going.

8 – Hot Spring, NC (107.4 miles from Fontana Dam; about 46 from Davenport Gap). A great, great trail town; one of the very few places where the trail leaves the woods and goes right thru the town. There are several fine places to stay; I prefer the Duckett House Inn where Brian and Frank have been treating hikers right forever. However, you have all sorts of options, from tenting, to cabin rentals, to hiker hostels, to motels. Not a whole lot of services, but the town has everything you'll most likely need, including the friendliest outfitter on the trail, Bluff Mountain. As for resupply, there are 2 little markets; between the 2 of them, you should find everything you need to keep going, but I'd shop first at the Outfitters, as they have a ton of foodstuffs aimed at thru-hikers; also a great place to find vegetarian / health food items.

9 – Erwin, TN (70-odd miles past Hot Springs). You can, if you wish, resupply at Sam's Gap, 25 miles before you get to Erwin. I generally don't bother. Erwin is a good trail town, though a bit spread out. There are a number of lodging options, from hostels to motels. There is also a new hostel, Miss Janet's. I expect this to be a popular spot, for a number of reasons. In any case, all the various lodging places will hold hiker mail, which might save you a trip to the post office; this, of course, is also true for Hot Springs, though as most folks seem to take a zero day there, getting to the post office when it's open shouldn't prove to be a problem. There is excellent supermarket resupply in Erwin, so you shouldn't need to send any food there, unless you have special dietary needs or are relying on prepared / dehydrated stuff from home.

10 – After Erwin, some folks choose to resupply in Roan Mountain or Elk Park. I do neither, as neither town has particularly inspired services available; instead, I stay at Kincora Hostel in Dennis Cover, near Hampton, TN. Plain and simply, this is one of the most remarkable places on the trail, and the proprietors, Bob Peoples and his wife Pat, are about the two finest folks you'll meet on your whole trip. You can send mail here (it's only .2 off the trail) and Bob provides free shuttles to a nearby supermarket, where you can get whatever you need for the stretch to Damascus, some 50 miles down the trail. If you stay here, and you really should, make sure you leave a donation (most folks don't), and see if he's got any trail projects going on that he needs a hand with. He's the maintainer, and a great one, in that area. In short, this place is operated out of love, as opposed to a few completely money-grubbing other facilities that I will not name, whose sole interest in in parting you from your money as quickly as possible. For \$4 a night, Bob offers services that other places charge 7 times as much for, but then Bob's place is not about the money.

11 – Damascus! Very friendly folks, great place to take some time off if your schedule permits, and it should. Most folks stay at The Place, a legendary hostel, and avoid other commercial entities, including some that have recently sprung up in an attempt

to drain hiker wallets. Good places to eat: Quincey's Pizza is great; the Sidetrack Café is wonderful; Cowboys has also been taking care of hikers for years. As for resupply, the little market in town should have everything you need. There's also an excellent outfitter.

Damascus, VA to Harper's Ferry, WV

1 – The stretch of trail heading north from Damascus is one of the most spectacular on the entire AT; be aware that you may want to slow down a bit in this section in order to enjoy it; in other words, you might want to plan on extra food. Most thru-hikers later acknowledge that they wished they'd spent more time here, especially in the Massie Gap / Grayson Highlands area. While some folks resupply in Whitetop, or more frequently Troutdale, VA, I usually keep going. VA 683 / Rt. 11 is only 75 miles from Damascus. Most folks also seem to get food (pizza, sandwiches, etc.) at Partnersip Shelter via telephone delivery which enables you to carry a bit less food.

2 – I always resupply by mail at the very hiker-friendly Village Motel, which is directly on the trail. Some folks go all the way into the town of Atkins, I never do. There's also a fairly well stocked convenience store directly on the trail. In May 2002, the Dairy Queen was no longer open (information furnished by Lamar Powell). Also, don't skip the diner next to the motel for at least one meal!

3 – My next resupply spot is the town of Bland, which has a far better market than the one in Bastian, as well as other services (motels, eateries, etc.)

4 – After this, it's just over 40 miles to Pearisburg, a great, if somewhat spread out, trail town. I always get my mail (and also stay at) the extremely hiker-friendly Rendezvous Motel, which is practically on the AT. Owners Brenda and Buck have been taking care of thru-hikers for years. Note: There's a great church hostel in town, but it's WAY off the trail. There are many shopping / dining options in town; also note that you'll pass ANOTHER large supermarket, Wade's, directly on the trail as you head out of town. Very useful in case you've forgotten anything.

5 – I generally don't resupply until Troutville, but if you have to, there's a very friendly general store in Catawba.

Also, try (if you time it right) to eat at The Homeplace restaurant, one of the great meals of the trip. In Troutville, I generally stay at the Best Western, with shopping and dining within easy walking distance. Note: Most northbounders, when getting to this road, take a RIGHT and do their shopping up the hill at Winn-Dixie. It's a slightly longer walk, but I advise you to go LEFT instead, where you'll soon come to a small strip mall which contains a 24-hour Folger's Superstore, maybe the most complete market within walking distance of the trail. There's also a very friendly little outfitter at this mall, or there was in 2001. I generally avoid sending mail to the Cloverdale or Troutville post offices, as they are off the trail; much better to send stuff to one of the motels where I plan to stay, anyway. But really, with such complete markets available, resupply via mail isn't strictly necessary here.

6 – I generally go into Glasgow for a few supplies, and sometimes spend the night at the little motel there. Other folks go into Big Island.

7 – On the next stretch, I've never been to Buena Vista, which is where some folks go; likewise, AVOID Montebello for mail or shopping, as the hitch from the trail is impossible. Also note, especially if you're using old planning guides, that the general

store in Tyro is now closed; if you want food or mail when you arrive at VA 56, you're going to have to hitch a bit further than you used to.

8 – Waynesboro is a very complete trail town; excellent shopping / lodging options. Neglect not the EXCELLENT Chinese restaurant located next to the Kroger's in the center of town; maybe the best buffet on the trail.

9 – Avoid bring too much food into Shenandoah Park with you; there are several "camp stores" on or very near the trail where you can get snacks, basics, etc. There's really no need to leave Waynesboro with a week's worth of stuff as some folks do.

10 – After the Park, I generally avoid going into Front Royal, VA for a number of reasons: It's a tough hitch from Rt. 522, and the town is very spread out. Plus, there's a good-sized hill immediately after you cross this road. Instead, I resupply in the little town of Linden, VA, either via mail or at the little general store, which has plenty of stuff to see you down the trail. Also, note that you can actually walk from the Jim and Molly Denton Shelter (5.2 miles from Rt. 522) to Linden, get your mail / shopping, and then retrace your steps to return to the shelter. By doing this each year, I avoid Front Royal altogether, I don't have to roadwalk to Linden later on (I just keep going) and I also have the option of spending the night at the very nice Denton Shelter with treats from town. Easy directions from Denton to Linden: Go north on AT maybe 70 yards past the shelter. There's a grown-over jeep track veering off to the left; it may have a little chain hanging across it. Follow the jeep track downhill for perhaps 5 minutes, you'll hit a road. Go straight, follow this road 7 - 10 minutes, you'll hit a "T" intersection. Go left for a few minutes, it brings you directly to the center of Linden and the store / post office. To get back, reverse these steps. Incidentally, this is far more easily viewed on the map for this section, which clearly shows the jeep track and roads.

11 - From Linden, you'll be in good shape to get to Harper's Ferry, where you should either plan a maildrop, or get a ride to nearby Charles Town, where there's a major mall / supermarket. Before you get to Harper's Ferry, I'd also advise checking out, or staying at, Bear's Den Hostel and / or the Blackburn AT Center, both are wonderful places.

Harper's Ferry to Kent, CT

1 – Resupply in Harper's Ferry is iffy; the only, and I mean ONLY places to buy supplies are the 7-11 and the camp store at the KOA. Neither is adequate, so I suggest either a small maildrop here, sent to either the PO or the ATC office, or get a ride / shuttle bus to the supermarket a few miles away in Charles Town.

2 – Some folks resupply in Maryland, like South Mountain or Cascade. I never do. Other possibilities: Hitching to the store / town from US 30 (Fayetteville, PA).

3 – Boiling Springs is a good place for a small maildrop, or you can get to a market. Remember, you don't need much, since Duncannon is just down the trail.

4 – Duncannon. Terrific trail town, great market, but don't get killed walking to it (VERY busy road, no sidewalk!). Several good places to stay: The Doyle Hotel is highly recommended (though not if you embrace sobriety); the little campground in the center of town is no-frills, but very hiker-friendly; great for those on a budget. The truck-stop motel is for those folks, primarily the older and less lively, who can't bear to face the Doyle. Anyway, this is one of the great trail towns; it's been thru some hard times, but it's a very friendly place. Here's hoping you all get out of town alive, or at least out of the Doyle. That's something of an "in" joke, which I may explain someday. Just be aware that some folks are so fond of the Doyle that they never leave, at least not on their own two feet.

5 – Port Clinton, PA. Very good place for a maildrop, since there is nowhere, and I mean NOWHERE to buy food. You may well be able to score a ride to Hamburg from friendly locals, but it's chancy. I always get a small box here. Folks at the PO and motel are extremely hiker-friendly; if you don't stay at the free hiker pavilion, the motel is simple, but nice. GREAT food at the bar; do NOT, if you value your life, order the "Large" French fries, since it's enough for four people.

6 – Some folks resupply in Wind Gap. May be a good idea, since you might want a break, as the section just after Wind Gap is heinous. In fact, THIS is why folks unfairly dislike the trail in Pennsylvania.

7 – Great church hostel in Delaware Water Gap. Not much in the way of resupply, but the nearby outfitter runs a cheap van shuttle to nearby East Stroudsburg, which has everything you'll want; food, markets, laundry, restaurants, etc.

8 – The Mohican Center, 10 miles north of Delaware Water Gap, is a great place to stay. Good example of what the Appalachian Mountain Club is capable of when they're not obsessing with pampering rich folks in the White Mountains and elsewhere.

9 – I forgot Unionville, NY. Not much there, but it's just off the trail. Very friendly folks at PO and General Store, which makes great sandwiches (Note from Rainmaker - A good place to mention that hitch-hiking in New York state is illegal, and the police will write you a citation if they catch you.)

10 – Great trail town / resupply options in Vernon, NJ. Great church hostel which will probably close before long due to abuse by hikers. There's also a pavilion, with tables and showers, run by the very friendly local Fire Department. Supermarket is open 24 hours.

11 – Bear Mountain. Good place for small maildrop, since market is some distance away.

12 – Some folks resupply in Peekskill, Stormville or Pawling. I generally don't; instead I hit some of the deli's / convenience stores that are close to the trail in this area; see your Handbook or Thru-Hiker's Companion for more details.

Kent, CT to Hanover, NH

1 – Kent, CT is a great trail town, though a bit pricey. I've never overnighed there, except once when a local let me tent in his yard. There's no cheap lodging place in town; most folks stay at nearby Algo Shelter, just south of town, come in to do their town stuff, and move on from there. Silver Hill campsite, an easy 10 miles north of town, is a great place to spend the night.

2 – I generally do not go in to Cornwall Bridge, West Cornwall, or Falls Village, instead opting to hold out until Salisbury, which is a nice little trail town, if a little snooty (there is a motel in Cornwall Bridge that is well spoken of). Salisbury, like Kent, is a nice enough place, but pricey. Don't expect to spend the night unless you're well funded. The market is well stocked, though sort of chi-chi (anyplace called "le Bon Epicure" is obviously going to be a bit nose-in-the air). Anyway, it sure is fun going in there, especially in mid summer when you're raising a fearful stink. If you leave town late, Plateau Campsite, just out of town, is an adequate place to spend the night. In very dry periods, you might want to stop for water in the cemetery as you leave town.

3 – Some folks go into Great Barrington; I generally do not. You can lightly resupply a few things at the roadside fruit & vegetable stand on Rt. 7 before you get to town. There is a hostel in the area, just after Tom Leonard Shelter, whose name escapes me, but it was NOT particularly well-spoken of by the folks who overnighed there. Related note; the stretch from Kent on is generally the most bug-ridden on the trail, so make sure you get DEET in or by Kent, or you'll live to regret it. There are some spectacular places to camp as you head north from Kent (Ball Brook, Sages Ravine, etc.) but without DEET you will be hating life, especially if you're tarping.

4 – Some folks go into Lee; I did for the first time in 2001, but only because it was our third straight 100-degree day, and we were half dead. Be aware that the hitch back to the trail can be very tough.

5 – The trail goes right through the towns of Dalton and Cheshire; both have limited, but adequate resupply. Avoid buying too much, since you'll shortly be going up Mt. Greylock, which is kind of a beast. The new management at Bascom Lodge atop Greylock regrettably is NOT an improvement over the hiker-friendly, but fiscally inept former management of the AMC, so don't expect to stay at the lodge. I'm not sure if Bascom is accepting maildrops; don't send anything there unless you are sure that they are.

6 – At Rt. 2 on the far side of Greylock, some folks go into North Adams; I suggest going left instead, towards Williamstown, and hit the Super Stop & Shop on the way into town; one of the best markets on the trail. The outfitter in Williamstown is excellent, and lets hikers stay, in limited numbers, behind the store. This is a great little trail town, with nice facilities; restaurants, bookstores, pubs, coffee shops, Internet services, etc. Great stop!

7 – I generally do not go into Bennington, VT, though it's a nice little town. Instead, I prefer Manchester Center, which is easier to get to, and easier to get around in.

Unfortunately, due to abuse by idiots, the church hostel in town is gone, so there's nowhere cheap to stay. Another option: Stay at the very nice Spruce Peak Shelter, 2 ½ miles before town, hitch in, do your town stuff, and get out. You can spend the night atop Bromley in the little ski cabin on the summit (bring water!). Or if you get out of town late and don't want to go all the way up Bromley, there's a good tent site less than a mile north of Rt. 11 / 30, the Manchester Trailhead.

8 - I generally do not go into Peru, Danby, Wallingford, North Clarendon or Killington. Instead, I prefer to pack all the way from Manchester to Hanover. Likewise, I skip Woodstock and South Pomfret. In West Hartford, you will go right by a little general store which can be used if your supplies run low before Hanover.

9 - Hanover, NH. One of the best trail towns on your trip, though I'm somewhat biased, since I live there. Here are a few key things about the town: 1. The best Dartmouth dorm to stay in is Tabard. 2. Don't stay there if you're no fun, or want to sleep. It can be something of a madhouse when it's full of hikers. 3. The outfitter at the Dartmouth Co-op will be closed; unless a new store opens in town, the closest outdoor shop will be in nearby West Lebanon, which is accessible by shuttle bus. If you anticipate gear problems, you might want to take care of them in Manchester Center. 4. The best restaurant, BY FAR, is the 5 Olde Nugget Alley, just off Main St., round the corner from the Cowboy Café. It is very hiker friendly, very informal, great pub, great food. 5. EBA's restaurant is vastly over-rated, the owners are rude, they're not particularly hiker-friendly, and they frequently run out of, or limit the availability / honesty of, their advertised "All You Can Eat" specials. I do not eat there, and don't recommend it to anyone else, either. If you want good pizza, go to Ramunto's on Main St. 6. If the Dartmouth dorms are closed for semester break when you get to town, you can camp at the field's end, or just into the woods at the end of the field, and you can easily get back to downtown to do your town stuff. You will be going above treeline when you leave Hanover, so make sure you pay attention to your clothing and gear.

Hanover, NH to Mt. Katahdin, ME

Your shopping options north of Hanover are fairly limited, and while there are stores and other places to get food, the selection is limited, too. Even if you haven't used any maildrops up to now, you might want to reconsider. Also, if you've been carrying 6 – 10 days worth of food in order to save money / time, this is NOT a good idea in New Hampshire and Maine. I once went from Gorham to Stratton without resupplying, thinking it'd save unneeded town trips; BIG MISTAKE. NH and Maine are the 2 toughest states on the trail; you DO NOT want to be packing 10 days worth of food in here, and YOU WILL NEED some breaks, especially in the first half of Maine.

1 – I generally leave Hanover with three days worth of food, enough to get to Glencliff.

2 – I usually get a small maildrop at Glencliff, enough to get me up and over Moosilauke. Be aware that you'll be going above treeline (up to 4800') shortly after leaving Glencliff, so be sure you've got your cold weather gear by this point. A few Glencliff notes: The hostel there, right by the PO, is a wonderful place; you MAY be able to get a shuttle to a nearby small market, but don't 100% count on it. There is NOWHERE to get food right in Glencliff, though you could hitch to nearby Warren. Also, if you're sending a maildrop to Glencliff, make sure you check the calendar before you leave Hanover, so you don't arrive in town when the PO is closed; you might want to consider a maildrop to the hostel instead. Call ahead first to make sure this is okay.

3 – I generally resupply in North Woodstock, and I usually go in from Franconia Notch, not Kinsman. Give yourself extra time for hitching since it can sometimes be difficult at both places. If the little market in N. Woodstock is insufficient, you can hitch (or take a very long walk) down the road to Lincoln, where there's a real market, restaurants, outfitters, etc. Not the easiest hitch here, either.

4 – I'd pack plenty of food, including a bit extra, when you head into the Whites. You may, repeat MAY, end up staying at a few of the Appalachian Mountain Club Huts and may score a few work-for-stay meals, but you can't count on this, especially if you're heading through the Whites in early or mid-August, when thru-hiker traffic, both north and southbound, is at its heaviest. In short, you probably will get some of your food, one way or another, from the huts, but don't paint yourself into a corner here. Every year there are folks who head into the Whites with only 2 or 3 days worth of supplies; they generally live to regret it. I personally avoid the huts unless the weather is awful or I'm hurt. If you do the work-for-stay, you generally don't get going much before 9 or 10 the next morning, which affects your entire day. In addition, sleeping in a bunkroom with 35 Patagonia-clad yupsters from Westchester County or Connecticut is not exactly why I go into the mountains. But to each their own.

5 – DO NOT, unless you can't help it, send a maildrop to the Mt. Washington (summit) post office. It has very irregular hours, and it can't be guaranteed that you can pick up your mail.

6 – You can get very limited resupply in Pinkham Notch. Instead, I generally hitch into Gorham from Pinkham, and go to The Barn Hostel in town, one of the best hostels on the trail. I spend the night, and then field-strip my pack, taking only what I need for one night in the woods (tent, bag, warm clothes and limited food). I then hitch back to Pinkham, and set out on the 20-odd mile stretch between there and Gorham, camping somewhere in the middle. I then go back into Gorham, retrieve my stuff, and spend another night. The advantage to this: You don't have to carry food all the way from Woodstock to Gorham, since you'll be going in to resupply at Pinkham; I get 2 nights in Gorham at one of my favorite places on the trail; I carry a very light pack over the Carter Range, which is a tough 20 miles (if you hike this in one day, you'll likely regret it, and end up taking a full zero day afterwards to recover, so what's the point?). Lastly, you'll get some decent rest before tackling the Gorham – Andover stretch, the single toughest stretch of the entire trail.

7 - I resupply in Andover, where there are 2 not so great markets. You might want to send a small drop here to compensate. There are several great places to stay in town, the Pine Ellis B&B, the Andover Guest House and The Cabin. I recently stayed at The Cabin, and had an absolutely wonderful time. Anyway, plan to take some time down in Andover; you'll need it, and it's a very friendly little place.

8 – In Stratton, I generally stay the White Wolf Inn. The resupply at the market is fine.

9 – I generally don't overnight in Rangeley, though lots of folks do. The hostel there is well spoken of. Good market. If you get out of town late, there's camping a few tenths of a mile north of the trailhead, or it's an easy walk to the very pleasant Piazza Rock shelters / campsites.

10 – In Caratunk, I always stay with the Kennebec River ferryman, Steve Longley, one of the nicest folks you'll meet on your trip. He has a great selection of hiker food sufficient to get you to Monson. (Be aware that the General Store has CLOSED, so you will have to do something about food.) There are 2 other places to stay; the new B&B in town is very well spoken of, and the Hot Tub place is okay, if you still have the funds. Shuttles are usually available from those places to a market. I find it easier, and much nicer, to just stay with Steve. His place is simple, but it's got all you need; work-for-stay is sometimes available for those on a tight budget.

11 – In Monson, I always stay at Shaw's, a legendary place. Also, DO NOT send a 10 day maildrop here, or anything like it. I generally get thru The Wilderness in 6 – 7 days; you'll take 8 at the very most. Great hiker boxes at Shaw's, filled with discarded stuff from those who sent themselves 90-lb maildrops, so check his hiker boxes before you get to the store in town. Also, send yourself a lot of film here, since you'll need lots in The Wilderness and at Baxter. And send your stuff right to Shaw's, in case you arrive in town when the PO is closed.

12 – The Abol Bridge store has limited, but adequate supplies. Make sure you go into Baxter with at least a day or two's worth of extra food, in case you have to kill a day or more waiting for good weather for your summit day; there is NO resupply after Abol Bridge, so make sure you have some cash for this place. Do not send maildrops either here or to the Park Ranger Stations unless you have express prior permission

do so; the rules about this seem to change every year. However, do not take it for granted that they will accept and hold your mail. Every year, someone manages to lose a very expensive bottle of champagne because of this; don't let it happen to you.

13 - Easy hitch out of the Park to Millinocket; I generally stay at the Pamola Motel in town if I stay over; there's bus service south from Medway. From Bangor you can get anywhere; Amtrak service has been restarted between Boston and Portland, so if nobody's coming to meet you, get to Bangor or Portland and you can go anywhere from there. I've also hitched south from Baxter back to Gorham, which takes the better part of a day; there's bus service south from there.

Update 2003

Below are a few additions, revisions, etc., that take into account changes and additions to the trail for 2003. The post below should be used in conjunction with the original post, of which perhaps 98% is still accurate.

1. I want to re-iterate that the store in Fontana Village is a lousy place to shop---irregular stocking of goods, poor selection, over-priced. If you don't plan on having Jeff and Nancy from the Hike Inn shuttle you to town, a maildrop here is a very good idea.
2. As an alternative to Mountain Momma's, which each year seems to rub more people the wrong way, you might want to continue on a few miles to the new hostel at Standing Bear Farm. I didn't stop by this year, but everyone I spoke to who did, spoke well of the place. I'm not sure what, if anything, they offer in terms of re-supply; I do know they offer shuttles to town. For more info (and to see if they accept maildrops), call Maria Guzman or Chris Owen at (423)487-0014
3. Miss Janet's House in Erwin in one short year of official operation has absolutely become THE place to stay in Erwin, and is conveniently located within walking distance of P.O. and supermarkets, though knowing Janet, she'll probably give you a ride. Unless you feel the need for a motel, this is the ONLY place I'd even consider staying in Erwin. Maildrops, of course, can be sent directly to the House.
4. In Damascus, some of the restaurants have gone under new ownership; however the supermarket is still there. If necessary, you can probably find a ride or shuttle to nearby Abingdon, which has bigger markets and other services.
5. Lots of folks spoke well of the hostel and little store in Troutdale, VA., just after Damascus. Note: Do not confuse your address label or zip code with TroutVILLE, VA., another trail town.
6. Market in Bastian has closed; go to Bland instead.
7. Four Pines Hostel in Catawba is a great place, and is within walking distance of both the Trail, and a convenience store.
8. There will probably be a new hostel in Front Royal in 2003, and if so, I'm sure there will be shuttle service to shopping areas.
9. The new managers of Bear's Den Hostel are great, and have greatly expanded the selection of hiker-oriented foodstuffs available for sale. This is VERY important if you're not planning on a maildrop in Harper's Ferry, or if you plan to go straight thru there.
10. The new owners of the Doyle Hotel in Duncannon, PA. are wonderful folks---plan to stay there. They also offer a daily shuttle to the supermarket which will save you over a mile of roadwalking on a very busy street.
11. Hostel in Vernon, NJ may be closed due to hiker abuse, but you can still stay at the Firemen's Pavilion, which is directly across the street from a 24-Hour supermarket.

12. In Manchester Center, VT., check bulletin board at laundromat for details on possible lodging options; also try the friendly folks at Eastern Mountain Sports for suggestions. Camping may be available at Rod and Gun Club site, which is near a convenience store.

13. The little store in West Hartford, VT is right on the Trail, and is a good spot for food if you're not going to make it all the way to Hanover that day.

14. In Hanover, there's an excellent chance that no Dartmouth dorms will be taking in hikers next year. This won't be decided til March. This past year, there were a few friendly locals who let folks pitch on their lawns; this may be the case in 2003. If you have to camp, the best spot is just North of town: Follow the AT north outta town; you'll go along the edge of a soccer field near the Co-Op food store. At the end of the athletic field, the trail enters the woods. Immediately to your left are some good campsites. Do NOT camp on the field itself, as this invites harassment, and if you're going to go into town the next day, or take a day off, break your camp down in the morning and take all your stuff with you---lots of kids in the area, lots of foot traffic. Leaving your stuff untended is a good way to lose it.

15. All NH and Maine from earlier post is still current; the Barn in Gorham is still the best place to stay, if it's open in 2003. Otherwise, there are many motels in the \$40.00 range; most will let you stay in groups of up to 4 or 5.

Andover still a great trail town; this past year, I stayed at the Cabin hostel and had an extraordinarily good time.

White Wolf Inn is still the place to stay in Stratton; the hostel in Rangeley was quite popular this year; the Horsefeathers hostel in Oquossuc is now closed.

In Caratunk, Steve Longley, who ran the Kennebec River ferry for years, has greatly expanded his camp store at Rivers and Trails, a very quick mile up the road from the Trail head (and an easy hitch!) If you don't have a maildrop planned to get you to Monson, go and see Steve. Actually, you should see him anyway, as he's one of the nicest folks you'll meet on your whole trip.

In Monson, though the matter is hotly debated each year, Shaw's is still the legendary place to stay. I wouldn't consider anywhere else.

Well. That's all I can come up with off the top of my head; if there are any folks out there who hiked this past year, and have any comments, additions, etc., feel free to send 'em along. Also, please keep in mind in using this post and the previous one, that this information is offered as suggestions ONLY---there are dozens of other places to resupply or send mail all up and down the Trail; there's no "right" way to do it; you gotta figure out what works for you. This is merely what has worked for me.

Best of luck with your planning and preparations!