



The Dragon's Tale

PO Box 882
Gloucester, VA 23061

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Friends of Dragon Run, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to the preservation, protection, and encouragement of wise use of the Dragon Run and its watershed.

April 19, 2017 General Meeting

THE SUN—A SMART ALTERNATIVE FOR A BRIGHT TOMORROW

Join Friends of Dragon Run Wed. April 19th, 2017 and make your future bright! Come learn all about solar technology and how solar panels work, where the energy goes and how it gets there, how batteries work with solar, how solar equipment is installed and much more. Discover why solar is beneficial to you and the environment.



Aaron Sutch, Program Director for VA SUN will present the educational presentation on how solar works and will be available to answer any questions you may have about solar energy. Aaron develops and manages all of the Virginia VA SUN solar co-ops, provides technical support for residents and organizations wishing to go solar and supports policy advocacy for solar in Virginia. His experience includes project development, municipal sustainability leadership, and policy advocacy focusing on renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Aaron received a dual M.A in International Affairs and Natural Resources; specializing in International Energy Policy from American University School of International Service and United Nations University for Peace. He has published numerous articles and speaks fluent Spanish. A native of San Diego California, Aaron enjoys being on the water, playing guitar and spending time with his son Gabriel.

The program is free and open to the public and will be held Wed. April 19th at 7 pm at the Gloucester County Library Community Room located at 6920 Main Street, Gloucester, VA 23061. For more information about the program or Friends of Dragon Run, please contact Christine Tomblason at 804-815-0172.



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Roadside Trash Pickup April 29 9AM

Meet in the parking lot of
Rappahannock Community
College in Glens.
For more information, contact
Hugh Markham at



HELP WANTED:

We still need assistance from a CPA who could volunteer to be an independent auditor or to advise FODR about auditing our financial records. Our records have not been audited in some years, and an audit is not required to maintain our tax-exempt status or in order for us to qualify for the grants that we have received in the past. But we would like to be sure that we are following best practices, and we do not have a CPA on our board. Please contact the President of FODR directly with any information at President@dragonrun.org.

NEW WEBSITE LIVE!

We continue to add photos and new information, thanks to our hardworking volunteer webmaster, Debbie Rollins. So check out our new look at www.dragonrun.org! We are also very happy to see that folks are joining FODR, renewing their membership and paying their dues, and ordering and paying for our new Dragon Run tee shirts and hats using our website and PayPal. And for your convenience, online donations are also possible now. Check it out now – just click here www.dragonrun.org.

“NEW” Meeting Time – GENERAL MEETING STARTING AT 7 PM

In response to many members’ requests, we will be starting the program of our general meetings at 7 pm. In the past, we have convened at 7 pm and had refreshments and socialized until 7:30 pm. Many of our members found this kept them out too late at night. In addition, the library doors are locked at 8 pm, and we don’t want to be there any longer than we have to after that. We appreciate the member feedback, so we’re going to try starting at 7 pm and see how that goes. We will still have refreshments, and we’re happy to socialize after the business meeting and program.

FODR GOES PAPERLESS 2018!



Go Paperless

We have been debating the wisdom of printing and mailing our newsletter for some time now. Lately, we’ve noticed that many non-profits with a conservation mission like FODR have decided to stop making and distributing paper copies of their newsletters. For a small organization like ours, costs are also an important factor in our decision because it’s one of our largest expenses—over \$300 to print and mail each issue. So, FODR’s board has decided to follow that lead and only send electronic copies of the newsletter beginning in 2018. If we have an email address for you, you will see the newsletter in your email inbox rather than in your mailbox or at the post office. We realize that a few of our members do not have any access to a computer, and so we will send a printed copy to those members. You can help us by giving us your current email address when one of our volunteers calls you. You can also email Deb Rollins at debrollins@gmail.com to give us your current email address. Many thanks for helping to save Dragon Run!

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Janice Moore



Another Paddle Season Is Approaching

Thanks to Helen Hamilton, who presented the program at our last meeting; you can read a brief summary and see some of her photos on page 6.

We are all looking forward to another exciting paddle season, which you read about in Teta Kain's article in the last newsletter. We have many very talented members joining us as crew this year, and we are almost sold out for the entire season. All weekends are sold out, and only 8 seats are available as we go to press. We will still be meeting paddlers at Food Lion in Saluda at 9 am. We hope that everyone can bring a \$45.00 check or cash donation with them. We're also hoping that you'll bring extra money because we are going to sell T-shirts and hats BEFORE the paddle this year. Don't worry if you forget your hat; you can buy and wear a Friends of Dragon Run hat on your paddle!



The Newsletter will be paperless in 2018, so check out that article to see what to do to continue receiving it by email.

We still have 2 special requests for assistance from members and friends. The Board is seeking a CPA who could serve as an independent auditor and/or will volunteer to advise us about the possibility of auditing our financial records. Please contact me directly at President@dragonrun.org with suggestions. And we also need to enhance our equipment for the paddle season this year. We still need paddles, life vests, paddling gloves, and kayaks (12 feet long or less and in good condition). Of course, we would also welcome cash donations so that we can purchase equipment.

Be sure to keep track of what is going on by checking our website <http://www.dragonrun.org/> frequently. Please check out our new look, thanks to our hardworking webmaster, Debbie Rollins. I'm very happy to say that you can now order and pay for our new Dragon Run tee shirts and new hats using our website and PayPal. And, follow us on Facebook!

Don't forget to send me an email at President@dragonrun.org, call me (703-217-0610), write me a letter (P.O. Box 247, Deltaville, VA 23043), or post a comment on our Facebook page and let me know what you are thinking. I hope to see or hear from you very soon!

Give Local 757 coming on May 9, 2017

Friends of Dragon Run will participate in this charitable giving drive being offered by the Peninsula Community Foundation. Beginning at midnight on Tuesday, May 9, 2017, until 11:59 pm on Tuesday, May 9, 2017, everyone will be able to log on to the website <https://givelocal757.org/> and contribute to the charity of their choice, including, for the second time, Friends of Dragon Run. So on May 9, everyone can be a philanthropist by donating online or by mailing a check to the Peninsula Community Foundation for the benefit of any registered Give Local 757 non-profit, including Friends of Dragon Run. Donations will be amplified with \$55,000 in incentive prizes for us to try to win, and we'll tell you more about them in the coming months. We do hope that you'll remember to make a contribution on May 9 - watch for our reminders in this Newsletter and on Facebook!

EQUIPMENT WANTED!

Many thanks to Louise and Phil Friday, of Friday's Marine, who responded to our request for paddle equipment and donated brand new life vests. We are still in need of new or gently used paddles, life vests, paddling gloves, and kayaks (12 feet long or less) in good condition, so that we can continue to provide all the equipment for our members and guests who paddle down the Dragon with us. If you have anything that might be useful or know any outfitters who are updating their equipment, please contact our President, Janice Moore, at 703-217-0610 or President@Dragonrun.org. Of course, we would also welcome cash donations so that we can purchase equipment to replace items that are no longer useful. You can send us a check or donate online by clicking [here](#).

THE 2017 PADDLE SEASON—EIGHT SEATS LEFT!

The 2017 paddle season will begin **Saturday, 15 April, running every day for 30 days (weather permitting) through Sunday, 14 May.**

At press time, there were 8 seats available – none for a weekend day.

Contact our volunteer booking agent Martha Graham by emailing her at mgr8040@verizon.net or by phone (757) 898-8040 for availability. **E-mail registration is much preferred.** You may email anytime, but please phone only between the hours of 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. To register, you will need to provide your name as trip organizer, the date you wish to paddle, the number of people in your party, and (very important) a phone number that will reach you the day before and the morning of the paddle in case we have to make any changes because of weather. Hope to see you on the Dragon this year!

GO PAPERLESS AND SAVE FODR \$\$\$\$

Contact Deb at:
debcrollins@gmail.com to
receive your copy via email today!



Go Paperless.

DRAGON RUN LURES PADDLERS INTO PRISTINE PARADISE

Spring is the best time for exploring the 'The Dragon'

Excerpts from an article in [Bay Journal](#) by Leslie Middleton—

The dark, tannic water of Dragon Run slides downstream in an ever-tighter channel, taking us deeper into the tupelo and bald cypress swamp on a cloudy April morning. The dark water adds to my foreboding.

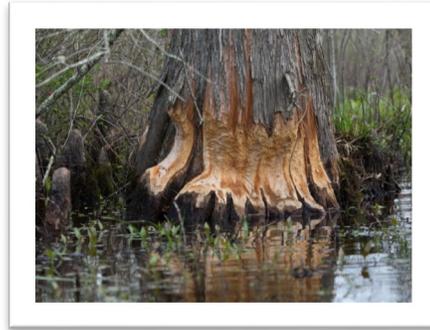
After all, this is a swamp where for centuries people have gotten lost — some purposefully, others unintentionally — never to be heard from again. On either side, rich organic piles called musk mounds, built by beaver and muskrats to mark territory during the mating ritual, rise from dark shallows.

In an open section, atop a 40-foot snag, a bald eagle stands at the edge of its broad, ragged nest of sticks — a nest that's been occupied every year for the last 14 years, except for 2013 when a violent storm destroyed it.

Close enough to touch, we pass a resurrection fern growing on the bark of a bald cypress. The plant can lose more than 70 percent of its moisture in dry periods, waiting for the rain that will “resurrect” its then-brown clump of leaves into leafy green foliage.

Looking down, we see the rare aquatic plant aptly named “featherfoil,” its delicate structure gently wavering in the slight current.

And we are keeping our eyes open for the prothonotary warbler in the soft green undergrowth of new bald cypress needles and silky dogwoods. These charismatic warblers — as well as other songbirds — travel from Central America to places like Dragon Run, where they rear their young in cavities hollowed out in swamp trees. Most of us see at least one of these striking yellow birds.



Signs of beaver, like this deeply gnawed cypress trunk, are common along Dragon Run. (Dave Harp)



Andy Lacatell of The Nature Conservancy has worked towards land protection in the Dragon Run watershed for more than 13 years. (Dave Harp)



Prothonotary warblers travel from Central America to rear their young in the Dragon Run swamp. (Dave Harp)



FEBRUARY'S PRESENTATION WAS ENJOYED BY ALL



Helen Hamilton's presentation at our February meeting was about the Native Americans and early settlers and their survival in Dragon Run. She spoke of the chemicals in local plants

that were used as medicines for various ailments, how game and fish were captured, how primitive shelters were constructed and much more!

As a writer, Ms. Hamilton, who is a Master Gardner and a local author, has created plant guides for local parks, written articles about native plants, co-authored *Wildflowers & Grasses of Virginia's Coastal Plain* and just recently published her new book entitled *Ferns & Mosses of Virginia's Coastal Plain*.



Mrs. Hamilton shared many of her photographs of the habitat utilized by the Natives and the settlers to sustain themselves in the Dragon Run area.





Like US on Facebook!

Friends of Dragon Run

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



Be sure your Amazon account is set up to donate to FODR! For every purchase you make, Amazon will donate to FODR!

IMPORTANT CONTACTS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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Contact Deb at debcrollins@gmail.com to go paperless!

Have a Change of Address? Just send to FODR, PO Box 882, Gloucester, VA 23061

FODR Activities February—August 2017

April

11-12 Paddle Prep Days
15 Paddle Season Begins
22 Deltaville Farmer's Market
26 General Meeting
29 Highway Trash Pickup

May

14 Paddle Season Ends
13 Deltaville Seafood Fest.
21 Kayak Cleanup Day
22 Business Meeting
27 Deltaville Farmer's Market

June

24 Deltaville Farmer's Market

July

22 Deltaville Farmer's Market

August

26 Deltaville Farmer's Market
28 Business Meeting

September

9-10 Mathews Market Days
23 Deltaville Farmer's Market
25 Business Meeting
27 General Meeting
30 Highway Trash Pickup

Contact Deb at:
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receive your copy via email.

