



# The Dragon's Tale

Friends of Dragon Run  
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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.

## Revival of the Mighty American Chestnut Tree



Join Friends of Dragon Run, Wednesday February 21, 2018 to learn about the history, fall, exciting comeback, and potential consequences of reviving the once most dominant tree in the eastern forests, the American chestnut.

In its prime, the American chestnut was an icon of East Coast forests with sweeping canopies and strong, straight timber earning its

nickname the “redwood of the East.” A blight brought to America on Asian ornamental plants over a century ago proved deadly to this majestic member of the forest. By 1950 the mighty tree had almost gone extinct. But today scientists and American chestnut enthusiasts are making efforts to resurrect this once-great tree.

Dr. Harmony Dagleish, Assistant Professor of Biology at the College of William and Mary and plant population ecologist will present the program and share her passion and knowledge of this majestic species. Dr. Dagleish’s current research examines the biological interactions critical to American chestnut reintroduction and the potential consequences of successful establishment of a blight-resistant chestnut for the ecology and carbon dynamics of eastern US forests.



This informative program will be held Wednesday, February 21, 2018 at 7 pm in the Gloucester County Library Community Room located at 6920 Main Street, Gloucester, VA 23061. The program is free and open to the public. For more information about the program or Friends of Dragon Run, please contact Christine Tombleson at 804-815-0172.

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## Roadside Trash Pickup February 24 @ 9AM

Meet in the parking lot of Rappahannock Community College in Glenss. For more information, contact Hugh Markham at [hughr.markham@gmail.com](mailto:hughr.markham@gmail.com)



## PADDLE CREW WANTED FOR SPRING 2018 SEASON

We are getting ready once again for our Spring Paddle Season. We plan to open reservations on March 1, 2018 (at 12:01 am). Paddle trips will start on April 14 and continue until May 20, 2018, depending on weather conditions and water temperatures and levels. You can choose the number of days you want to work and which days are best for you, and we will do our best to work you into the schedule. We will have two orientation/training days April 8 and 9, to acquaint you with how the trips are run and what we expect of crewmembers. Attending one of the April training days is mandatory, even if you attended training in October, 2017, because we'll be using a different water trail this time.

There are a few things to consider about the crew duties before you sign up, because you will be responsible for safe passage of our 12 guests on each paddle trip. You should be in good health, able to get in and out of a kayak on your own, agile and experienced enough to adjust boats to suit participants, provide assistance to those needing help maneuvering their craft and helping them through obstructions on the river when necessary. You should also be in good enough physical shape to help with loading and transporting kayaks and equipment. Not everyone is expected to lift kayaks and load them on our trailer, but other jobs like cleaning out the boats, and/or helping participants get in and out of kayaks are some of the aspects of the job that you should consider. If you would prefer to help with the kayaks and the logistics, rather than paddle with our guests, just let us know because we can use volunteers for that, too.

So far, all our crewmembers have loved their jobs, despite the responsibility they have. They get to meet many people, they can usually paddle the Dragon often during the season, and they have the satisfaction of showing paddlers the Dragon. Most of all, they just enjoy the experience of being on the river and observing the incredible changes that take place on the water and along the shores each day. There's no better place to be than the Dragon.

If you would like to sign up or get more information, **contact Janice Moore no later than March 15, 2018**, by emailing her at [President@dragonrun.org](mailto:President@dragonrun.org) or calling 703-217-0610. We'll need to know the dates that you can crew, the dates that you cannot crew, whether you want to paddle or handle logistics (or both) and any restrictions, such as needing to come with another person. We'll also need to know what kind of vehicle you would be driving on the days that you are on the crew and how many passengers you would be able to transport in it. We'll ask you to complete a questionnaire about your experience level, basic abilities and your willingness to complete certain tasks.

We look forward to hearing from you!

## FODR GOES PAPERLESS!

After noticing that many non-profits with a conservation mission like FODR have stopped printing and distributing paper copies of their newsletters, FODR's board voted to go paperless with *The Dragon's Tale*. So, starting with this issue, only electronic copies of this newsletter will be sent out, with a very few exceptions for members without access to email. The electronic copies will be in full color, but the printed copies will be black and white from now on. You can help us by giving us your current email address when one of our volunteers calls you or contact Deb Rollins at [debcrollins@gmail.com](mailto:debcrollins@gmail.com) to give her your email address. And if you know someone else's email address, please contact Deb Rollins at [debcrollins@gmail.com](mailto:debcrollins@gmail.com) to give her the information. Many thanks for helping to save a Dragon – and a lot of paper!



## PRESIDENT'S NOTE—*Another Exciting Year Planned for FODR*



Our last newsletter celebrated the opportunities presented by a fall paddle season. It was short, but it was successful in as many ways as our other paddles. We took 70 paddlers down the river to enjoy the beautiful fall foliage along the new water trail down the old canal. Many thanks to Robert Gibson for allowing us to use his farm as a takeout point and to all the volunteers who served as crewmembers on these trips.

Check out our 2018 Activities Calendar to find out our plans for the spring paddle season, and all the other activities planned for this year. We'd love to hear from you if you want to be a paddle crew member, monitor one of the FODR parcels, write an article for the newsletter, or let us know about an event that would welcome FODR's participation. The FODR board has received several requests to allow hunting on our properties, and we are considering how to respond to those requests. We'd love to hear your views.

Please join us at our next member meeting on February 21 at 7 pm in the Gloucester Library. Thanks to Dr. Heather Dalglish, Assistant Professor of Biology at William and Mary, who will present a program on the American Chestnut and share her passion and knowledge of this majestic species. Dr. Dalglish's current research studies whether and how the American Chestnut might be re-established.

Be sure to keep track of what is going on with the spring paddle season and other activities by checking our website <http://www.dragonrun.org/> frequently. Remember that you can now pay your membership dues and also order and pay for our new Dragon Run tee shirts, long-sleeved performance shirts, and new hats using our website and PayPal. And follow us on Facebook, especially if you want to paddle with us during the spring paddle season!

Don't forget to send me an email at [President@dragonrun.org](mailto: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!

## HELP WANTED: FODR PROPERTY MONITORS



Love to be outside? In the woods? Looking at the Dragon Run? Our Property Manager, John Jensen, is looking for volunteers to help monitor all of FODR's properties. The VA Department of Forestry is currently updating all of the land management plans for our parcels, so we need to be prepared to monitor all the properties with those plans in mind. If you become a property monitor, you will work with John to choose one of our 11 parcels to monitor, learn the boundaries of that parcel, and walk those boundaries as frequently as needed – quarterly or annually – making

sure that the boundaries are marked, and noting things like litter, vandalism, storm damage, and trail disruptions, and then filing a report with John. You will work with John to schedule workdays and lead a work crew, as appropriate. Thanks to all of you who have already contacted John to volunteer, but we still need a few more volunteers. If you have questions or want to help, please contact John directly at [hopesdad-john@aol.com](mailto:hopesdad-john@aol.com) or, as always, you can contact me using the FODR email, [President@dragonrun.org](mailto:President@dragonrun.org).



## OUR NEW STORAGE UNIT IS AT BIG ISLAND



If you happen to visit Big Island and walk along the trail that leads away from the picnic area and launch site and runs parallel to Dragon Run, you might notice something new. Our new Conex box was delivered in October! Special thanks to Dave Clements and his heavy equipment. With the help of Roger Weakley, John Jensen, Jeff Wright, and Davis Rhodes, Dave moved the box down the road so that it is now sitting in the woods off that trail and provides locked weather-tight storage for kayaks and all the other FODR equipment, adding to its useful life.



## A Walk in the Woods, Anyone? *Teta Kain*

A great way to walk off the winter blues is a stroll in the woods. There are all kinds of stuff to see - birds, trees, mosses, fungi, and often wonderful little moments - a glimpse of rabbit or raccoon, interesting remnants of last summer's vegetation, the unexpected hoot of a Barred Owl - and many other little surprises that cross our path.



If you are interested, meet me at the lower end of the Food Lion parking lot in Saluda at 10 a.m. on Saturday, 10 February. Rain date is Sunday, 11 February - same time, same place.

When everyone gathers, we'll proceed to Big Island and walk one of the upland trails, or perhaps the new path we've created along the edge of cypress wetlands. Or we can do both if we are feeling ambitious. We'll let the participants decide what they would like to do. One of the great aspects of these outings is how much we learn from each other. Just about everyone has a story or an anecdote to tell that livens up the day and broadens our knowledge of the great outdoors.

Dress for the occasion - there will probably be some wet spots so bring waterproof shoes/boots, hat, mittens/gloves, a sturdy jacket. Try to wear at least one item of clothing that is hunter orange or yellow. Hunting season will be over by then, but it's always safer to be very visible when you are in the forest.

Binoculars and cameras are important items to bring. And a field guide on your favorite subject and a note pad and pencil to write down what you see. If you have one, a hand lens (magnifying glass) helps you see all the fine details of items we study. You should have some snacks and drinks. In fact, some may want to stay and have a quick lunch. Since our cars will be at Big Island, participants are free to leave whenever they wish.



Registration is not required, but it would be nice if you let me know you plan to attend so that I'll know to expect you at Food Lion and won't go off and leave anyone. My email is [tkdragonrun7@gmail.com](mailto:tkdragonrun7@gmail.com) or cell phone: 804-693-5246.

## Friends of Dragon Run Hats and T-Shirts



Ball Caps and T-Shirts—\$20.00  
 Bucket Hats—\$25.00  
 Shipping \$5.00

Order online at [dragonrun.org](http://dragonrun.org)



## HELP WANTED: Representing FODR



As you can see on our 2018 calendar, FODR is planning to participate in several community events, particularly the Deltaville Farmers' Markets. We'd very much like our members to help us identify other community events that might welcome FODR and our booth, where people might want to hear about the Dragon Run and its mission and perhaps become a FODR member or otherwise support FODR. If you can suggest a community event or can be a FODR representative at that event or some other event, please contact us ([President@dragonrun.org](mailto:President@dragonrun.org)) so that the FODR board can consider adding that event to our calendar.

### FODR Coming Events

Month	Day	Event	Place	Time
February	19	New director orientation	Saluda	6:00 pm
	19	Board Meeting	Saluda	7:00 pm
	21	General Meeting	Gloucester Library	7:00 pm
	24	Trash pickup day	RCC Glenns	9:00 am
March	1	Spring Paddle Season reservations open		12:01 am
	20	Newsletter deadline		
	26	Board Meeting	Saluda	7:00 pm
April	1	Easter holiday		
	3	Begin workdays	Big Island Mascot Gibson Farm	9:00 am
	8	Crew Training Day #1	Big Island Mascot	9:00 am
	9	Crew Training Day #2	Big Island Mascot	9:00 am
	14	Spring Paddle Season Begins		
	24	General Meeting	Gloucester Library	7:00 pm
	28	Trash Pickup Day	RCC Glenns	9:00 am



## OFFICERS &amp; DIRECTORS

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**Articles Wanted**

As you can see in this first issue of our 2018 Newsletter, FODR is planning to do a lot this year, but we would really like for all of our members to share their interests. We'd very much like our members to help us fill the Newsletter with articles about their interests and activities. If you have an article or report about one of your organizations or activities, please contact us [President@dragonrun.org](mailto:President@dragonrun.org) or [sherriehill@live.com](mailto:sherriehill@live.com) so that we can include it in the next issue of *The Dragon's Tale*.

**Welcome New Members**

Agnes Andrews

Martin Hill

Andy Lacatell

Betsy Washington



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[www.facebook.com/FriendsofDragonRun](http://www.facebook.com/FriendsofDragonRun)

