

# Dragon's Tale

Friends of Dragon Run  
PO Box 882  
Gloucester, VA 23061

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.

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November 2011

## FODR General Meeting Wednesday, November 16

A general meeting of the Friends of Dragon Run will be held on Wednesday, November 16 2011 in the Community Room of the Gloucester County Library, located in the Main Street shopping center on Business Rt. 17 (Main Street) at the southern edge of Gloucester Courthouse. A "Social" will begin at 7 PM, followed by a short business meeting and the program.



Kevin Heffernan

Our guest speaker will be Mr. Kevin Heffernan, a Stewardship Biologist for the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (VDCR), Division of Natural Heritage. He will speak on "The Ecology, Distribution, and Management of Phragmites and Other Invasive Plants".

Kevin received a non-traditional degree program BA in Environmental Writing in 1994 from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. He has some 18 years of experience in Botany/Biology with VDCR. His work has ranged from rare plant species surveys and management plans to controlling and monitoring invasive plant species, including aerial surveys of Phragmites. His most recent reports have been on "Virginia Invasive Species Management Plan" (2005), "Back Bay Wetlands Phragmites Aerial Survey and Census" (2010), and "Native Plants for Conservation and Landscaping" (2011). *Mark Chittenden*

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## Electronic Newsletter-A success story

In February 2009 we began offering electronic distribution of a full-color version of our newsletter. This was a system in use by other nonprofits, and was researched by Teta Kain.

Our first distribution list of 13 electronic newsletters has grown to the point that we now send 79 newsletters via email. This has saved more than \$400 in postage and printing per year. Success story? Yes, we think so.

If you too would like to receive the full-color electronic *Dragon's Tale* instead of the black & white paper version, send your request to Tom Gregory, at [Dragonswamp@Kaballero.com](mailto:Dragonswamp@Kaballero.com).

### REMINDER:

**Roadside Trash Pick Up is Saturday, November 19**

Meet at 9:00 AM in the parking lot at Rappahannock Community College in Glens. For more information, leader Hugh Markham can be reached at [hmarkham@crosslink.net](mailto:hmarkham@crosslink.net)

## 2012 SPRING PADDLE SEASON - REMINDER

The 2012 paddle season is scheduled for Saturday, 7 April through Sunday, 7 May. Trips will be conducted every day during that period. You may sign up either as an individual or a group. All participants must be at least 18 years of age.

The maximum number of participants is 12 per trip. You may use your own paddle or life vest if you wish, but we strongly urge you use our kayaks which are ideally suited for the trips and best accommodate our shuttling system. Generally the trips last from 9 a.m. to 1:30 or 2 p.m., depending on water/weather conditions. Because we are running trips every day, we cannot schedule rain dates.

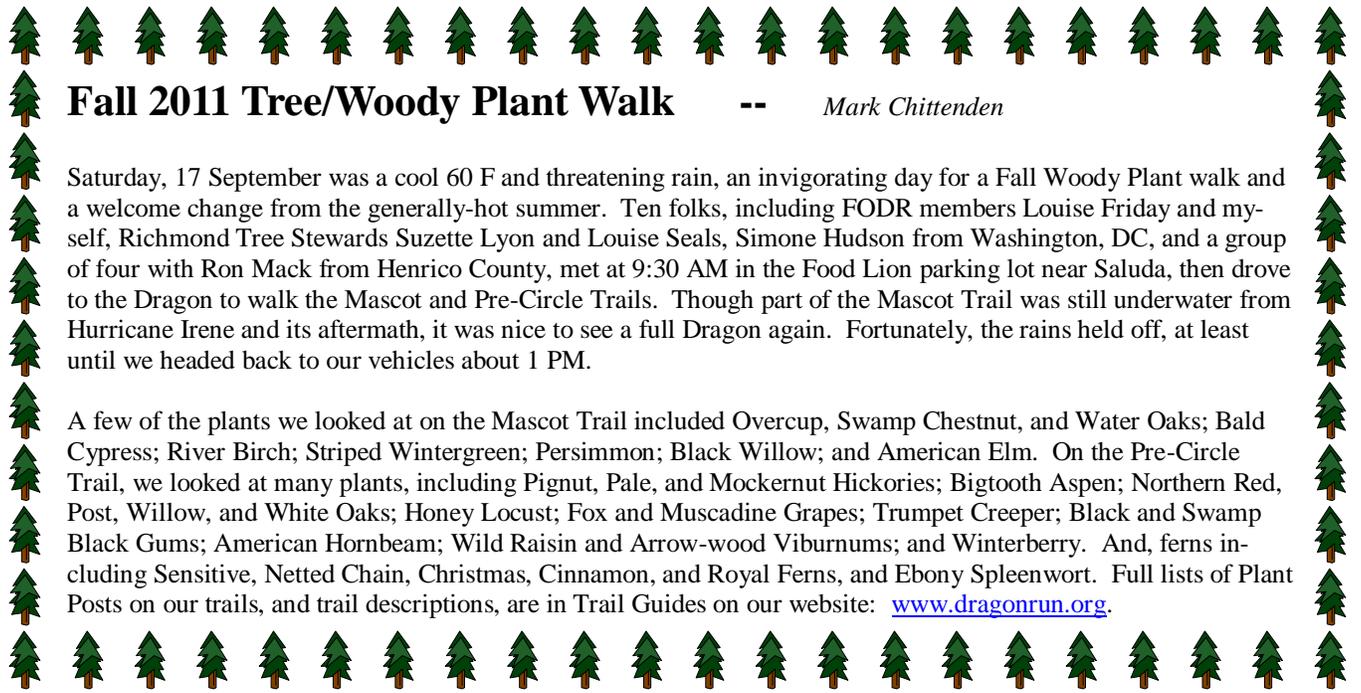
To make a reservation or receive more information, contact Martha Graham by e-mail (preferred)

[mgr8040@verizon.net](mailto:mgr8040@verizon.net) or phone (757-898-8040). When you sign up, we will send you an information sheet which tells you what to expect and how to prepare for the trip. You will also receive a release form which must be signed by each participant.

Even though the trips are free of charge, they are our major source of fund-raising for our organization and we appreciate donations. A suggested amount is \$25/person.

**ATTENTION:** Weekend times are going fast but there are still some slots left and plenty of weekdays available. Any FODR member who wants to book a big group would do well to state both a first and a second choice of dates.





**Fall 2011 Tree/Woody Plant Walk**    --    *Mark Chittenden*

Saturday, 17 September was a cool 60 F and threatening rain, an invigorating day for a Fall Woody Plant walk and a welcome change from the generally-hot summer. Ten folks, including FODR members Louise Friday and myself, Richmond Tree Stewards Suzette Lyon and Louise Seals, Simone Hudson from Washington, DC, and a group of four with Ron Mack from Henrico County, met at 9:30 AM in the Food Lion parking lot near Saluda, then drove to the Dragon to walk the Mascot and Pre-Circle Trails. Though part of the Mascot Trail was still underwater from Hurricane Irene and its aftermath, it was nice to see a full Dragon again. Fortunately, the rains held off, at least until we headed back to our vehicles about 1 PM.

A few of the plants we looked at on the Mascot Trail included Overcup, Swamp Chestnut, and Water Oaks; Bald Cypress; River Birch; Striped Wintergreen; Persimmon; Black Willow; and American Elm. On the Pre-Circle Trail, we looked at many plants, including Pignut, Pale, and Mockernut Hickories; Bigtooth Aspen; Northern Red, Post, Willow, and White Oaks; Honey Locust; Fox and Muscadine Grapes; Trumpet Creeper; Black and Swamp Black Gums; American Hornbeam; Wild Raisin and Arrow-wood Viburnums; and Winterberry. And, ferns including Sensitive, Netted Chain, Christmas, Cinnamon, and Royal Ferns, and Ebony Spleenwort. Full lists of Plant Posts on our trails, and trail descriptions, are in Trail Guides on our website: [www.dragonrun.org](http://www.dragonrun.org).



## Clearing the roads on the Big Island Preserve



It's been a wet year on the Dragon, the vegetation has grown tall and thick, so the roads and trails on our Big Island Preserve needed to be cleared to make way for our annual picnic. On September 26, nine volunteers from our maintenance crew met at the Dragon to begin work clearing downed trees, leaning trees and other debris from the roads in preparation for mowing. Thanks go to Jed Dolan, Gary Driscole, Art Ensley, Teta Kain, Lynn Kinard, Jack Musick, Jim Pettyjohn, and Davis Rhodes for giving their time and sweat to this effort.

To complete this work David Clements provided his tractor and brush hog, thank you David, and Davis Rhodes spent six hours, on October 11, mowing the three feet tall grass on the preserve roads. I worked hard opening and closing gates and standing by as safety officer.

Thank you to everyone who helped and especially to David Clements for providing the tractor and brush hog. *Tom Gregory*



Davis Rhodes mowing the road to and from the picnic area

## Friends of Dragon Run 2011 Picnic — *Tom Gregory*



It was a beautiful fall day, sunny, temperature in the 70's, light winds, friendly people, and wonderful gourmet food. The menu included homemade pork BBQ, coleslaw, roasted chicken, taco salad, home grown mixed greens salad, smoked salmon, green beans, and baked beans.

Then there were the desserts. Chocolate cookies (my favorite), brownies, hummingbird cake (no hummingbirds were harmed), and chocolate cake.

Special thanks go to Jo Ann Nolte for coordination and for making the BBQ, to Wanda Eberly for managing the registrations, to David Clements for providing the picnic tables, to Dave Rhodes for providing the serving tables, stove and other equipment, to Gary Driscole and Adrienne Frank for running the parking lot shuttle, to Cynthia Honablue for manning the FODR sales table, to Mark Chittenden, for his leading of a tree and plant walk, to everyone who contributed to the enjoyment of the day, with delicious food items and their participation.

## A Heartfelt THANK YOU from Friends of Dragon Run

The FODR Treasurer and Board would like to thank both members and many other generous contributors during 2011.

FODR could not purchase property, be good stewards to the land, or conduct organizational business without your support.

The IRS tax laws state that donations of \$250 or more be acknowledged in writing. Due to the large number of smaller donations, we have been unable to acknowledge all your gifts individually but please know that we greatly appreciate all donations. Contact Adrienne Frank, FODR Treasurer, at the address listed on the front of the Newsletter, if you would like a receipt for your gift. Thank you again for your support.

### Did you know...

- That many employers have a gift-matching program?
- That some matching gift corporations offer matching gift programs to the spouses of their company employees and retirees from their companies?

Check with your company's human resources or payroll department to see whether it offers a matching gift program.

Just for the asking, your generous donation could be doubled!

## YOUR Support Leads to FODR Accomplishments

1985-86	James V. Morgan, learning of lands potentially available for preservation, forms a group that eventually incorporates and becomes Friends of Dragon Run (FODR), acquiring some 639 acres so far
1986	Virginia Outdoor Foundation (VOF), acting for "FODR", acquires Big Island from L. McKenna -- 27 acres
1986	VOF, acting for "FODR", acquires Sears Tract near Big Island from L. McKenna -- 50 acres
1986	VOF, acting for "FODR", acquires Lumpkin Tract near Big Island from L. McKenna -- 140 acres
1987	VOF, acting for "FODR", acquires Little Island near Big Island from L. McKenna -- 25 acres
1991	FODR becomes formally incorporated, assumes ownership of VOF-acquired property
1994	FODR acquires Royals Tract at Mascot from C. and D. Royals -- 6 acres
1999	FODR acquires Powcan Tract near Millers Tavern from S. P. Jones -- 32 acres
2000	FODR acquires Ware Bridge Tract at RT 602 from Chesapeake Forest Products -- 55 acres
2003	FODR receives gift of land at Ware Bridge from J. Becker -- 5 acres
2007	FODR acquires Bulman Tract near Big Island from The Nature Conservancy -- 60 acres
2007	FODR acquires Revere Tract near Big Island from The Nature Conservancy -- 106 acres
2008	FODR acquires Eagles Nest Tract near Big Island from L. P. Reichert et al -- 47 acres
2008	FODR acquires Williams Tract near Big Island from R. and R. Williams -- 74 acres
2011	FODR acquires Milby Tract at Mascot from L. Milby Trust -- 12 acres

## President's Message -- Fall Displays/Activities

As I write this, the cooling temperatures and shortening days of early Fall are beginning to herald the wonderful floral displays we expect now, and much animal activity. Various Goldenrods and Golden-Asters cover our fields and roadsides with bright yellows, various Asters and Bonesets contribute beautiful, clean whites, and various Joe-Pye Weeds, Ironweeds, and Mistflowers add violets and blues. Black Gum leaves, a very early harbinger of Fall have been turning a spectacular red since August. Flowering Dogwoods have changed to deep purple leaves and the bright red berries that attract a host of Robins, Chickadees, and many other birds. Tulip Tree leaves, as well as those of Aspens/Poplars, Silver Maples, Beeches, River Birches, and American Hornbeams are changing to bright yellows. Hickories, with their compound leaves, provide spectacular golds. And leaves of Red Maple, Sourwood, Winged Sumac, Poison Ivy, and, often Northern Red and Scarlet Oaks, provide spectacular displays of red; indeed, even White Oak leaves often show patches of red now. In low grounds, marshes, and ditches, Baccharis provides spectacular displays of silver. And, Monarch butterflies become prominent as they migrate, joined by many bird species that move to lower altitudes/latitudes to accommodate the coming lean months. In contrast to these migrants, Gray Squirrels, which stay here, are now busily putting away the harvest of acorns and nuts to provide for the lean months.

With regret, these spectacular displays of nature come to an end too soon, and indoor activities become more prominent as we head toward Winter. Though outdoor activities taper off after our mid-October Annual Picnic, FODR still has outdoor events in mid-Fall and even Winter, notably Hugh Markham's Highway Trash Pickup scheduled for 19 November, and Tom Gregory's Work Parties, oftentimes in February/March.

To keep busy with FODR, try to attend our Fall/Winter General Meetings, those on 16 November 2011 and in February 2012. And bring a friend! We have had well-received Speakers at our recent General Meetings, on topics as diverse as Eagles, Whitetail Deer, Butterflies, Black Bear, American Chestnuts, Wild Turkey, Frogs/Toads and Salamanders, and Bobwhite Quail. Our audiences, unfortunately, were somewhat low last April and this September. Try to come out and hear our Speakers; they have been experts who not only come, but put a good deal of time/effort into preparing their Presentations. We cannot expect either to continue if attendance is low. So, come on out to our General Meetings for the companionship, even if a given Speaker's topic is not as interesting to you as others have been -- and you can help there. As always, FODR still needs volunteers at our Meetings to set-out/put-away chairs, move tables etc. All too often, such tasks have fallen upon the same few people, some of whom, like Teta Kain, have had surgeries and should not have been helping. *Mark Chittenden*

### Friends of Dragon Run Officers and Directors

#### Officers:

President	Mark Chittenden
Vice President	S. Davis Rhodes
Immediate Past President	Frank Herrin
Treasurer	Adrienne Frank
Secretary	Cynthia Honablue

#### Board of Directors:

<u>Term Ending December 2012</u>	<u>Term Ending December 2013</u>
John Jensen	Tom Gregory
Teta Kaine	Rachel Williams
Robert Gibson	Jack Musick
David Milby	Jim Pettijohn
Cindy Kane	Jed Dolan
Bob Hancock	
Annick Ensley	
Joe Nolte	



*Friends of Dragon Run*

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

### ***FODR Activities for 2011***

#### **November**

7 Business Meeting, Saluda MPPDC  
16 Annual Meeting, Gloucester Library\*  
19 Highway Trash Pickup

#### **December**

5 Annual Planning Meeting

\* General and Annual Meetings begin at 7 PM for refreshments and conversation; short business meeting at 7:30 PM followed by program.

***Ever Save a  
Dragon?***