

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 2, 2020

For More Information, Contact:

Wendy Austin, Executive Director
Friends of the Lower Appomattox River
waustin@folar-va.org
804-543-0325



FOLAR to Celebrate 2020 Outstanding Community River Impact Awards Recipients and Retiring Founding Member, Richard Taylor

The community is invited to join the virtual celebration on December 16, 2020 at 6PM

The Board of Directors of the Friends of the Lower Appomattox River (FOLAR) is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2020 FOLAR COMMUNITY RIVER IMPACT AWARDS. These awards honor the extraordinary impact of individuals and organizations who have made a significant difference for our community this year through exemplary service and philanthropy in support of the cause of conserving and protecting the Appomattox River for all to enjoy.

This year, along with recognizing our five exceptional 2020 honorees, FOLAR is honoring retiring board member, **Richard Taylor, with a special LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**. After his 20 years of selfless dedication to the mission of FOLAR and the Appomattox River community, Richard is retiring from the FOLAR Board. Richard has made lasting and significant contributions as a key person in helping to establish and maintain the regional FOLAR conservation community, including his tireless efforts toward park improvements and on-the-ground trail blazing work, advocacy for the river environment, and generous sustained philanthropy. As a lifelong resident of Petersburg, he is well-known for his civic and community service and philanthropy. “We are excited to have the opportunity to commemorate Richard’s life-long passion and service, especially as FOLAR founding member and first chair, as well as recognize our exceptional River Impact Award honorees,” said Mike Golden, FOLAR Chair.

The 2020 FOLAR COMMUNITY RIVER IMPACT AWARD recipients are:

CHAIRMAN'S AWARD: Debbie Newman; Debbie has been a dedicated FOLAR volunteer and donor, serving as FOLAR's Treasurer for six years, she has helped lead the organization to achieve greater operational capacity enabling FOLAR to meet its mission more effectively.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR: Kyle Kohler, Troutman Pepper; Kyle has provided sustained and outstanding pro bono legal work that has helped FOLAR to successfully acquire land that will be protected forever as public green space advancing FOLAR's mission to conserve and protect the Appomattox River for all to enjoy.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY AWARD: David Leming, Budz with Sudz; David's sustained support of cleaning and restoring the sensitive natural and historic structures along the Appomattox River Trail greenway has had immediate benefit and is inspiring stewardship by others.

GOVERNMENT AGENCY AWARD: City of Colonial Heights; City Manager Doug Smith, with the City Council leadership, staff, and C.H.A.R.T.S. have made significant advancements in expanding the Colonial Heights section of the Appomattox River Trail as a world-class greenway and a path to learning, wellness, conservation, and prosperity.

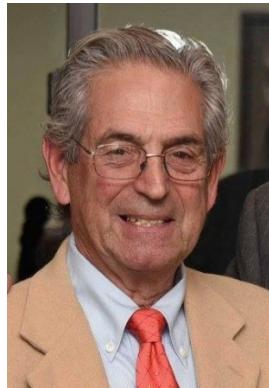
COMMUNITY PARTNER: Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF); Brett Glymph, Executive Director with the Foundation leadership and staff, have helped improve the quality of life in our community through the Foundation's first project in Petersburg, which assisted in closing a vital gap in the Appomattox River Trail greenway through successful acquisition and easement of nearly 5 acres, supported by a \$159,000 grant to FOLAR from VOF's Preservation Trust Fund.

"FOLAR is truly fortunate to have so many outstanding leaders and organizations that are willing to invest their time, talent, and treasure to serve FOLAR and their community. We at FOLAR are privileged to honor these outstanding community leaders for the hard work and valuable contributions they have made to help transform the Appomattox River community into one of the commonwealth's most liveable regions," said Wendy Austin, FOLAR Executive Director.

The 2020 Outstanding Community River Impact Awards will be presented at the FOLAR Annual meeting program to be held virtually on Wednesday, December 16, 2020 at 6PM. Registration is required and available at the following link <https://bit.ly/2JCZHvH> and at the FOLAR-VA.ORG website.

- - -

About Friends of the Lower Appomattox River (FOLAR) - The only organization in the Tri-Cities and surrounding counties dedicated to conserving and protecting the natural, cultural, and recreational resources along the lower Appomattox River. FOLAR has served the region as a registered 501c3 nonprofit organization since 2001 working to develop river stewardship, improve parks, establish trails, increase access to the river and protect special places. FOLAR is a membership organization and depends on private donations to succeed. Additional information can be found at www.folar-va.org.



Above Left caption: Richard Taylor, Founding Board member of the Friends of the Lower Appomattox River (FOLAR) retires after 20 years of service. Photo by John A. Rooney.

Above Right caption: Richard Taylor (left) with Wayne Walton (right), both long serving founding board members of FOLAR at the Hopewell City Park Riverwalk, one of many park restoration and development projects that these two volunteers spearheaded. Photo by Daniel Jones.