



Gloucester Parks, Recreation & Tourism

6467 Main Street
Gloucester, VA 23061
804-693-2355 Fax: 804-693-0061

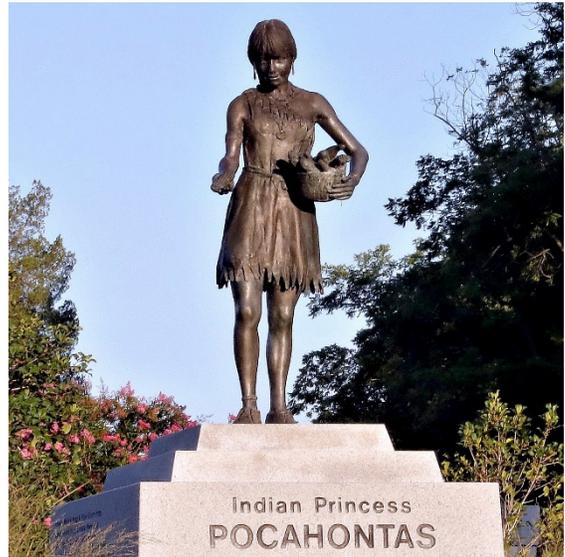
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Monday, October 21, 2019
Contact: Katey Legg, Director of PR&T
693-2355 or klegg@gloucesterva.info

POCAHONTAS FESTIVAL ANNOUNCED

On November 16 – 17th Gloucester County will reintroduce the Pocahontas Festival, marking the 25th anniversary year of the one and only Pocahontas Festival held in 1994. With numerous reasons to bring the Festival back, it will now be held as an annual event drawing people from the region, the state and beyond to honor the life, legend and legacy of Pocahontas and to help educate the public about Virginia's Indian tribes.

The Festival will also provide an opportunity for the public to learn more about two major land acquisitions in Gloucester. The federal government, through the National Park Service's Captain John Smith Historic Water Trail, purchased the land known as Werowocomoco in 2016. An influential site since the 1200's, Werowocomoco was the tribal headquarters of Powhatan and where he and his daughter Pocahontas first met John Smith, and where legend has it, Pocahontas, as a young girl saved the Englishman's life. Planning is currently underway on how to open the park to the public in a way that does not harm the land considered sacred by Native Americans.



The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation purchased a tract of land approximately 10 miles south of the national park property known as Timberneck. It will open to the public as Machicomoco State Park in 2020. The park is thematically designed around the Virginia Indians, the land's original inhabitants. Machicomoco will feature interpretative exhibits and native landscaping along with RV and tent camp sites and other traditional state park facilities. An old farm house will be preserved, and plans are being developed for it to include exhibits about Virginia's Tribes.

The Pocahontas Festival is sponsored by Gloucester County and the Gloucester Historical Society with all activities free to the public. Chief Anne Richardson of the Rappahannock Tribe has acted as an advisor for the event and the Rappahannock Tribe as well as others will be participating. On Saturday, November 16th, the Festival will be held along Main Street where Indian dancers, a statue, a mural, museums and multiple exhibits are available to see while hopping on and off free shuttle buses. The event includes special activities for children and at 11:30 a.m., a new exhibit within the Gloucester Visitor's Center on Werowocomoco, funded by the National Park Service, will officially open to the public. The Saturday Festival programming will run from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Sunday's program will feature a presentation on Werowocomoco by Kym Hall, Superintendent of Colonial National Historical Park, and Dave Brown from the Fairfield Foundation. They will discuss the site's past, present and future. The program will be held at 2:00 at the TC Walker Education Center located at 6099 TC Walker Road. The event is free and open to the public.

For more information on the Festival and/or the Pocahontas Project, contact the Gloucester County Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department at (804) 693-2355 or go to www.visitgloucesterva.org.

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