



Friends of Lake Accotink Park

Volume 1, Issue 3

June 2014

President's Newsletter

Well FLAPPers, another Cardboard Boat Regatta (CBR) has come and gone and it appears the sea-worthiness of the boats improves each year. Once again, the regatta would not have been the memorable event it was without the witty humor of emcee Jim Hickey who in watching one race with the boat SOS, noted that they needed to send out their own SOS after they capsized. I also asked Chairwoman Bulova and Supervisors Cook (Braddock) and McKay (Lee) if the judging gets any easier, and all three noted that it should, but the participants put so much effort into their boats each year that it actually gets harder and harder. The event is one which essentially defines what a park event should be: pure fun. My thanks to Ann McElhatton, Meghan Walker, Beverley and Juan Rivera, Mary Keeser, Mary Lipsey, and Melissa Bright who staffed the Friends of Lake Accotink Park table at the CBR to let folks know who we are and what we do. And what does FLAP do? We make the park better!

The articles in this month's newsletter reflect some noteworthy accomplishments, some good news, and some not so good news. Three FLAP members were honored as Lords and Ladies Fairfax. Congratulations also go to our very own Park Supervisor, Julie Tahan, who was selected to receive the Best of Braddock award. There is also a fun new Park Authority program to "Enjoy Campfire Saturdays at Lake Accotink and Royal Lake Parks." And the "Summer Concert Series - Braddock Nights" starts again at both Lake Accotink and Royal Lake Parks, but due to reduced funding, it starts a little later this year. And FLAP, along with the Friends of Accotink Creek, received a very generous donation of \$3490.60 from Whole Foods Springfield as a result of their 5% Day. Lastly, we have an agenda approved by both FACC and FLAP boards for a joint meeting in July.

The not so good news is that the Park Authority is delaying the kick off meeting for the Lake Accotink Park Master Plan until the September/October timeframe due to a number of issues they need to staff internally before holding the meeting. I had hoped that the master plan would be kicking off later this month, but the decision to delay is one that I support given several stormwater runoff issues and their impact on the lake.

However, even as the Park Authority staffs its issues, we in FLAP can be moving forward thinking about what we would like to see in the park. Some ideas quickly pop up regarding the location of the carousel, the picnic tables, and the mini-golf. What about connecting the two parking lots by more than just a service road so people can drive from one part of the park to another? Do we want to keep a basketball court that gets minimal use, or make that a skate spot? Should there be an Off Leash Dog Area (OLDA) aka dog park in the park? Should we leave the sanded volleyball court where it is or move it to the beach area by the lake? What else could go in the space it is currently in? The list can go on and on. **We can discuss ideas at monthly FLAP meetings over the next few months and have constructive exchanges and bring forth new ideas to throw against the wall.** Let's see which ideas have legs and which don't. We need to articulate what we would like to see in the new Lake Accotink Park.

Let me capitalize on something Hollywood loves to capitalize on, that part of a wedding scene when it comes to the line: "If there is anyone here who knows why these two should not be joined in holy matrimony, let him speak now or forever hold his peace." Well, here's the bottom line: Since Master Plans are like Halley's comet – they only come around once in a while (every 76 years), it's speak now, or well you can fill in the rest.

Best Regards –

Tony Vellucci

Park Supervisor's Letter

Hello Friends –

The 25th running of the Cardboard Boat Regatta at Lake Accotink Park kicked off the month of June and capped off another successful Springfield Days. The sight of wide smiles and sound of amused laughter amidst splashing paddles and soggy cardboard remnants leaves us with fond memories that will remain vivid long into the summer and beyond. As with any memorable event, the Regatta could not have taken place without major involvement from community members, staff and others who helped with the planning and implementation of the event. I wish to thank them all.

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FLAP Mission

We are committed to:

- A. Protect, restore, and preserve the natural, historical and cultural resources of Lake Accotink Park;
- B. Promote educational and recreational opportunities;
- C. Encourage interpretive, educational, and cultural programs;
- D. Promote the community use of the park facilities; and,
- E. Foster respect for the park.

Whole Foods Rep To Speak At Next FLAP Meeting

FLAP has invited Janelle Cesari, Marketing Director at Whole Foods Market Springfield, to speak at the next FLAP meeting, and to accept a Certificate of Appreciation for Whole Foods' support of Lake Accotink. The next FLAP meeting is on June 26 at 7:05 pm at the Richard Byrd Library.

Anyone can become a Friend of Lake Accotink Park, just attend a couple of FLAP meetings or join us in various park activities.

Contact us at:
flap.membership@gmail.com

Friends of Lake Accotink Park Newsletter Distribution

The Friends of Lake Accotink Park (FLAP) newsletter is distributed monthly to provide information about the park raising its awareness and visibility in the community.

Distribution includes all FLAP members; the district offices of the three magisterial districts that border Lake Accotink Park – Braddock District, Lee District, and Springfield District; and the following communities for posting on their website, or inclusion in their community newsletters: Canterbury Woods, Carrleigh Homeowners Association, Danbury Forest, Kings Park, North Springfield Civic Association, Oak Hill, Ravensworth Farm, Stonehaven, Springfield Civic Association, and West Springfield Civic Association.

Park Supervisor's Letter continued...

Some of the people involved in coordinating the event deserve special mention:

- The Springfield Days Committee for providing coordinated marketing and other expertise in support of all the Springfield Days events
- Safford Chrysler Jeep Dodge of Springfield – Presenting Sponsor for Springfield Days 2014
- Nancy-jo Manney, 2014 Springfield Days Chair, who also served as Boat Inspector and photographer for the Regatta
- Jim Hickey, esteemed FLAPPer and announcer extraordinaire, who knows how to keep it fun and exciting

We also thank the following, for serving again this year as judges of the pre-race boat-judging contest, Sharon Bulova, Chair, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors; John Cook, Supervisor, Braddock District; and Jeff McKay, Supervisor, Lee District.

And for serving as award presenters and overall regatta enthusiasts, we thank FLAPPers and Park Authority Board Members Ed Batten (Lee District) and Tony Velluci (Braddock District).

For safeguarding our community and being there in case the going got rough, we owe tremendous gratitude to Rick Machado and his team mates from the Greater Springfield Volunteer Fire Department; the dedicated lifeguard team from the Park Authority's Providence RECenter; and police patrol units from Franconia Station, who monitored the event.

We also thank the staff and volunteers of Fairfax County School-Age Child Care (Department of Family Services) for their continued partnership, enthusiasm, and participation, which enable countless schoolchildren to be part of this event in which they might not otherwise have a way to participate.

An event of this magnitude relies as well on staff from throughout the Park Authority, whose talents, professionalism and support factored into all aspects of the regatta. And it should be noted that, since the regatta has been a tradition within the Park Authority for 25 years, its success today owes much to the staff and volunteers from the past who had the vision to create the event and sustain it over the years.

Above all we thank the intrepid crew members and their fans, who dedicated countless hours to constructing cardboard boats and then willing them to fate... demonstrating determination, teamwork, sportsmanship, resilience, passion, community spirit and many more of the valuable life lessons that are gained through recreation.

So mark your calendar for next year's running of the Cardboard Boat Regatta: Sunday, May 31, 2015. Until then, gather your crewmates and come out for a ride on a pedal boat, pontoon tour boat or canoe. Don't worry—they're not made of cardboard.

Enjoy the park,
Julie Tahan

Whole Foods Market Springfield Donates To Friends of Accotink Creek / Lake Accotink Park

Janelle Cesari, Marketing Director at Springfield Whole Foods Market, invited the Friends of Accotink Creek (FACC), to be a beneficiary of its quarterly **5% Day**, a program where the store donates 5% of net sales to a non-profit organization making a difference in the community. This quarter's theme was environmental programs, and Whole Foods was looking to find ways to help protect and promote vital environmental habitats. Kris Unger, FACC's President, contacted the Friends of Lake Accotink Park and asked if FLAP would want to participate and split the donation 50/50 with all funds being expended on environmental stewardship projects in the park – such as protecting, restoring and preserving the natural, historical and cultural resources of Lake Accotink Park, outreach, educational programs and lake cleanups. The Fairfax County Park Foundation, as a 501(c)(3) agreed to accept the donation on behalf of both FACC and FLAP.

Both FACC and FLAP members were on hand on the 5% Day, Wednesday June 11. Kris Unger and Liz Kirchner from FACC; Beverley Rivera, Juan Rivera, and Tony Vellucci for FLAP. Also participating was Phil Latasa – a member of both FACC and FLAP. Sales were brisk that day and several shoppers noted that they were shopping just to support Lake Accotink. Whole Foods generously donated \$3,490.60. Both FACC and FLAP are planning a joint meeting for July and determining how the funds are to be spent will be an important agenda item.



FLAP / FACC Establish Joint Meeting Agenda

The agenda for the joint meeting of the Friends of Accotink Creek and Lake Accotink Park in July, includes: FACC Organizational Structure, FLAP Organizational Structure, Accotink Creek Clean Ups, Lake Accotink Park Clean Ups, Environmental Stewardship efforts, Presentations to Civic/Community/Homeowner Associations, Lake Accotink Park Master Plan, FCPA Lake Accotink Park Supervisor Support/Perspectives, Braddock Nights Summer Concert Series, Fundraising/Expenditure of Funds. Meeting date and location details coming soon.

Five Steps to being a Great Steward

By Ann McElhatton



Sure, you've seen the blue and green oval medallions (pictured) on the drains of local waterways reminding you that what goes down the sewers is icky no good pollution. And because of that you refrain from tossing garbage into the street, always use pesticides sparingly, and dispose of used oil at proper disposal sites. Not sure what else you might be able to become a better steward and protect, restore, and preserve Lake Accotink Park? Here are some actions that might seem a bit out of the box, but are worth considering if you're up for a new personal challenge this summer:

- 1) At the car wash: Did you know that commercial car washes regulate and treat the water? Try to use one instead of washing your car at home. Dumping excess cleaning fluids into storm drains can have an unfavorable effect on Lake Accotink.
- 2) While repairing your car: Make sure to prevent leaks from oil and other auto fluids by using oil pans to collect excess. Also, instead of hosing off clean-up use rags and absorbent materials.
- 3) Xeriscaping: Garden in a way that reduces the need to additional water. Use native plants and vegetable filter strips when possible and if you need to use water create a rain barrel collection system to water them.
- 4) "Darn, feisty raccoons!": Make sure to properly store garbage by fitting bungee cords or locking up the cans so animals cannot get in them. Often time's wildlife is the culprit when we see debris on the side of the road. The debris then filters to the creeks and we clean it up once it reaches Lake Accotink.
- 5) Poolside: Be careful not to release large volumes of water since it can cause erosion. Also, make certain to dispose of the pool chemicals efficiently. If not, these chemicals can be quite harmful to the aquatic life in our neighborhood streams.

Understanding What it Means to be Stewards

Part of the mission of Friends of Lake Accotink Park (FLAP) is to **"encourage an active interest by Fairfax County residents in promoting the stewardship of the cultural and the natural resources of, and promoting active and passive recreation opportunities at Lake Accotink Park."** For the natural resources aspect of the mission it's important to remember we depend on natural resources for a variety of aspects of our daily lives – including many cultural aspects. Also, it goes without saying (but, is worth the reminder) that we need to sustain our natural resources for future generations. Natural resource stewardship refers to the responsible use and protection of the natural environment through conservation and sustainable practices. The Friends of Lake Accotink Park recognize it's a challenge finding a balance between our growing society's demands while still keeping in mind the necessities of the animals and plants that live on the land. Become a member of Friends of Lake Accotink as we work with both government and private organizations to find the delicate balance for all

FLAP Membership chair, Ann McElhatton, has a B.S. in Marine Resources Management and an M.Ed. in Environmental Education. She is currently Program Manager with the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program and is a member of the North American Association of Environmental Educators, National Marine Educators Association and the Mid-Atlantic Marine Educators Association; enjoy her Beach Chair Scientist blog at: <http://beachchairscientist.com/2013/03/01/and-that-concludes-my-we-affect-what-goes-in-our-watershed-week/>

Three Friends of Lake Accotink Park Members Honored As Lord/Ladies Fairfax

Three Friends of Lake Accotink Park members, Mary Keeser, Tawny Hammond and Anthony Vellucci, were honored as Lord and Ladies Fairfax during the Celebrate Fairfax Salute 2014. The tradition of honoring Lords and Ladies Fairfax began in 1984 as a way to recognize outstanding citizens of Fairfax County. Each year the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors selects two people from each district who have demonstrated exceptional volunteer service, heroism, or other special accomplishments to receive the award. Ms. Keeser was selected by Chairwoman Sharon Bulova, Ms. Hammond was selected by Supervisor Jeff McKay as the Lee District Lady Fairfax, and Mr. Vellucci was selected by Supervisor John Cook as the Braddock District Lord Fairfax.

Mary Keeser is the Founder and Chairman of America's Adopt-A-Soldier, a non-profit organization dedicated to serving and making a positive difference in the lives of our service members, veterans, and their families and veterans who are homeless. Her dedication to making a difference in the lives of our service men and women is unfailing, and the heart of this organization. As a fifth generation military service member, Ms. Keeser supports multiple diversity and volunteer initiatives for military service members, veterans and their families. She is a past president of the Ravensworth Farms Civic Association.

Tawny Hammond headed the Springfield Civic Association for 10 years during which time the organization became of the most active and engaged local organizations in the Lee District. As president, she built relationships among residents, the business community and elected officials. Those relationships still flourish today as the civic association's membership continues to grow. She also chaired the Springfield Days Committee for years, again building relationships, especially with the business community. She was also a Park Supervisor for Lake Accotink Park before taking a position with the Fairfax County Police Department as the Director, Animal Shelter.

Tony Vellucci is the Braddock District representative to the Park Authority Board and has been instrumental in advancing park projects and issues for Braddock District residents, such as a new playground for Old Forge/Surrey Square. He has worked tirelessly to transform the defunct Kings West Swim Club into a neighborhood park, Rabbit Branch Park, and has been a master of ceremonies for the Braddock Nights summer concert series at Royal Lake Park. He is a past president of the Kings Park West Civic Association, encompassing over 1800 homes and three separate homeowner associations.

Park Supervisor Julie Tahan Receives Best of Braddock Award

Lake Accotink Park Supervisor Julie Tahan was recently selected for a Best of Braddock award for her can-do spirit at the local employee level. The Best of Braddock is a joint Braddock District Council of Community Associations and Braddock District Supervisor program to recognize citizens, organizations and businesses of the Braddock District whose excellent performance or contributions to the welfare, beauty, or strength of Braddock District deserve special recognition. Julie's award recognizes the role she plays addressing a broad range of issues each day ranging from cultural and natural stewardship, to recreation, both active and passive. The range of her responsibilities encompass directing lake clean ups twice a year, coordinating summer camp programs, directing seasonal events, identifying and prioritizing maintenance needs, coordinating volunteers and projects, and addressing the responsibilities of dam ownership. Further, she has ably directed the last five Cardboard Boat Regattas, having been involved in roles critical to the event since 2002. Each Regatta improves on the last and, by tapping interested community members and aligning with strong partners, Julie has ensured that the event keeps its grassroots and authentic flavor as an event that remains deeply rooted in the community. The Cardboard Boat Regatta supports the larger community fabric due to its longstanding place as the capstone event of Springfield Days. There is no doubt that Julie's can-do attitude and dedication to her position and the citizens of Fairfax County set her apart from other local employees for this award. For these reasons, she earned the title as the Braddock District "Most Can-Do" Public Employee at the Local Level. A ceremony honoring all Best of Braddock awardees will be held Wednesday July 9, 2014 at Braddock Hall and is open to all.

Park Authority Delays Lake Accotink Master Plan Kick Off Meeting

The Park Authority has delayed the Lake Accotink Park master plan kick off meeting. A tentative date of June 26 had been identified for the meeting, but after a Park Authority on-site meeting on June 5, several issues surfaced regarding the lake that require additional analysis and coordination with the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services. That analysis and coordination should be accomplished this summer so that the kick off meeting will occur sometime in the September/October timeframe. Members will be notified of the revised kick off date and location as soon as it is known.

Enjoy Campfire Saturdays at Lake Accotink and Royal Lake Parks

What better place for a campfire than on a lake? Join Hidden Pond naturalists for excursions into the wilds of our neighborhood gems. Explore with nets, find animals and listen for the call of the wild critters as the full moon rises and nocturnal hunters do their aerial acrobatics over the lake. Topics this summer include reptiles and amphibians, bats, nocturnal predators, flying squirrels, owls, stargazing and more!

Programs conclude with a campfire. S'more ingredients are provided, and hot dogs are welcome.

Campfires will be held on Saturday evenings at Lake Accotink on July 19 and on Aug. 2, 16 and 30. Royal Lake will host Campfire Saturdays on June 28, July 12 and 26, and Aug. 9 and 23. All Campfire Saturday programs begin at 7:30 p.m. The cost is \$7.00 for county residents and \$9.00 for out-of-county.

For more information, or to sign up, please call [703-451-9588](tel:703-451-9588) or go to Parktakes online and search "campfire" www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes/. Children must be accompanied by a paid, registered adult.

Long Branch Stream Valley Communities Considering a Friends Group

Supervisor John Cook will host a meeting of concerned citizens from several Braddock communities who have expressed an interest in the Long Branch Stream Valley on July 7 at Braddock Hall. The goal of the meeting is to determine if there is sufficient support to establish a Friends

Group whose initial focus will be invasive management control, trash control, and trail safety/maintenance. Several communities border the LBSV, and representatives from each community have been invited to attend: they include the Braddock District Council; Rutherford; Bradfield; Long Branch, Olde Forge/Surrey Square; Red Fox Forest, Canterbury Woods; and Stonehaven. Long Branch feeds into Lake Accotink so any trash that can be contained in the LBSV is trash that will never see Lake Accotink Park. Come out and show your support.

Lake Accotink Park Off Leash Dog Area (OLDA)

At the regular monthly FLAP meeting in May, the discussion of an Off Leash Dog Area (OLDA) aka dog park, came up and meeting attendees expressed both support for, and opposition to the idea. Erin Mays, the president of Braddock Dogs provided a short overview of Braddock Dogs and its efforts working with the Park Authority during the Monticello Park master plan process to have a dog park at Monticello Park; the Monticello Park Master Plan was approved in June 2012.

Braddock Dogs is an organization committed to working with the Braddock District Supervisor, the Braddock District Representative to the Fairfax County Park Authority Board, and Fairfax County Park Authority staff to advance the establishment and sustainment of dog parks within the Braddock District. Individuals interested in supporting a dog park in Lake Accotink Park should contact Braddock Dogs at braddockdogs@gmail.com.

Braddock Nights Concerts Kick Off At Lake Accotink and Royal Lake Parks

Welcome to the 2014 Braddock Nights Summer Concert Series. Once again, Braddock Nights will be held at both Lake Accotink and Royal Lake Parks. The series of free musical performances runs throughout the summer and presents a wide array of performers from classical to bluegrass, and everything in between. The atmosphere is informal; bring a picnic dinner, blankets and lawn chairs and relax with friends and family to celebrate the end of the workweek. Performances start Friday June 27 and will be held each Friday night till the last week of August. Note there will be no performances on Friday July 4 this year. Concerts are cancelled if it's raining so if there is a threat of bad weather, call 703.324.SHOW (7469). Stop by to pick up a program, or download it from the county website at

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances/braddocknights.htm>

Photos of the 2014 Cardboard Boat Regatta (scroll to the end for a list of the winners)













25th Annual Cardboard Boat Regatta

Judges' Picks

BOAT

GROUP/CAPTAIN

Pride of the Regatta

Eagles

Waples Mill SACC

Best Costume

Harry the Heron

London Towne SACC

Team Spirit

TC Hound

Terra Centre SACC

Best Buoyant Beginning

Top Hat

Interstate Van Lines, Inc.

Titanic

Royal Flush

David Kelly Family

Most Educational

Nautical Almanac

Brian Platt

25th Annual Cardboard Boat Regatta

Race Winners

BOAT	GROUP/CAPTAIN	TIME
<u>Open Ages 14 & Under</u>		
<i>Happy Happy Happy</i>	Interstate Van Lines, Inc./Mikayla	1:10:00
<u>SACC</u>		
<i>Eagles</i>	Waples Mill SACC	1:15:75
<u>School/Civic/Scouts Group</u>		
<i>Eagles</i>	Waples Mill SACC	1:09:07
<u>Parent & Child</u>		
<i>Nautical Almanac</i>	Brian Platt	0:54:18
<u>Open Ages 15-50</u>		
<i>Honey Badger</i>	The Honey Badgers/Teresa	1:53:03
<u>Open Ages 50 And Over</u>		
<i>Scare Away Hunger</i>	ECHO, Inc./Pauline	2:44:25
<u>Businesses/Corporations</u>		
<i>Happy Happy Happy</i>	Interstate Van Lines, Inc/Dulla	1:39:78
<u>SURVIVOR</u>		
<i>Top Hat</i>	Interstate Van Lines, Inc.	0:59:60



Photos courtesy of Thomas Kinder. More photos on his website www.pixjrpics.com