

# Friends of Lake Accotink Park FLAP



ISSUE 01

MARCH 2019

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## NOTES FROM THE BOARD

Mary Keeser, President FLAP

We have been working very hard on several important projects, activities, efforts, and areas of interest, more information in this newsletter and on our social media. We have finalized our 2019 project and activates schedule, moved forward and established; Friends of Lake Accotink -FLAP as a Virginia corporation, tax ID, mailing address, bank account and are awaiting 501c3 Charity classification. We have also moved forward with the relocation of the Pollinator Garden. We will provide more information at our upcoming General membership meeting. Thank you to our FLAP Volunteers, who have made our success a reality, without YOU we could not be impactful. Please do encourage your neighbors, colleagues, friends and family to get involved and make a positive difference to your Lake Accotink Park. Critical to our overall success are our Committee Directors, members and volunteers. We need your talents, skills, and dedication to lead (a few hours a month) the following FLAP Committees: Stewardship, Recreation, Fundraising, and Special Projects. To volunteer send your contact information to [contact@flapaccotink.org](mailto:contact@flapaccotink.org). Thank you for being an active member of FLAP, together we can make a positive impact for our community and our Lake Accotink Park. See you on the trail.

## FLAP NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

The Friends of Lake Accotink Park (FLAP) newsletter is distributed quarterly 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, Carleigh Homeowners Association, Danbury Forest, Kings Park, North Springfield Civic Association, Oak Hill, Ravensworth Farm, Stonehaven, Springfield Civic Association, and West Springfield Civic Association.

## 2018-2020 FLAP Board Members

POSITION	NAME	e-Mail
President	Mary Keeser	president@flapaccotink.org
Vice President	Tony Vellucci	Vice.President@flapaccotink.org
Secretary	Jim Hickey	secretary@flapaccotink.org
Treasurer	Meghan Walker	treasurer@flapaccotink.org
Member At Large	Dave Gibson	memberAL@flapaccotink.org



<https://www.facebook.com/friendsoflakeaccotinkpark/>  
<https://www.twitter.com/accotinkfriends>  
<http://www.accotink.org/FLAP/>  
 STAY TUNED FOR NEW WEBSITE [flapaccotink.org](http://flapaccotink.org)  
 Contact@flapaccotink.org



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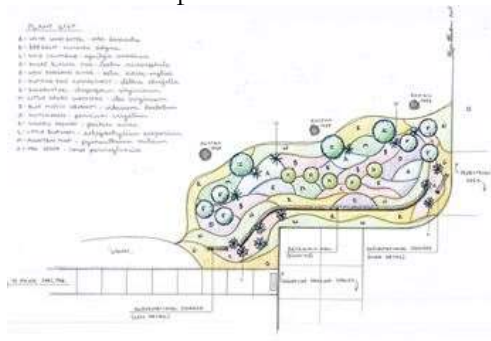
## OUR IMPACT

*Our Volunteers have helped to remove **TONS** of debris-trash from Lake Accotink marina, trails and woodlands. You are seeing our results!*



## Pollinator Garden

We have been working with FCPA, LAP leadership and our partner Merrifield Garden Center for several months now. We are pleased to report, we'll be relocating plants, trees and reading the soil on 6 April at the LAP Clean-Up. More to follow!



Merrifield Garden Team - David , Debbie and Michael

“Merrifield Garden Center is thrilled to be a part of this project! Michael, David and Debbie are all Northern Virginia natives and both David and Michael visit Lake Accotink regularly.”

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## CRITTER OF THE QUARTER

By Jim Hickey, FLAP Secretary



Have you seen a beaver in the lake or along the stream? You just witnessed the keystone species of the area. A keystone species helps define an entire ecosystem, and no other animal could take its place and have the same effect. Beavers help maintain woodlands by thinning out older trees and allowing young saplings to flourish. They also help create wetland areas that provide habitats for hundreds of other species. Wetlands are crucial to naturally removing pollutants from the water and absorbing carbon. They engineer nature to an extent exceeded only by humans. Beavers are great neighbors! As the largest rodent in North America, the beaver will grow to about 3.5 feet long, with the tail adding up to another 12 inches. Beavers can live over twenty years and grow to over fifty pounds. Beavers mate for life, and both the female and male will help raise their young. Although their eyesight is poor, they have good hearing, touch and smell. Powerful swimmers, they can go through the water at five miles an hour with the help of webbed feet. Their wide tail serves as a rudder. Slapping it on the water creates a loud noise, which can scare predators and warn other beavers. They can stay under for up to fifteen minutes. The best times for viewing are dawn and dusk, as beavers are primarily nocturnal. So if you're lucky enough to see one, say "Hi, neighbor," and tip your hat to the animal that works tirelessly to improve our park. The American Indian understood the value of the beaver and referred to them as the "sacred center" of the land. Workers at wildlife rehab centers who care for sick and injured beavers find them to be gentle, reasoning creatures who sometimes seem to enjoy practical jokes. They really are industrious – "busy as a beaver" is more than a cliché. In the Canadian province of Alberta the longest beaver dam ever can be found. It is almost 2800 feet long and can be seen from space. A beaver's teeth grow throughout their life. They are vegetarians, though, using their large incisors for taking down trees. They rarely overpopulate an area, and will stay in a particular location for years if enough food is available. April 7 is International Beaver Day, but we can celebrate our furry friends anytime we want.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS - EVENTS

<https://www.facebook.com/friendsoflakeaccotinkpark/>

### APRIL 2019

4/6: FCPA Watershed cleanup

4/27: FCPA Core marina area  
cleanup

4/28 Metro Run & Walk  
Accotink 6K

### MAY 2019

5/11: FCPA Spring Fling at  
the Marina

### JUNE 2019

6/2: FCPA Cardboard Boat  
Regatta

6/27: FLAP General  
Membership Meeting

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## LAKE ACCOTINK STAFF NOTES

By Joshua Smith, Lake Accotink Park Manager



Lake Accotink Staff and Volunteers are staying busy during our off season preparing new programs and our facilities for the upcoming season.

**Operations:** Park Hours will be expanding March 10<sup>th</sup>, new hours will be 7:00 AM – 7:30 PM  
The Marina is scheduled to open May 4<sup>th</sup> with new operation hours;  
Weekends/Holidays 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM, Weekday hours, 2:00 PM – 8:00 PM, begin June 17<sup>th</sup>

### Programming and Events:

Registration for spring programs and **summer camp** has begun! Popular offerings like our Dog Obedience Series, Mountain Biking classes, and Kayak classes are already starting to fill up don't miss your chance to register. Lake Accotink has expanded its summer camp offerings and now has truly unique summer camp experiences for your child(ren). Find a complete list of programs, events and camps on our website, <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lake-accotink/classes-camps>.

Two of the Lake Accotink's biggest events are just around the corner!

**30<sup>th</sup> Annual Cardboard Boat Regatta:** Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019. 7:00 AM – TBD

**Spring Fling:** May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019. 1:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Registration: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lake-accotink/>

### Volunteer Events:

- **Lake Accotink Park – Core Area Clean-up**  
Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019. 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM  
Lake Accotink Park Core Area  
Registration: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lake-accotink/volunteer>
- **Cardboard Boat Regatta** (see above)

### Facility Maintenance and Improvements:

Ongoing and Upcoming projects including;

- Preparing for maintenance work on Carousel to begin
- Completed relocation of rentable picnic areas
- Preparing for relocation of pollinator garden and cleanout of the traffic circle at the marina
- Refurbishing carousel horses
- Working on solutions for the debris at the top of the spillway
- New shade structures for rentable birthday party areas
- New boat storage solutions
- Information Kiosk around the trails and in the core area have been updated

Need to report damage or maintenance concerns? Please call the visitor center, 703-569-3464. We appreciate your support!

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## FAIRFAX COUNTY - FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY NOTES



### MASTER PLAN UPDATE

*By Andrea L. Dorlester, AICP, CPM Manager, Park Planning Branch Fairfax County Park Authority*

“The engineering consultant firm (WSSI) has completed their study and the Park Authority Director, Kirk Kincannon will be meeting soon with County Executive Bryan Hill to discuss the study results and next steps. The timing for a public meeting to discuss the study results will be later in the spring, with a re-start of the park master planning effort to follow after that. Adam Wynn, Senior Landscape Architect and Project Manager, is taking over the reins from Gayle Hooper to lead the master planning effort.”

*FLAP NOTE: Adam will be joining us at our General Membership meeting 28 March to provide an update.*

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/planning-development/lakeaccotink>

### *FLAP Vice President, Tony Vellucci*



#### DPWES Provides Lake Accotink Update

On March 4th 2019, representatives from Friends of Accotink Creek (FACC), Friends of Lake Accotink Park (FLAP) and Save Lake Accotink (SLA) met with Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) staff to receive a briefing of a final report provided by Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc, (WSSI) regarding Lake Accotink lake sustainability. Prior to delving into the report, the group spent about 45 minutes discussing fish passage options around the dam with a Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) representative, Mr. Allan Weaver who

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noted that a fish passage route was not a state law requirement for dams over 22 feet (the Lake Accotink dam is 28 feet), and that the preferred method for fish passage was dam removal.

(Continued)

Mr. Weaver provided significant information regarding the issue including several examples of fish passage options that had been implemented in other parts of the state and country. Regarding Lake Accotink sustainability, in 2017, WSSI had been contracted for by the Park Authority to develop management options to operate the lake considering the excessive sediment loads deposited each year. To continue with the careful consideration of what is the best option moving forward, additional study of the most feasible options had been requested by DPWES, especially after several FCPA-sponsored public community meetings were held where community sentiment was voiced to both FCPA and DPWES staff regarding retaining the lake. The briefing had been provided to the Fairfax DPWES Provides Lake Accotink Update County Park Authority Board 19 January and was briefed to district supervisors shortly thereafter. The report discusses common requirements and/or options that are involved with the dredging operation, regardless of the specifics of how it is conducted, followed by more specific information on scenarios for the actual performance of the dredging, along with associated costs.

There were three key takeaways from the briefing: First, upon more detailed analysis, the installation of upstream beaver dams in a cascading fashion (Management Option D) was removed from consideration due to the extent of environmental impacts with very limited benefit. Second, due to the size of the Accotink watershed, staff assessed that forebays considered in Option C (Dredge With Forebays) would be ineffectual since they could not be sized for the expanse of the Accotink watershed. As such, full dredges would be required every 15 years or so. They noted that forebays at other lakes such as Huntsman Lake, Woodglen Lake and Royal Lake were effective at capturing sediment because the lakes were rightly sized for the watershed.

This is not the case in the Accotink Watershed. Third, staff assessed that a permanent pipeline would be required to preclude the transport of sediment by trucks through neighborhoods, and that a primary location could be along the cross county trail from Accotink to Wakefield Park. DPWES staff presented the various options, with cost data having much greater fidelity than previous efforts. A detailed description of the options, costs and impacts to the community is beyond the scope of this article, however the Park Authority will soon be advertising a community meeting to make the information known to interested stakeholders. The options, costs and impacts may cause many to reconsider which option they will want to support, so attendance at the meeting to truly understand the issues to make an informed decision is paramount to all who have an interest in Lake Accotink.

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## SOUND OFF

By Karole Nielsen

### Pet Waste Management Project in Lake Accotink Park

The volunteer effort to maintain the pet waste stands along the Lake Accotink trail continues!

In 2007, four pet waste stands were erected on a two mile stretch of the trail immediately behind the Ravensworth Farm homes. The stands were the Eagle Scout project of a scout who lived in Ravensworth Farm, worked at the Park, and was a member of Boy Scout Troop 991 based in Ravensworth Elementary School. The initial funds to erect the stands were provided by the Ravensworth Farm Civic Association. Continued funding has been a collaborative effort with a grant from the 495 Express Lane Grant Program and funding from Friends of Lake Accotink Park, the Ravensworth Farm Civic Association and private donors.

The stands have utilized on average seven cases of bags annually. Seven cases represent 22,400 pet waste bags. The Food and Drug Administration estimates that a dog excretes 0.75 pounds, 12 ounces, of waste per day.

([www.clearchoicescleanwater.org](http://www.clearchoicescleanwater.org)) In a conservative estimate, if you calculated 2 ounces of waste per bag, the stands have prevented 2800 pounds, over one ton, of pet waste from entering the park ecosystem every year. (Judging from the size and weight of the average dog I see on the trail this is a very, very conservative estimate!!!!)

While the management of pet waste is a significant environmental concern, it is also part of a greater community effort to protect our parks and preserve the water quality of local lakes and streams that feed into the Potomac River watershed.

If you would like to make a financial contribution, funds can be donated to Friends of Lake Accotink Park. Please specify that you wish your donation to be used for the pet stands.

Thanks to all who love and support this beautiful natural resource!



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## YOUNG FLAPers



By Eryn VanBrunt

We've lived by the Lake my entire life; I have participated in the monthly cleanups since September and am now helping to spearhead the Marina cleanup efforts to support the expansion of volunteer sites. I'm in my last year at Ravensworth Elementary.

*The Lake*

*Still as nature*

*Joy of play*

*Peaceful trails*

*Full of energy*

*Celebrations and parties*

*Together or alone*

*Something for everything*

*Lake Accotink*

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Landon VanBrunt's (9 years Old) painting of our family playing at the playground at Lake Accotink's Marina in 2018





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## COMMUNICATIONS and OUTREACH

### *Positions OPEN – Volunteer(s) needed*

POSITION	NAME	e-Mail
Membership	Elissa Myers	membership@flapaccotink.org
Community Outreach and Communications	OPEN	communications@flapaccotink.org
Stewardship		stewardship@flapaccotink.org
Recreation		recreation@flapaccotink.org
Fundraising		fundraising @flapaccotink.org
Special Projects		specialprojects @flapaccotink.org

***\*\*Please Submit your articles for next quarters FLAP Newsletter “Sound Off” and “Young FLAPers” sections to: [communications@flapaccotink.org](mailto:communications@flapaccotink.org)***