



Friends of Lake Accotink Park Newsletter

July 2022

NOTES FROM THE FLAP BOARD

By Mary Keeser, FLAP President

I'd like to lead off by reminding all that our Lake Accotink Park turns 60 years old on Aug. 26, 2022; we will be celebrating this on the 27th of August at Lake Accotink Park. We need volunteers to help make our anniversary celebration a success (see link in "Events" section below).

It continues to be my honor to serve as FLAP president and to work with our dedicated board and committee volunteer members. Our partnership with FCPA and its stakeholders create our extended stakeholder organization: Chris Goldbecker, FCPA managed parks section manager, continues to provide key guidance and mentorship. We are very fortunate to have Dan Grulke as our permanent Lake Accotink Park manager. Together LAP/FLAP have continued our steadfast commitment to ensuring we accomplish our partnership commitments and our mission: "Protect, restore, preserve, and educate all concerning the natural, historical, and cultural resources of Lake Accotink Park." It has only been through their mentorship, patience, commitment, and selflessness that we have developed, initiated, executed, and continued or completed several important projects, activities, programs, and efforts.

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.

Our community volunteer members selflessly give of their time and talents to improve the park; these legions of volunteers eagerly secure their boots, gloves, safety vests, trash tools, bags, and can-do attitudes monthly to make a positive impact. Many of our volunteers have found themselves recruiting classmates, schools, friends, neighbors, colleagues, and even strangers to join our monthly Lake



Accotink Park clean-ups and Pollinator Garden care and classes.

Together as a community our ability to ensure positive impacts is endless. We accomplish this through educating the community concerning the harmful impacts of trash and pollutants, along with the many positive impacts of clean waterways, land, and pollinator gardens. This is all done through encouraging outreach and educating our community volunteers, including our Young FLAPer program that engages local high schools and our community youth to attend our many volunteer activities, competitions, and classes.

We could not have accomplished and continue the magnitude of these impacts without our partnership with FCPA, Lake Accotink Park, and our community of dedicated volunteers and donors.

Thanks—see you on the trail!

OUR IMPACT

We are all privileged to meet and work with our amazing FLAP volunteers and members through the seasons, rolling up our sleeves and working side-by-side to accomplish our missions. Thank you again for supporting FLAP's efforts of taking care of our Lake Accotink Park and educating others to do the same.

We are thrilled to announce that for the first time Friends of Lake Accotink Park has been honored with the Harold L. Strickland Partnership and Collaboration Award, which recognizes significant service to Fairfax County Parks.

On behalf of FLAP, we would like to thank and dedicate this award recognition to all of our amazing, hardworking, energetic, selfless, motivated volunteers. It is truly only through your giving of your time and talents that we are able to accomplish our mission.

The Harold L. Strickland Partnership and Collaboration Award

FLAP accomplishes its mission via eco-savvy and educational projects, programs, and outreach efforts in collaboration with neighbors and visitors alike. Together we create a positive impact on the park and ecosystem. FLAP also coordinates, when appropriate, with local schools, other non-profits, private industry, and government organizations—including our MOU with FCPA. This inclusive approach creates an inviting atmosphere and outstanding volunteer experience, which encourages others to join our team.

FLAP's volunteer activities are the regular monthly clean-ups, care and maintenance of our 11 dog waste stations (installed along the trail), Margaret Kinder Educational Pollinator Garden care/watering as well as the monthly "Exploring the Garden" classes, and other care and educational programs/projects in partnership with Lake Accotink Park.

We have also submitted our Young FLAPer Yasmine Marrero for consideration for the Elly Doyle Park Service Youth Award for her extraordinary contributions.

The Elly Doyle Park Service Youth Award

In 2019, Yasmine began her volunteer service with FLAP as a monthly trail clean-up volunteer. She quickly realized that FLAP's clean-up effort fit with her passion as a steward of the environment. Yasmine took that commitment a step further by agreeing to take an increased role by leading (director) the Young FLAPers

committee (it's main focus is on energizing our youth to get involved in our many environmentally focused Lake Accotink Park projects and programs). She engaged other young people in caring for not only Lake Accotink, but the greater Chesapeake Bay ecosystem and the health of our environment. Yasmine challenges her fellow high school students to get more involved, earn service hours, and remove pollutants from Lake Accotink's 493-acre park during monthly clean-ups as well as quarterly "Trash Off: A High School Showdown" competitions.



UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

National Night Out

WHEN: Tuesday, Aug. 2, 6-8 p.m.

WHERE: North Springfield Swim Club

Stop by the FLAP tent to receive free pollinator gardening tips and more.

60th Anniversary of Lake Accotink Park

WHEN: Aug 27, 11 a.m.–4 p.m.

WHERE: All around Lake Accotink marina

Full day of FREE educational/interactive /fun displays, events, activities, speakers, and more. Contact@flapaccotink.org.



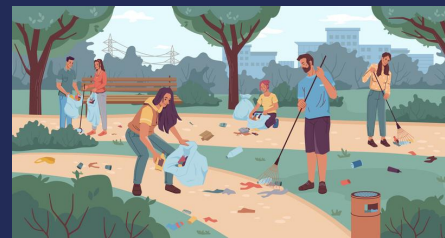
Caring For & Exploring the Pollinator Garden

WHEN: 2nd Sunday of every month

TIME: 10:30 a.m.

WHERE: Lake Accotink Park Margaret Kinder Pollinator Garden—Adjacent to the Marina

Our experts will guide you through the pollinators and pollinator plants, and starting and maintaining your own pollinator garden. Work



Monthly FLAP Lake Accotink Park Clean Up

WHEN: 2nd Sunday of every month

TIME: 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

WHERE: Sign in at Lake Accotink Marina

Pick up debris carelessly dumped, check and refill bags in dog waste stations, trim vines, and more. We'll provide gloves, FLAP information, clean-up

alongside the experts as they care for the plants, water, and clean up. We'll provide the tools and gloves, or you can bring your own.

Sign Up

bags, tools, maps, and more. You will also be loaned a FLAP safety vest. Volunteer 4 times and receive your very own safety vest to personalize!

Sign Up

A Note From Braddock District Supervisor James Walkinshaw

Dear Friends,

First, I want to thank the Friends of Lake Accotink Park for your work to protect and preserve our beautiful lake and park.

I'm excited that our community is now enjoying Braddock Nights, our free summer entertainment series, and I'm thrilled that we have returned to Lake Accotink for the first time since 2019. This year's Braddock Nights at Lake Accotink Park line-up includes bands like the U.S. Army Blues, the Annandale Brass Ensemble, and the Nitehawks Swing Band. Braddock Nights are held at the Large Pavilion on Fridays at 7:30 p.m. I hope to see you there and thank you for your stewardship of the park—your work makes it the perfect venue!

Last month, I hosted the inaugural Braddock Bark at Lake Accotink Park and it was a huge success, bringing Braddock residents and their furry friends to the field by the McLaren Sargent Pavilion. It was also a great opportunity to promote FLAP and I appreciate Yasmine Marrero, director of Young FLAPers, making a perfect pitch for the community to get involved in FLAP's efforts.

Finally, it is amazing to think that Lake Accotink Park is marking its 60-year anniversary! I can't wait to join FLAP on August 27 to celebrate this momentous occasion. This treasure of a lake and the park that surrounds it would not be the recreational gifts that they are without a community of dedicated conservationists, volunteers, and residents to keep it alive. Thank you, FLAP, for continuing to preserve this beautiful space.

If you would like to stay on top of local community news, county resources, and important information, sign up for my newsletter and follow me on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram at linktr.ee/JRWalkinshaw. Enjoy the remainder of your summer!

Yours in service,

James R. Walkinshaw
Braddock District Supervisor



ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



SATURDAY, AUGUST 27, 2022
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Complimentary Amusements, Marina and Programs

11 a.m.-Noon
Opening Ceremonies, Guest Speakers

Noon-4 p.m.
Events, Workshops, Exhibitors

Plus...

- Games/Activities
- Vendors
- Food Trucks
- Speakers
- Nature Walks
- Fishing
- Raffles



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Lake Accotink Park
7500 Accotink Park Road • Springfield
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lake-accotink/



703-324-8563 • TTY Va. Relay 711

Lake Accotink Park 60th Anniversary Celebration Approaches

Come celebrate six decades of excellence at Lake Accotink Park. It was Aug. 26, 1962, when the park first opened. A daylong event will be held Saturday, Aug. 27, 2022, for the 60th anniversary of Lake Accotink Park. Members of the public are invited from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. for special cost-free activities. Bring your family for classes, demonstrations, historical guided experiences, and much more. Lake Accotink Park is located at 7500 Accotink Park Road, Springfield, VA.

Learn about all this 493-acre park has to offer. The celebration begins with remarks from local officials, including the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, the Park Authority Board, and members of Friends of Lake Accotink Park (FLAP). The day will be filled with fun and adventure for all. Consider playing miniature golf, a ride

on the paddle boats or historic carousel, taking a fishing lesson, or a walk on the trails. Start the day with remarks from local officials as they retell the story of the park's creation, its importance to the community, and why it's an invaluable environmental resource. Enjoy food, adventure, discoveries, and nature walks. Explore pollinators and the pollinator garden, and learn how trees, water, contaminates, and other items affect our environment. **Volunteers are needed to assist with set up and throughout the day on Saturday in a variety of capacities.** It's a fabulous volunteer opportunity for service hours and helping the Park Authority achieve its mission.

For more information about the Lake Accotink Park 60th Anniversary celebration, contact the Public Information Office at 703-324-8662 or send an email to parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov.

For more information about the park, [visit Lake Accotink Park](#) or call 703-569-3464.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
TO SUPPORT
60th Anniversary of Lake Accotink Park Celebration

WHEN: 27 August 2022
VOLUNTEERS: Many varied positions 8am-5pm (shifts)
WHERE: Lake Accotink Park
Register: https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/#/opp_details/187946



Lake Accotink Park
60th Anniversary 2022

ALL VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE LIMITED EDITION 60th Anniversary T-Shirt



Stay Connected Text FLAP to #22828
Tax Deductible Donations: contact@flapaccotink.org

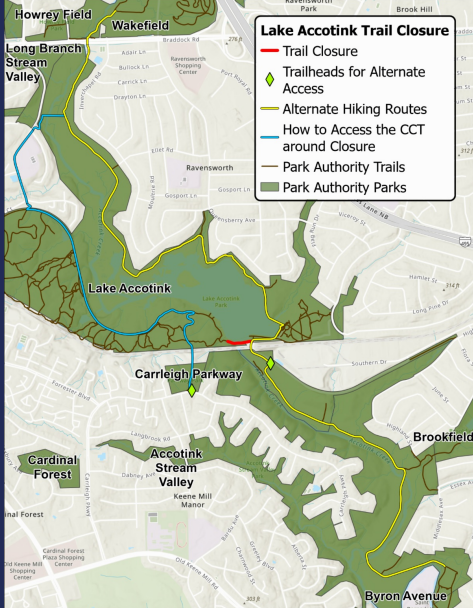
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PARK UPDATES



Lake Accotink Dredging

*By Charles Smith, Branch Chief,
Fairfax County Department of
Public Works and Environmental*



County staff and elected officials are working to finalize the location for dredge material processing. Once that location is finalized, staff from the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services and our consultant will continue with the development of a conceptual design to complete the dredging project. Once work on the conceptual design begins, we will update the schedule on the [project web page](#).

Dam Stream Crossing

By Heather Lynch, Dam Stream Crossing Project Manager

The Fairfax County Park Authority has started the construction of the Lake Accotink Dam Stream Crossing Project (LADSC) at Lake Accotink Park. The contractor, Franco's Liberty Bridge Inc., has mobilized and the site is active. Active construction began June 6 and is anticipated to be completed in the first quarter of 2023. Please expect occasional construction traffic entering and exiting the Accotink Park Road entrance, and please note a portion of the Lake Accotink trail has been closed near the dam stream crossing as indicated in red above—there is no passage to the marina from the Carleigh Parkway side of the trail.

For more information, please contact project manager Heather Lynch at heather.lynych@fairfaxcounty.gov, or contact the Public Information Office at 703-324-8662 or via parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov.

YOUNG FLAPers

Recap: Third Quarterly FLAP Trash Off—A High School Showdown!

By Yasmine Marrero, Young FLAPers Director





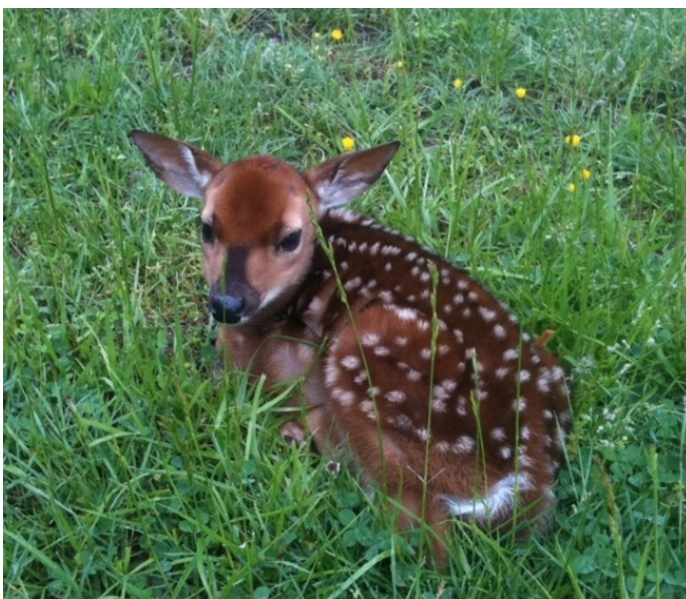
On April 24th, the third FLAP Trash Off: A High School Showdown! competition was held. Four teams from Annandale, Edison, Hayfield, and Lewis High Schools competed to help keep the park clean by collecting trash and other pollutants from the park's almost 500 acres.

The Trash Off is a quarterly competition, during the school year, to encourage local students to get involved with environmentalism. Removing trash from Lake Accotink and the surrounding grounds is essential in maintaining the ecosystem's health and beauty. The first- place winner of the final 2021–2022 school year competition was the team from John R. Lewis High School.

Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all volunteers for your efforts! The next Trash Off will be held in the fall of the 2022–2023 school year. In the meantime, if you want to get involved in the Young FLAPers committee's other efforts, email youngflappers@flapaccotink.org. We'd love to hear from you!

LAKE ACCOTINK WILDLIFE CORNER

Fawning Season—Don't Be a Fawn Kidnapper!



*By Katherine E. Edwards, Ph.D.,
Certified Wildlife Biologist, Fairfax
County Police Department Wildlife
Management Specialist*

Fawning season is here and calls to the county's Animal Protection Police and Wildlife Management Specialist about white-tailed deer fawns on residential property have begun. White-tailed deer fawns are born April through July. Newborn fawns are often found on lawns and in flower beds, gardens, bushes, or areas of tall grass near homes. It is common for people to

encounter white-tailed deer fawns motionless and without their mother, then mistakenly assume they are orphaned or abandoned. In almost all cases, fawns are only temporarily left by their mothers for protection and just need to be left alone. The mother may be out of sight but is likely nearby.

Young fawns are “hidlers” and will not try to run away when they are approached. If you encounter a fawn, do not handle or disturb it; this causes unnecessary stress for

the animal. If you have already handled or “rescued” a fawn, and less than 24 hours have passed, you should return it immediately to the exact place where you found it. Its mother will be looking for it.

You should only seek help for a fawn if it is showing obvious signs of injury or distress, such as wandering and crying incessantly, has swollen eyes, shows signs of trauma such as visible wounds or broken bones, or if there is a dead lactating doe nearby. If an animal is displaying these signs, contact a [licensed wildlife rehabilitator](#), veterinarian, or the Animal Protection Police (police non-emergency number: 703-691-2131) for further assistance and instruction. Do not feed the fawn or attempt to care for it yourself.

Rabid Coyote Incident at Lake Accotink

By Katherine E. Edwards, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist, Fairfax County Police Department Wildlife Management Specialist

The Fairfax County Police Department responded to the Lake Accotink area on Saturday, June 4, after three people and two dogs were bitten by a coyote. The decision was made by the Fairfax County Park Authority, with full support of the Police Department, to close the park out of an abundance of caution, given the reports of multiple injuries and the larger wildlife species involved, to ensure the safety of park patrons, staff, and officers. A search for the coyote was conducted through Saturday evening but the animal was not located. The search was continued Sunday morning, June 5, in the 7900 block of Carrleigh Parkway following additional reports of a coyote displaying unusual behavior by biting tires. The coyote was killed on Sunday by a police officer after it bit him while participating in the search. The coyote was transported to the Fairfax Health Department laboratory for examination. Rabies was strongly suspected based on behavior and was laboratory-confirmed on Monday, June 6, afternoon.

The recent incident at Lake Accotink has understandably created concerns for many residents about wildlife and public health and safety, and we wanted to provide additional information on this subject. The rabid coyote involved in the attacks at Lake Accotink was a young male (first year or young adult). Based on its age, it was old enough to have dispersed from its parents and family group and likely lacked a mate or established territory due to its young age and the nature of coyote social dynamics. There were no other coyotes observed with the individual. FCPA ecologists are monitoring the site for other wildlife exhibiting unusual behavior, but no other suspect-rabid animals have been detected on camera.

Rabies is a disease caused by a virus that is nearly 100% fatal in mammals, including humans. The virus is present in some wild animals and can be spread to pets and humans. The rabies virus is found in the saliva and central nervous tissue of an infected animal. The virus is usually spread through a bite or scratch, but also can be passed along when an infected animal’s saliva or central nervous tissue enters an open wound, mouth, nose, or eyes of another mammal.

Rabies is endemic throughout the East Coast, including Fairfax County and all our surrounding counties. It is consistently present in wildlife populations but at lower, manageable levels. Within Fairfax County, there are multiple wildlife reservoir hosts for the disease, including raccoons, foxes, skunks, and bats. Approximately 20–50 animals are confirmed as rabid by laboratory testing throughout the county annually. To date this year, Fairfax County has had 18 positive cases of rabies out of 119 tested animals.

Coyotes are well-established within Fairfax County and most do not come in conflict with people or pets. Coyote attacks on humans are rare, as are incidents of coyotes with rabies. Since 2012, there have only been a few cases of coyotes with rabies documented in Virginia, according to records by the Virginia Department of Health (VDH).

Animals with rabies may act normally during the early stages of the disease, making it difficult to know if the animal is infected. As the disease progresses, animals often show changes in behavior. Warning signs that may indicate a rabid animal include disorientation, a stumbling or staggering gait, erratic wandering or circling, excessive drooling, unprovoked aggression or animals that appear tame, self-mutilation, biting or snapping at imaginary objects, difficulty swallowing, paralysis, and/or seizures.

Steps to Protect Yourself, Your Family, and Pets

- **Vaccinate your pets for rabies and keep vaccinations up to date.** Rabies vaccination is required by law in Virginia for dogs and cats 4 months of age and older. The Fairfax County Animal Shelter offers low-cost vaccination clinics on various dates throughout the year.
- **Limit exposure to wild animals** by keeping supervision over your pets when outdoors, obey the county leash law, and do not let pets roam free.
- **Avoid contact with wild animals.** Do not pet or handle wild animals. Do not keep wild animals as pets.
- **Do not feed wildlife** and remove food sources on your property that may attract wild animals or cause wildlife to concentrate.
- **If bitten or scratched by an animal that might have rabies, wash the wound thoroughly** with soap and water and seek medical attention right away.
- **Report animal bites**, animals that are acting strangely (including domestic animals), or altercations between wild and domestic animals to Fairfax County's Animal Protection Police at 703-691-2131.

Fairfax County has one of the most robust rabies programs in the nation. The current rabies program includes active, daily surveillance for potential rabies exposures; oversight of vaccination treatments to patients; close coordination between the Fairfax County Health Department and the Fairfax County Police Department's Animal Services Division to review exposure reports; preventative strategies such as low-cost rabies clinics; and extensive outreach with veterinarians, doctors, and other health-care professionals on rabies prevention and control. For more information, pvisit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/rabies>.



Critter of the Quarter: Green Heron

By Dave Gibson, FLAP Board Member at Large

Several species of heron have found niches and prospered at Lake Accotink Park. In addition to the signature Great Blue heron, our lake and surrounding woods host Snowy Egrets, night herons, the Little Blue, and the less prominent Green Heron. Greens don't catch their prey on the fly, but are best described as shoreline fishers. From the water's edge they quietly lurk until a small fish, a nymph, or a bug comes into range of their long, sharp bill.

About the size of a crow, its average weight is around 8.5 pounds with a wingspan of 26 inches. At 16-18 inches in length, their stocky build becomes even more compact when the neck is pulled in. It extends typically in flight or when it propels the head forward for a meal. Green herons typically dine on small fish, crayfish, and insects—both aquatic and land-based.

Pairs typically produce six to eight pale green eggs that require about three weeks of incubation before hatching. Nests are often made of sticks at about 20 feet above ground.

It is one of the few birds that make and use tools to capture their prey. They are particularly good at turning bread crusts into lures that attract little fish and insect nymphs. They can be aggressively territorial in defending fishing or nesting areas.

Greens may not be plentiful, but their range covers the whole of the continental USA east of the Mississippi River and along the Pacific Northwest coast. Most are migratory.

Bear Activity in Fairfax County

*By Katherine E. Edwards, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist,
Fairfax County Police Department Wildlife Management
Specialist*

Each spring and summer, several bears move throughout Fairfax County and wind up in residential areas. Parkland and wooded areas provide green space corridors between residential areas which wildlife use as travel pathways as they disperse and seek food. Most of the sightings are of young, yearling bears (~16-18 months old) that are independent from their mother.



During this time of increased activity, it is important for homeowners to secure all potential food sources to reduce bear encounters on their property. These sources may be your garbage, compost pile, barbecue grills, birdseed, and pet food stored outside. In Virginia, it is illegal to feed bears, whether deliberate or inadvertent, on both public and private lands. Intentionally feeding bears or allowing them to access food on residential property rewards bears and teaches them to approach homes to look for food instead of natural foraging.

Bears attracted to residential areas due to accessible food can cause conflicts, including the habituation of bears to people and serious property damage. Some bears have even ventured onto porches and decks of homes in their search for food. Bears in Fairfax County have contributed to property damage and losses including destruction of bird feeders, beehives (apiaries), garbage cans, outdoor sheds, patio furniture, chickens/chicken coops, and outdoor decorations.

Take the following steps to avoid attracting black bears near your residence:

- **Secure garbage.** Keep in a locked shed or inside until collected or use a bear-resistant container.
- **Remove birdfeeders.** For tips on attracting birds, not bears: <https://bearwise.org/how-to-attract-birds-not-bears/>.
- **Pick up pet food.** Feed pets only what they will eat in a single feeding or feed them indoors. Remove all uneaten food. Do not leave food out overnight.
- **Clean up porches/decks.** Clean grills, remove any potential food sources, and remember that a screened-in porch is not a “secure” storage area from a bear’s point of view.
- **Never leave food, trash, or pet/livestock feed inside your vehicle.**

Most bears passing through the area do not pose a threat to public safety and will move on if they fail to find food. We ask that residents do their part to keep bears wild by removing food attractants on their property.

Residents can contact the Department of Wildlife Resources through the toll-free Wildlife Conflict Helpline at 1-855-571-9003 to report any concerns about bears in their area and receive additional advice on preventing and mitigating wildlife conflicts.

Submit your articles with photos for consideration in our next FLAP quarterly newsletter to publisher@flapaccotink.org. Please send by the middle of Sept. or Dec.

Friends of Lake Accotink Park Board

Position	Name	Email
President	Mary Keeser	president@flapaccotink.org
Vice President	Jennifer Williamson	vice.president@flapaccotink.org
Secretary	Jim Hickey	secretary@flapaccotink.org
Treasurer	Bob Neilson	treasurer@flapaccotink.org
Member at Large	Dave Gibson	memberAL@flapaccotink.org

We're accepting candidates for board positions, as well as various other committees and special projects. It is your Lake Accotink Park—help make a difference for about an hour a month! Send an email to contact@flapaccotink.org.



Donate to FLAP

Text FLAP to 22828 to receive monthly updates.

Friends of Lake Accotink Park | FLAP P.O. Box 1203, Springfield, VA 22151

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