



FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



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For Immediate Release

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Come Celebrate Frying Pan Farm Park's 50th Birthday

Frying Pan Farm Park is many things to many people. For 50 years the 1930s-era working farm has provided a welcome refuge from the surrounding suburbia through a unique blend of natural, agrarian, historical, recreational, educational, and equestrian cultures. The Fairfax County Park Authority is marking the half-century milestone with a birthday party on Saturday, January 29, 2011, from noon to 3 p.m. in the park's visitor center. Admission to the event is free.

Activities will include wagon rides, children's party games, hot cocoa, birthday cake, a preview of 2011 events, and s'mores at an outdoor warming fire. Visitors are encouraged to help the park meet its goal of adding 50 new members to the Friends of Frying Pan Farm Park, the park's advocacy group. Public interest and support will ensure that the legacy of community recreation, preservation, and education at Frying Pan Farm Park continues for another 50 years.

In 1958, Joseph Beard, a local resident and the county's agricultural extension agent, approached the Park Authority about preserving the Floris School property and buildings for use as a park and youth center. The 4.5-acre parcel was donated to the Park Authority in 1960 by the Fairfax County School Board. The park became known as Frying Pan beginning in 1961. It was run by a citizen advisory group until the 1970s, when paid staff took over operations. Today Frying Pan Farm Park includes 136 acres of preserved agricultural land, a blacksmith shop, equestrian facilities, an interpretive exhibit about the county's agrarian past, nature trails, and a picnic pavilion. The park welcomes over 400,000 visitors each year. An antique carousel will be installed near the playground this spring.

Benefits of a free membership to the Friends of Frying Pan Farm Park include receiving:

- The latest information about special events, classes, programs, and equestrian news
- Farm animal birth announcements and photos
- The Friends of Frying Pan newsletter, *The Sizzle*
- Invitations to attend a Friends only event and meet other Frying Pan supporters

Frying Pan Farm Park Visitor Center is located at 2709 West Ox Road in Herndon, VA.

For more information or to R.S.V.P., call the park at 703-437-9101.

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If accommodations and/or alternative formats are needed, please call (703) 324-8563, at least 10 working days in advance of the registration deadline or event. TTY (703) 803-3354.