



# FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



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*For Immediate Release*

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## Great Falls Grange Celebrates Newfound Accessibility

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this public assembly hall was built in 1929, a product of the Grange Movement which swept rural America shortly after the Civil War. The Grange was built as a symbol of commitment to community involvement and progress, and has been a meeting and special event site throughout its history. However, if a resident with a disability wanted to join in any of the events held in the facility, special accommodations had to be arranged ahead of time in order to enable the patron to attend. Both the building and the grounds were inaccessible to residents with disabilities and difficult to access for many elderly residents.

Those barriers to full participation at this de facto community center for Great Falls residents have now been addressed. The Great Falls Grange, owned by the Fairfax County Park Authority now provides several ADA compliant features greatly increasing accessibility and a celebration to mark the occasion is scheduled for Saturday, March 7, 2015 at 10 a.m.

“I am pleased I was able to obtain funding to move this project forward,” noted Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust. “The Grange is a valuable community asset and an important part of the history of Great Falls. It should be accessible to all Great Falls residents, and now it is.”

While this was not a full building renovation ADA improvements to the Grange Hall include an addition of an ADA compliant unisex bathroom, vertical platform wheelchair lift installation and associated electrical upgrades. Improvements were also made to the parking areas and walking routes around the entrance of the building. Additional park trail ADA enhancements are scheduled to continue until the spring. Making these types of improvements to an historic structure required careful planning and construction techniques that allowed for the improvements but preserved the historic nature of the building. The total project value associated with the building renovation as well as the site accessibility improvements is approximately \$503,000. Supervisor Foust obtained \$350,000 from County carry-over funds and the balance was funded by the Park Authority.

The community is invited to join in a brief ribbon cutting ceremony with remarks from local dignitaries. The Farmers Market will be in session as well and seasonal tastings will be available. The Grange is located at 9818 Georgetown Pike in Great Falls, VA. For more information please call 703-324-8662.

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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.