



# FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



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*For Immediate Release*

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## Park Authority Marks 65 Years of Making Parks Count

The Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) turns 65 this year. That's 65 years of making connections with our many neighbors, friends and supporters; educating generations of kids about nature, history and how to play sports, swim, and golf, keeping adults of all ages active and preserving open space and historic places. That is why parks count and it's something we can all celebrate!

Join us as we mark 65 years of making parks count! Here's how: Between now and the end of the year, the Park Authority will feature anniversary promotions, events and programs linked to this celebration. Our plans include publication of an historic agency timeline, a holiday festival at Frying Pan Farm Park, system-wide summer specials and an official salute during National Recreation and Parks month.

The Park Authority was created by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on December 5, 1950 under a provision of the Virginia Code. That legislative action marked the formal beginning of the county's park and recreation system which over the years has evolved into a mosaic of open space and recreational opportunities. In 1951, the Park Authority received its first land donation which later became Eakin Park. Four years later the Authority owned nine parks on 92 acres of land. Sixty-five years later, parks count over 23,300 acres! Voters have continuously shown their support for parks since 1959 when the first Park Bond was approved. Through the support of the Board of Supervisors and the far-sightedness of county residents, 12 park bond referenda have been approved since, providing over \$400 million in funding for capital projects and land acquisition.

From its humble beginnings, the Park Authority's vision of a green future and the strong belief that Fairfax County residents would benefit greatly from a diverse and robust park system inspired officials to create the Park Authority. Over the past 65 years, the Park Authority has been true to its dual mission: to provide recreational opportunity and to preserve and protect natural and cultural resources in Fairfax County. Today, the Park Authority cares for 420 parks. Over the years, the Park Authority has developed a system filled with very special places too numerous to list. Perhaps you have a favorite park, golf course, nature center or historic site, trail or RECenter? More than 16 million visitors come to the Fairfax County Park Authority system annually.

Fairfax County's park system has become a model for the entire nation. In 1983, 2002 and again in 2010, the Park Authority was singled out by the National Recreation and Park Association as the top system in the country and awarded the National Gold Medal. In 2008, FCPA achieved a perfect score in its quest for national accreditation by The Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) becoming one of only six accredited park and recreation agencies in Virginia. Currently there are 136 nationally accredited park systems nationwide.

For more information visit online, stay in touch via Facebook or Twitter or contact the Public Information Office at 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.