



Northern Virginia
Regional Park Authority

AGENCY OVERVIEW

ABOUT THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Comprised of six jurisdictions across Northern Virginia, NVRPA is a park agency unlike any others. It is a unique combination of conservation and entrepreneurship, urban and rural, cutting-edge technology and history. Likewise, its users are just as diverse. Members of any culture, any race, any age, religion or social background can be found at our parks on any given day. NVRPA's offerings reflect all of this: For every waterpark, there are large wide open spaces for picnicking, relaxing, or just general reflecting. For every golf course, there are thousands of acres of trees and protected waterfront. NVRPA owns historic property in the middle of a bustling urban center, a 45-mile long paved bike trail that bisects the entire region, and a full scale skeet and trap shooting center.

Perhaps what makes NVRPA so unique can be found in the difficulty in trying to explain exactly who we are. We are more than recreation. More than conservation. More than education. More than a destination. We are the best of what defines Northern Virginia as a region.

We are diversity, in our very makeup, our clientele, our offerings.

We are the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.

To learn more about this amazing agency, read on. Or visit www.nvrpa.org today, and discover for yourself who we are.

NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY



AGENCY OVERVIEW



2013 Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA) - Second Printing
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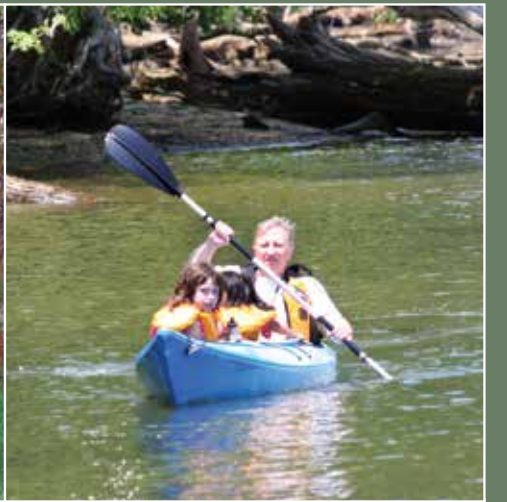
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Our Mission

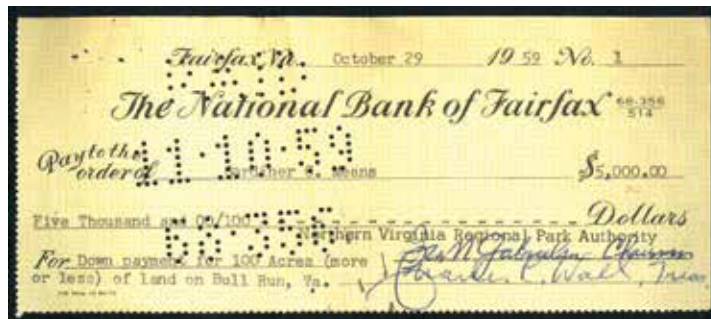
The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority enhances the communities of Northern Virginia and enriches the lives of their citizens through the conservation of regional natural and cultural resources. It provides diverse regional recreational and educational opportunities, and fosters an understanding of the relationships between people and their environment.

NVRPA: Who we are, and how we got here

In 1959, Arlington County, Fairfax County and Falls Church all saw a need to protect large natural areas along our major rivers. This was done to both protect the drinking water sources of the area and to provide passive recreation.

The first parkland purchased by NVRPA was located on the edge of Fairfax County in Centreville. What would become Bull Run Regional Park, was purchased at a discounted price from economist Gardiner Means and his wife Caroline Ware, who longed to see the land preserved from development and ultimately left to public use. Dr. Means and Dr. Ware later donated their farm home in Vienna to NVRPA as well, which today is Meadowlark Botanical Gardens. Development of Bull Run Park continued through the 1960s with the addition of a skeet and trap shooting center and a large swimming pool. In the late 1970s, Bull Run became known for producing and hosting large concerts, most notably the Bull Run Country Jamboree. (A large capacity special events center was built in the mid-1980s to provide an amphitheater with a capacity of over 10,000 people. A winter drive-through holiday light show became part of Bull Run's offerings in 1995 and is viewed by over 120,000 visitors annually). And so began a half century that saw this organization grow almost daily.

Within the first decade, NVRPA had conserved over 3,000 acres and, after its second decade, NVRPA had close to 8,000 acres. NVRPA added sites in Clifton, the City of Fairfax, Fairfax County, Arlington and Alexandria in the 1960s and then was joined by Loudoun County in the mid-1970s. The latter arrangement proved a tremendous boom to the county and NVRPA alike, as over the next two decades, NVRPA would dramatically increase the number of parks as well as its offerings, adding key sites like Algonkian Regional Park along the Potomac River (which features boating, an 18-hole golf course, riverfront cottages and an events center for weddings and meetings). Other facilities, including Red Rock Overlook, Temple Hall Farm and Ball's Bluff Battlefield would follow. In the 1990s, NVRPA added Brambleton Golf Course in



Above, Gardiner C. Means reviews plans with several members of the NVRPA Board and Executive Director Fred Packard. At left, the original \$5,000 check presented as down payment for the property.

Ashburn. Then in 2006, the Park Authority acquired Aldie Mill, a historic grist mill in Loudoun County. Just a few years later, the Park Authority would dramatically increase its holdings in the Aldie area, adding Mt. Zion Historic Park (just a two mile drive from Aldie Mill), and Gilbert's Corner Regional Park.

The Park Authority celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2009 by improving, augmenting or opening new facilities in each of its six jurisdictions.

In addition to our conservation mission protecting our area's drinking water and providing uniquely regional features like



Above, visitors to Temple Hall Farm in Leesburg in the early 1980s. At right top, Upton Hill Regional Park in the 1970s. At right, bottom, visitors to Brambleton Golf Course in Ashburn head out onto the first hole.

the W&OD Trail, NVRPA has also become a model of entrepreneurial operations.

Fifty years ago, the Park Authority's operations were 100% funded by tax dollars. By 1990, that number had dropped to 30%, and today only 16% of our operational expenses are supported by appropriations, the rest comes from self-generated enterprise activities like the Holiday Light Show and many other user fee based operations.

Because NVRPA's focus is creating destination parks, places that the public would be willing to travel some distance to go to, the agency is vital to the region's tourism. From the Carlyle House to Ball's Bluff Battlefield and Aldie Mill, we operate some of our region's great historic sites. Our five waterparks offer our neighbors great places to recreate close to home and are also attracting visitors from outside the region. Our over 100 miles of trails are both a tourism draw and a great addition to the region's quality of life.

As we look at our area today, NVRPA is an amazing combination of conservation and cooperation. It's a successful 50-plus year partnership with six supporting jurisdictions. The Park Authority is one of the greenest park agencies in the nation, with



cutting edge policies on everything from greenhouse gas emissions to pesticide and fertilizer use, and nearly 40 miles of river-front protection. The Agency has made every one of its parks a center for learning about nature and/or history. And perhaps most of all, in doing so, we have created wonderful facilities that remain an excellent value to the people in the region.



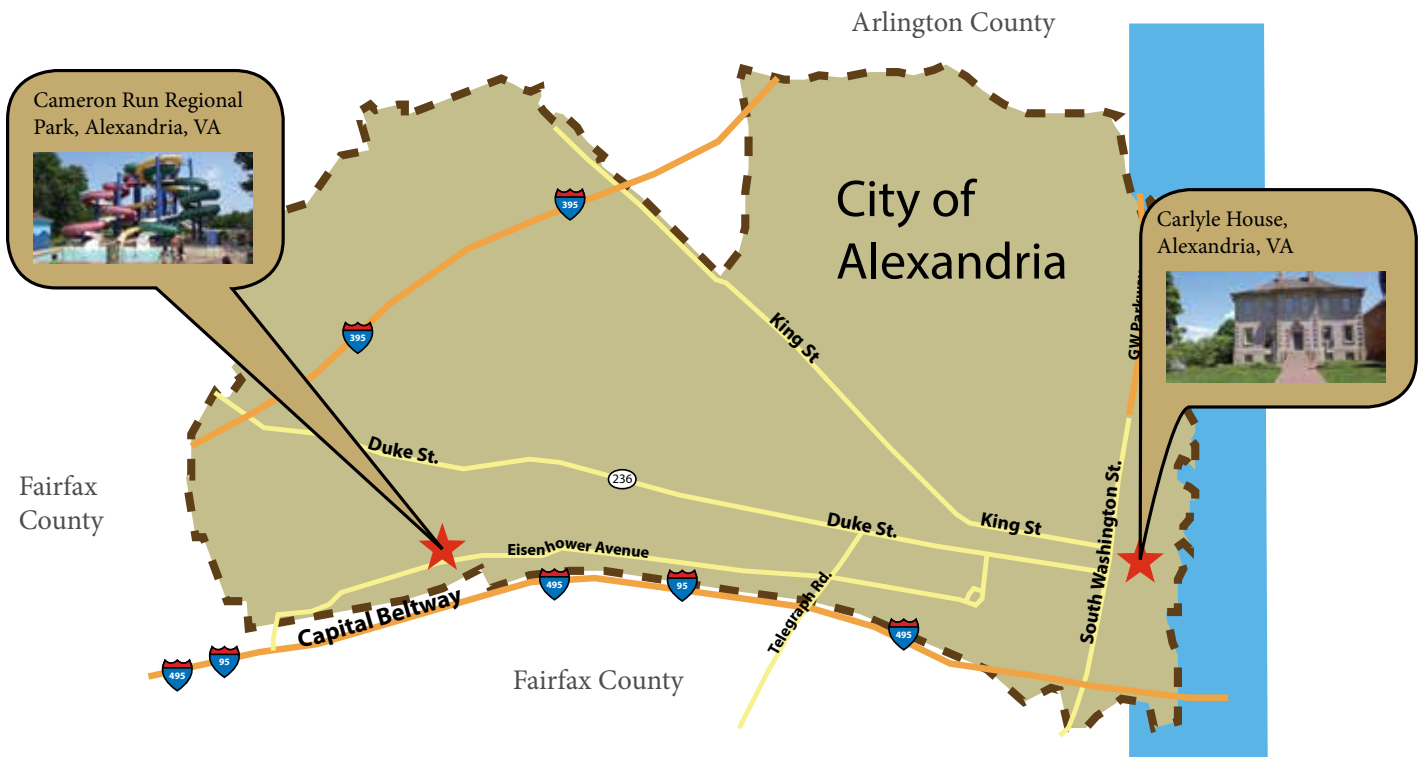
Our Jurisdictions: City of Alexandria



The City of Alexandria joined the Regional Park Authority in 1969, and within a year, NVRPA purchased the historic Carlyle House property, which had once been the home of a prominent 18th century Scottish businessman, and a residence frequented by George Washington. Already on the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Register of Historic Places, Carlyle House became the Park Authority's first major historic property, aiding NVRPA's growth as a full fledged local park agency. Work on the house was completed in 1976, just in time for the U.S. Bicentennial.



In 1982, NVRPA leased property that would eventually become Cameron Run Regional Park. In 1983, that park would be christened with a gigantic wave pool, which remains the centerpiece of the massive Great Waves Waterpark today.



While Great Waves' wave pool became a reality in the 1980s, NVRPA has continued to layer the extremely popular waterpark with different amenities time and time again.



Scan to learn more about this location!



Carlyle House Historic Park, Alexandria, VA

A living history re-enactor in soldier's clothing stands at the gates of Carlyle House Historic Park, prior to an event at the popular Alexandria destination. In addition to year round programs and tours, Carlyle House also plays host to several living history events, commemorating various parts of John Carlyle's life, including his wedding, a visit from George Washington (facing page) and his funeral.

Waterparks: An ever-evolving commodity

Scan to learn more about this location!



A beautiful day at Great Waves Waterpark, located within Cameron Run Regional Park in Alexandria. The agency has spent a great deal of time and money adding new features - including Paradise Play, a giant kids' splashpad, a revamped Café, new waterslides and more.

For the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, aquatic facilities, especially within the last decade, have been a continuous evolution. What began as essentially five community swimming pools located within five regional parks are now popular, vivacious, themed waterparks, each with its own look and feel.

But this evolution was hardly a one summer to the next transformation. Undertaking this effort has proven to be an ongoing process for NVRPA, that continues to produce fun summers for its customers.

NVRPA boasts a total of five waterparks – a varied group of offerings ranging from the somewhat modest to the somewhat elabo-

rate, all of which are well positioned across the region, including Atlantis Waterpark at Bull Run Regional Park (Centreville), Great Waves Waterpark at Cameron Run Regional Park (Alexandria), Pirate's Cove Waterpark at Pohick Bay Regional Park (Lorton), Ocean Dunes Waterpark at Upton Hill Regional Park (Arlington) and Volcano Island Waterpark at Algonkian Regional Park (Sterling). For years, these facilities were quite popular, especially within their respective communities. As the years passed, however, many of the facilities saw a downturn.

While the facilities were certainly in good condition, the appeal of the faceless community swimming pool simply stopped translat-

ing, as families found new and more interesting ways to spend their summer dollars.

Two of NVRPA's waterparks had addressed similar problems in the past. At Cameron Run Regional Park, which opened in 1983 and featured, as its primary attraction, a 500,000 gallon wave pool with a key location right next to the Capital Beltway, the problem was handled head on, with significant financial investments. Over time, NVRPA added more features to ultimately create Great Waves Waterpark at Cameron Run, including three flume waterslides, a pair of speed slides, and rock slides into the toddler pools. A similar financial investment was also made at Upton Hill Waterpark in Arlington. The park previously



At far left, Ocean Dunes, located in Arlington, features a Coastal Carolina beach theme, complete with Adirondack chairs and a lighthouse. Above, the brand new waterslides at Pirate's Cove at Pohick Bay Regional Park in Lorton, which was added in 2012. At left, Atlantis Waterpark at Bull Run Regional Park in Centreville keeps bathers cool with a zero-depth splash pad and dumping bucket.

consisted of a lap pool and a diving well. In 2007, a major financial commitment by NVRPA added a beach entry infant wading pool (replacing the diving well) and, most notably, a zero depth water playground feature with dumping bucket and a pair of waterslides. The latter changed the entire profile of the facility, bringing in a different dynamic and making the park more family friendly.

While the changes at both Great Waves and Upton Hill have certainly been successes, NVRPA had a problem at Pohick Bay. What had been a fairly successful community pool – at one time the largest swimming pool on the East Coast in fact - had essentially lost the public's interest.

The cost of significantly upgrading the location with exceedingly expensive new equipment was simply beyond the Park Authority's reach for a park with a rapidly declining bottom line. Meanwhile, revenue from this lumbering dinosaur continued to slide. The initial answer, it turned out, were minor upgrades, a few significant renovations, and, most importantly, theming.

“By 2007, we were strongly considering closing the pool entirely,” recalls NVRPA Executive Director Paul Gilbert. “The attendance simply wasn't justifying the operational costs to keep it open. According to Gilbert, this decision was made even harder by the fact that despite a loss in popularity, the pool itself ac-

tually had a lot to offer.

A giant deck area framed a 500,000 gallon main pool with plenty of room for swimmers, divers and kids, and an infant pool offered a place for the little ones. In the end, the Park Authority took a different approach.

In the summer of 2008, Pohick Bay Pool was laid to rest ... and Pirate's Cove Waterpark was born.

“We settled on a theme that we thought was timely, related well to the young and old, and could be created in a cost effective way,” Gilbert said. “The results were better than we could have imagined.”

Waterparks: continued

The makeover began with the installation of two large play features. The first was in the pool, and included slides, a giant dumping bucket, water cannons, and, of course, was loaded with Pirate theming elements. The second was a large in-ground sand play area. After that, however, creativity ruled the day. Meanwhile, the entire pool building – the first thing visitors see as they come down the drive – was transformed (using some very basic materials) into what appears to be a Pirate Ship.

“We had the front painted to give the appearance that it was sitting in the water, then added a mast (complete with fiberglass pirate in the crow’s nest), an arsenal of cannons (in actuality, PVC pipe painted gray surrounded by a wooden box with ‘door’) and a bevy of pirate flags,” Gilbert said. To complete the look, the Park Authority transformed the barren, grass-

less parking island in the front of the building into what appears to be a desert island – using a landscaping border, a few bags of white landscaping stones, and a plastic palm tree.

To thoroughly sell the new look, however, NVRPA went the extra mile, creating a grand opening extravaganza called ‘Pirate Day’, which was free to the public and featured living history pirate actors, a pirate village with educational displays, and a full scale pirate ‘attack’ from a ‘pirate ship’ at the Pohick Bay boat launch. The result was a resounding success. People came from all around to see the pirate attack, which included replica cannons and sword fights, cooled off at the newly-themed waterpark, and spread the word. In the meantime, the media reaction was equally as swift, and the newly dubbed “Pirate’s Cove Waterpark at Pohick Bay” was featured in print and on television.

Comparing the park’s revenue in 2007 – the year that NVRPA considered closing the pool – and the past season, the second since the renovation was completed, the results are striking. In 2007, Pohick Bay Pool pulled in just over \$90,000 in actual revenue. In 2012, Pirate’s Cove Waterpark at Pohick Bay took in \$472,949 in actual revenue. The numbers truly speak for themselves.

But the reshaping of Pirate’s Cove did more than raise the profile of a slumping waterpark. It also provided NVRPA with a blueprint. A similarly dipping profile for the pool at Bull Run Regional Park provided just such an opportunity to use said blueprint.

Walk into Atlantis Waterpark at Bull Run and it’s hard to imagine that this facility was often categorized as mundane, common place, boring only a year ago. But the feedback the NVRPA saw, largely in the form of slumping attendance figures suggested just that.

With the same approach in mind, NVRPA chose a theme – The Lost Continent of Atlantis, and work began. An at-grade dumping bucket play structure (complete with ancient Greek theme elements) was added to what had been a gigantic yet largely empty pool deck. Nearby, another significant section of vacant pool deck was excavated, and a large sand play area was installed. The Park Authority then turned to the more creative elements, adding columns and a faux portico to the entrance, as well as murals in the changing areas with under sea elements. Mermaids and other minor elements were added throughout the park to further expand on the theme, and a new logo was created. Atlantis Waterpark now stood where mediocrity had before, turning what had been a 50-year-old community swimming pool into a teaming waterpark.

“Atlantis was no less challenging of a transformation than Pirate’s Cove, yet the guideline of having done a similar renovation at Pohick Bay made the process somewhat easier,” said Chris Pauley, Director of Operations. “At the end of the process, we were able to generate a lot of buzz and ex-

A new kind of Paradise



Prior to the 2011 season, NVRPA officially opened “Paradise Play,” an outdoor, largely enclosed play area designed for children. Paradise Play was built adjacent to Great Waves Waterpark at Cameron Run in Alexandria. The idea behind the structure - which features several slides, high observation points, spinners, tubes and more - was to create an experience that would function perfectly during the summer months as well as off season. Paradise Play is open for much of the year, and with a very reasonable cost, invites families to enjoy Cameron Run more often.

Scan to learn more about this location!



Volcano Island
waterpark

Volcano Island Waterpark at Algonkian Regional Park in Sterling - formerly Downpour - overcame a bit of an image problem by simply adding theming elements such as paint, new fixtures, plastic characters and a new name. Like all of its cousins throughout the NVRPA system, it has become an extremely popular site for both neighbor swimmers and as a destination.

citement and really re-energize the community.”

Meanwhile, NVRPA also took a similar – if not slightly smaller – brush to Ocean Dunes (formerly Upton Hill) and Great Waves. While neither saw any significant play features added, both were the beneficiaries of theming updates. A new logo was created for Great Waves, with a ‘surf’ look, and a mascot – Sunny the Sandshark - was added. Several different areas of the park were also themed with names and signage to correspond, including the Riptide Café and the Shark Shack (souvenirs and clothing). Thatching, paint and other small touches did wonders to bring the elements together. At Ocean Dunes, a similar small scale approach was taken. While effective, what was then Upton

Hill seemed to lack a cohesive identity. In the spring of 2008, the park received a new logo that reflected a new Outer Banks beach feel.

The park followed suit by adding sand dune fencing and old jon boats (for effect), as well as murals and minor paint changes to complete the look. In 2010, those efforts were followed with a six-foot tall lighthouse, seating, fiberglass birds and typical foliage, and more.

NVRPA undertook its final major theming project in 2010 - Volcano Island, at the site of what had been Downpour at Algonkian, in Sterling. The newly themed Volcano Island has a sort of Polynesian jungle element, incorporates several relatable images, including geckoes, tribal

elements, and a steaming novelty volcano atop the main building, as well as palm trees and thatching.

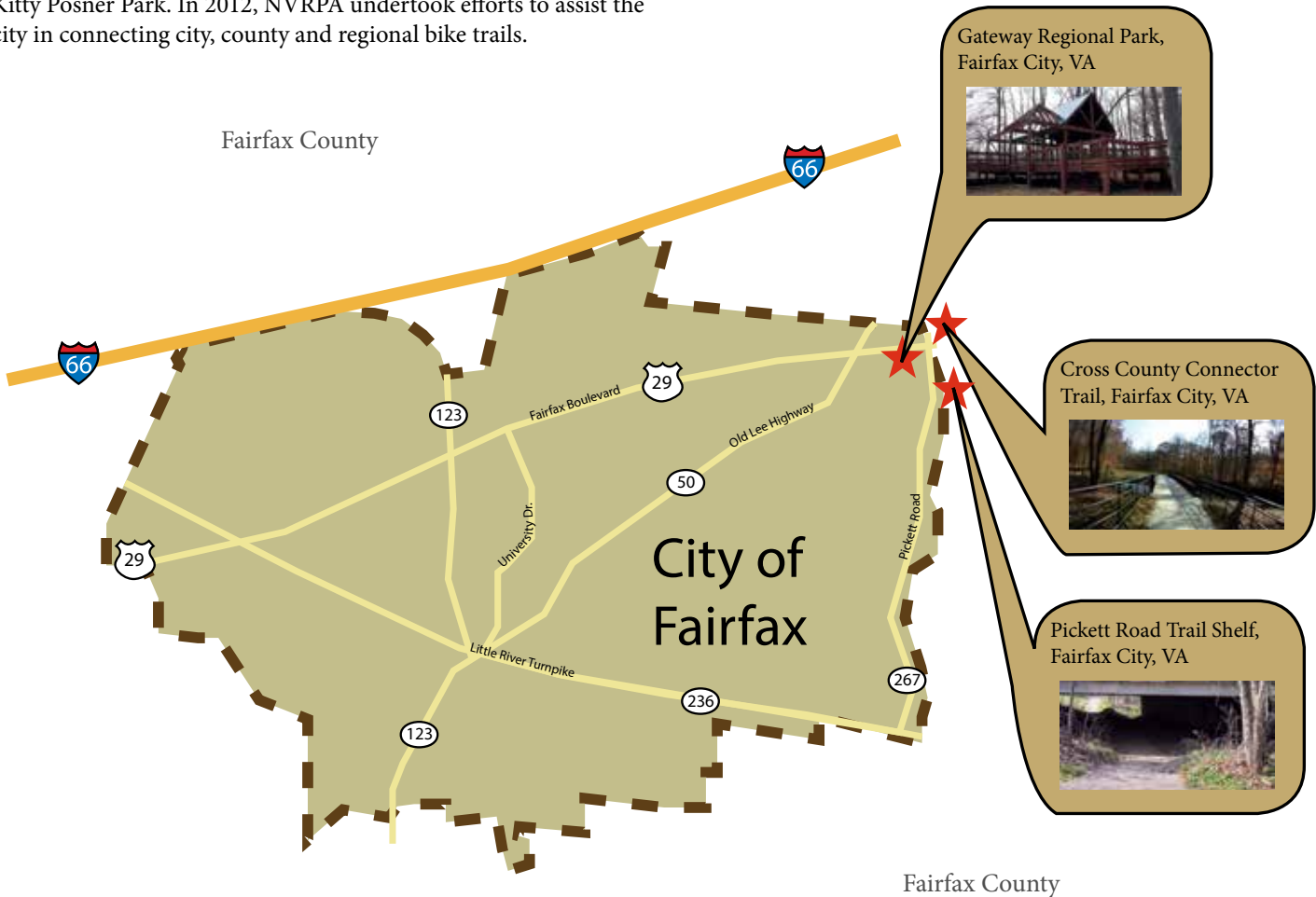
A sand play area similar to that of Pirate’s Cove and Atlantis was also added, but no additional water play structure – only rethemed with characters and new paint, to better reflect its new look.

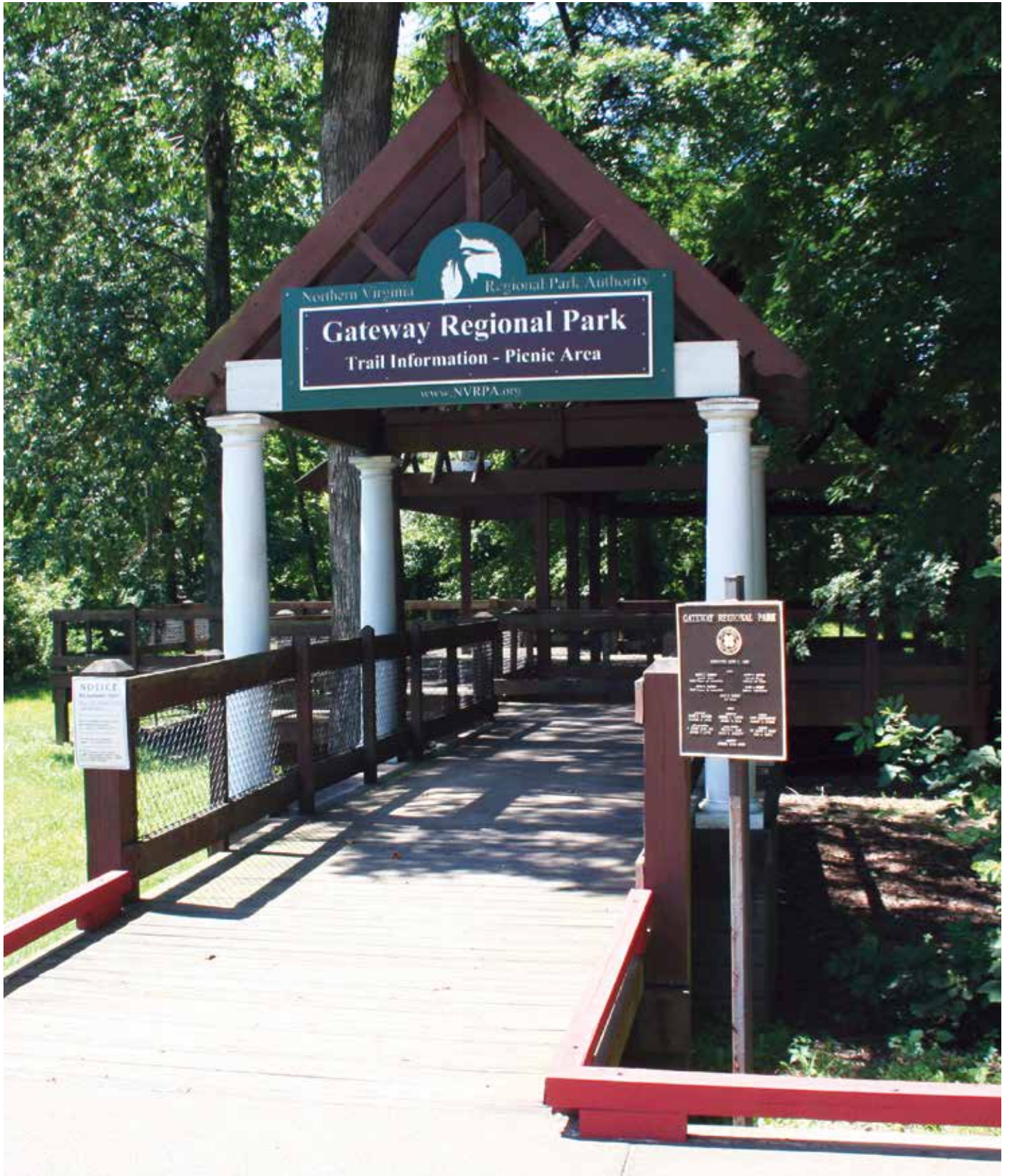
The latest work in regards to theming and creating the proper vibe is one you can take a look at any time – its online presence. NVRPA launched new websites for all five of its waterparks in 2011, each with their own URL. Accessible largely via its main portal – www.nowaterparks.com, users can buy tickets online, see a flash slideshow of the parks’ respective offerings, and so much more.

Our Jurisdictions: City of Fairfax



The City of Fairfax officially joined the Park Authority in 1963. The City is, of course, surrounded by Fairfax County, so by joining the Park Authority, the City of Fairfax was able to bring the amenities and benefits of membership to its residents. In 1993, NVRPA opened the W&OD Connector Trail in the City of Fairfax, part of what would eventually become the Cross County Connector Trail. Adjacent to this property, the Park Authority would eventually add Gateway Regional Park in 1995, dedicated on National Trails Day. In 2011, NVRPA partnered with City Parks and Recreation to offer custom animated light displays at Kitty Posner Park. In 2012, NVRPA undertook efforts to assist the city in connecting city, county and regional bike trails.





Gateway Regional Park, Fairfax City, VA

Fairfax City is home to the charming wooden structure, Gateway Regional Park. Located at the intersection of the Connector Trail, the City of Fairfax's trail system and the Fairfax County Park Authority's Accotink Creek Trail, Gateway Regional Park is a crossroads rest stop offering a shelter, water fountain and displays of trail maps and local points of interest.

Historical venues & assets: A guide

In as much as the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority boasts offerings like golf courses, waterparks, boat rentals and the like, it is its historical assets upon which NVRPA most proudly hangs its collective hat.

NVRPA manages many parks with great historical significance, including a grand 18th century mansion, a Civil War battlefield, a 19th century grist mill, a 200-year old working farm, a Civil War era church, and many more. These historical landmarks see an incredible annual flux of visitors, as literally thousands make their way through various hallowed halls and fields.

Carlyle House

The historic Carlyle House was completed in 1753 by British merchant John Carlyle for his bride, Sarah Fairfax of Belvoir, member of one of the most prestigious families in Colonial Virginia. Their home quickly became a center of social and political life in Alexandria and gained a foothold in history when British General Braddock made the mansion his headquarters in 1755. Braddock summoned five colonial governors to meet there to plan the early campaigns of the French and Indian War.

On the National Register of Historic Places, Carlyle House is architecturally unique in Alexandria as the only stone, 18th-century Palladian-style house. Daily tours of the house, programs for schoolchildren, special events, exhibits and lectures explore the life and times of John Carlyle in pre-Revolutionary Alexandria. The tour includes a look at much of the restored house, a video lecture room, and an under construction room that offers a unique look at the restoration process, including some of the original building materials.

Carlyle House Historic Park hosts historical interpretive events and reenactments throughout the year. Programs conducted by the House's staff included a reenactment of the Surrender of Alexandria during the War of 1812 and an event displaying and interpreting wedding and funeral traditions of the 18th century. Nine years of articles related to the history of the Carlyle House and Colonial Alexandria are now available online.



Cannon fire explodes from a Union artillery piece during the 150th Re-enactment of the Battle of Ball's Bluff. All told, the event hosted just over 2,000 uniformed re-enactors, and attracted more than 2,000 spectators.

Ball's Bluff Battlefield Regional Park

Loudoun County holds the lion's share of NVRPA's historic facilities. Ball's Bluff Battlefield Regional Park preserves the site of the largest Civil War engagement in Loudoun County. Also known as the Battle of Harrison's Island or the Battle of Leesburg, the conflict was fought on October 21, 1861, in Loudoun County, Virginia, as part of Union Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan's operations in Northern Virginia during the American Civil War. While a minor engagement in comparison with the battles that would take place in years to follow, it was the second largest battle of the Eastern Theater in 1861, and in its aftermath had repercussions in the Union Army's chain of command structure and raised separation of powers issues under the United States Constitution during the war.

Over the last century, trees and other growth filled in the area (the battlefield was actually a pasture in 1861), and understanding how the battle unfolded became increasingly difficult as time went on. In 2004, the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority embarked on what is

now known as the Ball's Bluff Battlefield Restoration Program. The purpose of the program was to return the Battlefield to its appearance in October 1861 when the final battle was fought there and to make battlefield interpretation efforts more effective. To accomplish this, park staff cleared under brush, then turned to removing trees. Much of those were chipped into a mulch, which now covers the bulk of the battlefield space. Today, the park is as close to its original appearance as it's ever been. Visitors can take advantage of weekend guided tours, volunteer guided programs and living history events (weather permitting). A podcast and walking tour brochure are available year round for self-guided tours of the park.

Major sites at Ball's Bluff Battlefield include a cemetery, which is the third smallest national cemetery in the United States. Fifty-four Union Army dead from the Battle of Ball's Bluff are interred in 25 graves in the half-acre plot; the identity of all of the interred except for one, James Allen of the 15th Massachusetts, is unknown. Monuments to fallen Confederate Sergeant Clinton Hatcher and Union Brigade Commander Edward Dickinson Baker are located next to the cemetery, though neither is buried there. While the stonewall-enclosed cemetery itself is managed through the Culpeper National Cemetery and owned by the

Department of Veterans Affairs, the balance of the 223-acre park is managed through the Park Authority. The site also contains an interpretive trail, signage, and an amazing view of the bluff itself, overlooking the Potomac River.

Mt. Zion Church Historic Park & Gilbert's Corner Regional Park

Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, built in 1851, sits at the intersection of the Old Carolina Road and the Little River Turnpike – once a main crossroad in Southeastern Loudoun County. From here, the church was an eyewitness to much of the history of this area, in particular the Civil War. The church was used as a military rendezvous site, prison, barracks, battleground and hospital. Union troops used the church as a field hospital after the cavalry engagements of Aldie, Middleburg, and Upperville in June of 1863, and graffiti on the church's walls are remnants of the soldiers' days spent in recuperation. July of 1864 saw military action close to the church, when Confederate Colonel John S. Mosby and his men met the Union forces from Massachusetts and New York under Major William H. Forbes.

The cemetery adjacent to the church contains over 240 marked graves and additional unmarked graves within its old stone wall, and at least 64 African American unmarked graves outside the wall. Among those buried here are veterans of the Civil War and one War of 1812 veteran. The facility is open seasonally for tours, and is available as a rental property for weddings and events. Mt. Zion also hosts various interpretive programs over the course of the year, with a wide array of historical topics and guests. Information about the park and its events can be found on the Park Authority website.

Immediately adjacent to the Mount Zion property is Gilbert's Corner Regional Park,



Carlyle House Historic Park, located in Olde Town Alexandria, offers a fascinating tour that takes visitors back to another place and time.

which was, among other things, the site of Civil War activity. The most heated action in this area happened on July 6, 1864 when a cavalry skirmish took place next to Mt. Zion Historic Church between the forces of Col. John S. Mosby, Confederate Rangers and Union forces (13th New York Calvary) under the command of Major William H. Forbes. Both sides had nearly 150 mounted soldiers. By the battle's end, 13 Union soldiers were killed and 37 wounded in this battle, while the Confederate forces had one killed and five wounded.

In addition to its Civil War history significance, the new parkland includes part of the Carolina Road, which was an active route between Frederick, Maryland and the Virginia/North Carolina border. It was originally a Native American trail used by the Algonquin and Iroquois Indians and a popular north/south route during the 18th & 19th centuries. It roughly follows the course that Route 15 is today.

Aldie Mill Historic Park

Less than two miles down the road is Aldie Mill Historic Park, a grist mill which was completed in 1809. The restored mill, an imposing four-story brick structure with tandem metal waterwheels, offers visitors and students a glimpse of how life was lived in the rural South during a time when the Mill served as a vital center of the community. The twin overshot waterwheels were restored in October 2010 with grant assistance from the Loudoun Preservation Society, and grinding demonstrations have resumed. Gristmills once dotted the landscape of Virginia and rural America, but most of them have now vanished or stand abandoned as silent witnesses of the past. At Aldie Mill, the unique heritage of water-powered gristmills is remembered and preserved. The merchant mill and store house, the oldest

Historical venues: continued

structures in the present Aldie Mill complex, were built between 1807 and 1809 by William Cooke for the noted legislator and reformer Charles Fenton Mercer. A brick granary erected to the west of the main structure between 1809 and 1816, and a smaller brick country mill that Mercer erected to the east of the merchant mill after purchasing Cooke's half-interest in the enterprise in 1816, are also preserved at the site. During the term of Mercer's proprietorship, Aldie Mill emerged as the largest manufactory of its kind in Loudoun County. The mill's five run of French flint burrstones turned wheat into superfine flour for commercial export. Among the mill's many prominent 19th-century visitors was President James Monroe, who had his grain ground here while living at neighboring Oak Hill, and Confederate raider John Singleton Mosby, who captured several Union soldiers at the mill during the Civil War.

Descendants of Captain John Moore, the miller to whom Mercer sold the property in 1835, operated the mill continuously for six generations until it closed in 1971. Aldie Mill survives today as one of the best preserved historic mills in the Commonwealth and Virginia's only known mill powered by twin overshot wheels.



Lafayette Day was a living history display held at the old manor house at Temple Hall Farm, commemorating the visit of the Marquis de Lafayette to the property in 1825.



Remnants of another era

On July 27, 2008, the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority and the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area formally dedicated Turning Point Plaza, a new memorial dedicated to the suffragists imprisoned at the Occoquan Workhouse. "The League of Women Voters was started by the suffragists who continue to be models of courage for us," said Mary Grace Lintz, acting President of the Fairfax Area League of Women Voters.

Turning Point Plaza honors the women who were imprisoned at the Occoquan Workhouse located across from the current Occoquan Regional Park. In 1917, women suffragists were the first political group to protest in front of the White House. As a result, hundreds of women seeking the right to vote were imprisoned at both the D.C. Jail and the Occoquan Workhouse, part of the Lorton Prison complex. News reports of poor conditions and hunger strikes by the imprisoned suffragists were a turning point in the struggle for women's right to vote. These events led to the 19th Amendment, allowing women the right to vote. Turning Point Plaza at Occoquan Regional Park will feature in-

terpretive displays of these events and their significance.

"The struggles of people to gain the right to vote and participate in society as equals are stories that need to be told and retold to every generation. The stories of the suffragists, the end of slavery, and civil rights are the events that helped define America as the democracy it is today," noted Paul Gilbert, NVRPA Executive Director.

Phase II of the Turning Point Plaza will be a fitting suffragist memorial, which will include inserted plaques to commemorate the suffragist struggle for American women's right to vote. The final design is yet to be determined.

The future of the project is in the hands of the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial board, an all volunteer group dedicated to honoring the lives of the suffragists who fought for the ratification of the 19th Amendment. TPSM is in the process of soliciting donations for the project's completion. For more information on how to contribute, visit www.suffragist-memorial.org

White's Ford Regional Park & Mount Defiance

Approximately two miles from Temple Hall Farm, on the banks of the Potomac River, is White's Ford Regional Park. Currently intended as a future site for camping, along with a boat launch, White's Ford also bears historic significance. White's Ford was an important ford over the Potomac River during the Civil War. It was used in many major actions, including the crossing into Maryland of the Confederate Army prior to the Maryland Campaign. It is located a few miles above present-day White's Ferry.

The ford was named after Captain Elijah V. White, a Confederate cavalry officer and leader of the cavalry battalion known as the Comanches. His farm was on the property where the park now lies.

At the beginning of 2013, the Park Authority actually extended its historical holdings with the addition of several new properties. Not far from Aldie Mill, NVRPA, via a partnership with the Virginia Civil War Trust, was given a tract of land on the outskirts of Middleburg, called Mt. Defiance. This site was essentially the key point of the Battle of Middleburg, which was fought on June 19, 1863, just ten days after the Battle of Brandy Station and fourteen days before the opening day of the Battle of Gettysburg – a very significant month of fighting in the Eastern Theater that year. The facility remains in development at the moment.

Other venues

NVRPA has many other venues with historic significance, even if they aren't known as typical historic destinations. Bull Run Regional Park in Centreville, for example, saw quite a bit of action during the Civil War, most notably at Blackburn's Ford, where a brigade attempted to cross but Confederate fire broke up the attack and Union commanders decided to cross the creek farther upstream.

The Park also recently erected a winter quarters display, a recreation of the dwellings built by Union and Confederate soldiers. Leading from the property is the 18-mile Bull Run Occoquan Trail, which was home to a great deal of various actions over the years, in the form of native American trails, trade routes, and later as civil war supply routes.

Temple Hall Farm Regional Park in Leesburg is a 200-year old working farm that offers visitors an opportunity to learn about our agricultural past while also exploring farming in Loudoun County today. The farm was donated to NVRPA in 1985 by Valeria Symington to preserve from development the farm



A living history actor looks out the window at Carlyle House during a historical demonstration, one of many held on the property each year.

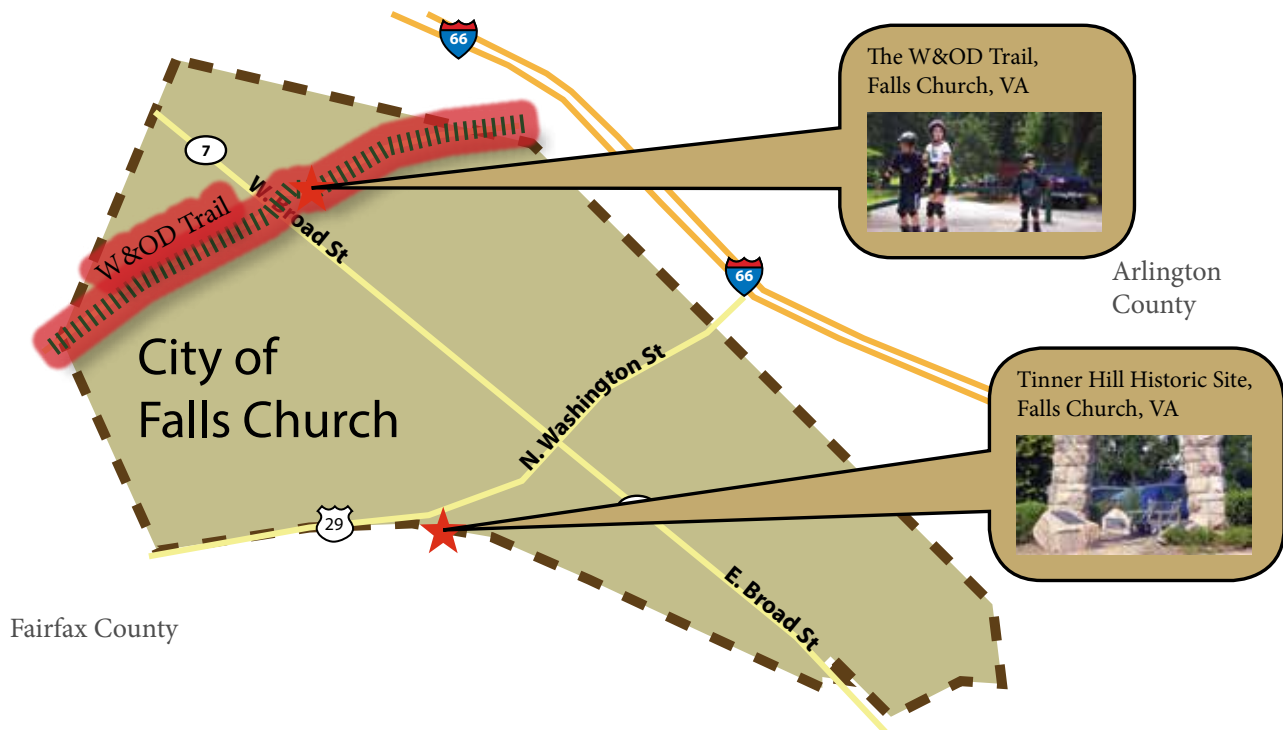
and home she moved into as a newlywed in 1940. She and her husband restored the early 1800s mansion of William Temple Thomson Mason, a nephew of George Mason, and ran a variety of agricultural endeavors through the years. Learn more about Temple Hall Farm on page 34.

The city of Falls Church, Fairfax County, Tinner Hill Foundation and the Park Authority are working to create a historic site that will interpret the 1917 (Jim Crowe era) events that made Tinner Hill an important historic site in our region.

Our Jurisdictions: City of Falls Church



In 1959, The City of Falls Church joined the counties of Arlington and Fairfax as the original group which approved concurrent resolutions, which ultimately established the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority. Today, Falls Church's identity as both a city and an NVPRA jurisdiction is synonymous with the trail that winds through it. The W&OD, which crosses the northern third of the City of Falls Church, making its way right over the backbone of the city itself - Route 7, seems in many ways to represent the city and its population. Falls Church is extremely pedestrian-friendly, and its residents will frequently incorporate the W&OD into their commutes. Nowhere is the trail more noticeable either - A footbridge, installed more than two decades ago, straddles the traffic of busy Route 7. Current efforts to create Tinner Hill Historic Site are underway.



The W&OD Trail as it makes its way through what many consider the heart of the 45 mile long bi-way in Falls Church. The Trail has perhaps its most dramatic crossing in Falls Church, arching up and over the very busy Broad St. (Route 7) across a beautiful pedestrian bridge.



Scan to learn more about this location!



Washington & Old Dominion Railroad Regional Park

Runners take to the Trail for an organized 5k run, following the dedication of new interpretive signage. Above left, the inaugural first ride through the Falls Church section of the W&OD Trail, taken in 1982 following NVRPA's official acquisition and subsequent opening of the trail to the public.

The Region, outdoors & active

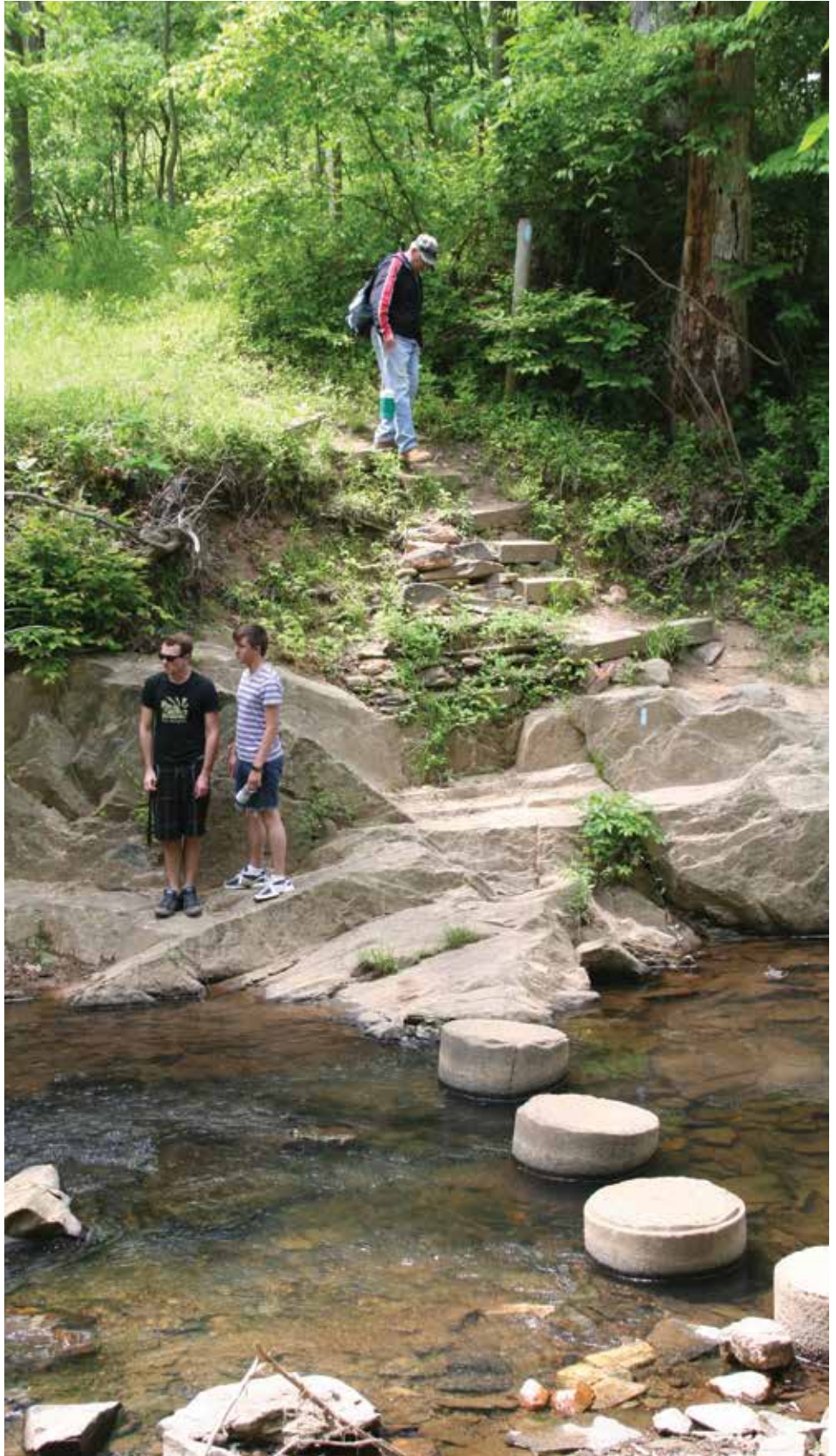
While NVRPA differs in many ways from the standard passive use park agency, it also offers many locations that allow its users to connect with nature. NVRPA has dozens of venues that offer the ability to picnic, hike, relax and play, each with its own look and feel. Walk and bike along the W&OD Trail, paddle through the marsh at Pohick Bay Regional Park. Picnic along the banks of the Potomac at Algonkian Regional Park, or observe nature in the tranquility of Potomac Overlook Regional Park and its amazing James Mayer Energerium.

You can essentially create your own specialized outdoor experience. Hike the 18-mile Bull Run Occoquan Trail, a beautiful view of Fairfax County as it's rarely seen: with nary a car or building in site. Stroll through a gigantic botanical garden at Meadowlark, enjoying the site of not only beautiful native foliage and flowers, but that of a huge authentic Korean Bell Garden, which overlooks one of the park's two lakes. Grab your bike, and explore the rigorous mountain bike trails at Fountainhead Regional Park. If a more passive experience is what you seek, spread a picnic blanket at Bull Run Regional Park, Algonkian or Pohick Bay and simply enjoy a day outside. In essence, every NVRPA park has an outdoor experience waiting for you.

The Region, by foot

Despite its continually evolving appearance as a concrete jungle, Northern Virginia is criss-crossed with miles and miles of walking, biking, hiking and equestrian trails that quite literally tie it together. NVRPA trails span from Purcellville to Shirlington, through Leesburg and throughout Fairfax, and all along the Potomac River; a truly breathtaking network of beauty, fun and education.

Winding its way through the heart of Northern Virginia is the Washington and Old Dominion Railroad Regional Park, better known as the W&OD Trail. This 45-mile multi-use trail is perfect for cyclists, walkers, joggers and skaters. The trail runs from the heart of Arlington into Western Loudoun County, and the scenery var-



Hikers make their way towards a foot bridge on the Bull Run Occoquan Trail. The 18-mile pathway cuts from Bull Run Regional Park in Centreville to Fountainhead Regional Park in Fairfax Station.



A kayaker sits among the calm waters of the Occoquan Reservoir at Fountainhead Regional Park. NVRPA has eight different parks that border bodies of water.

ies from urban to idyllic. Weaving its way along the same expanse are 32 miles of gravel equestrian trail. The pair sees more than 2 million visitors annually.

NVRPA's longest natural surface trail is the 18-mile Bull Run-Occoquan hiking trail, which connects Bull Run, Hemlock Overlook, Bull Run Marina and Fountainhead Regional Parks. Perfect for hikers or those on horseback, this incredible path takes visitors through more than 4,000 acres of scenic woodlands. Along this track one

will also find one of the region's richest untapped historic resources. This area played a vital role at different times in our history from the Revolutionary to the Civil War. The Park Authority is currently completing a smart phone application that will allow Blue Trail (as it's commonly called, due to the blue blazes) users to learn about various stops along the path.

At Fountainhead Regional Park, those who prefer to cycle will find one of the most challenging mountain biking trails in the area,

more than eight miles of hills, turns, climbs and loops through beautiful scenic terrain.

Pohick Bay Regional Park also offers trails, which can lead people to view thriving populations of great blue herons and bald eagles. Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, Ball's Bluff and Potomac Overlook Regional Parks offer guided hikes and natural or historic interpretive trails.

Users of NVRPA trails can also find beautiful and scenic vistas by water. The Occoquan Watertrail, completed in 2007 via a grant from the National Park Service Chesapeake Gateways program, is a 40-mile route on two tributary waterways of the Chesapeake Bay. Interpretive exhibits located at eight access points present a tapestry of time and place, each revealing a different facet of this extraordinary resource.

NVRPA has also forged an ever-evolving partnership with the National Park Service, creating a trail network that helps to complete the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail. When complete, NVRPA property will provide much of the passage through the region for this 425-mile corridor from the Chesapeake Bay to the Allegheny Highlands. This braided network of trails, open space and natural areas winds through a corridor linked by land, water and history. Parks and pathways along the Potomac River retrace George Washington's vision of "a great avenue into the Western Country."

The recent combined work of county and regional agencies like NVRPA, volunteers, private landowners and developers has created a route that attempts to connect the past with the present.

As it currently stands, the trail runs along the Potomac River and actually works its way through several NVRPA parks. Entering from the southeast, existing portions of the PHT run through Algonkian Regional Park in Sterling. It makes its way through several other Loudoun County parks before entering Ball's Bluff Battlefield (read more on page 17). When complete, the PHT will also guide visitors past Red Rock Wilderness Overlook Regional Park, as well as through White's Ford Regional Park.

Outdoors & active: continued

The Region, by boat

Many of NVRPA's parks and lands were acquired with the idea to defend, and subsequently preserve, the lands along the water in Northern Virginia. Boasting a total of 12 different parks with direct or indirect water access, the Regional Park Authority is, by design, a hub for boating enthusiasts in and around the area. Parks including Pohick Bay and Fountainhead offer boat rentals – everything from kayaks, canoes and jon boats, to Northern Virginia's newest boating sensation at Pohick Bay – Stand Up Paddleboards. These unique crafts allow users of any skill level to stand on a giant long board and paddle their way through the bay – truly a unique view from the water! There are several other parks and facilities that allow users to launch their own boats, including Algonkian Regional Park, Occoquan Regional Park, White's Ford Regional Park, Bull Run Marina, Pohick and Fountainhead.

Algonkian Regional Park provides water access to the Upper Potomac, while Occoquan and Pohick Bay Regional Parks launch boaters into the lower Potomac. Bull Run Marina and Fountainhead give easy access to Bull Run and to the Occoquan Reservoir. Canoe and kayak rentals are available at Pohick Bay and Fountainhead Regional Parks. Guided trips leave regularly from Pohick Bay, offering morning, sunset tours, moonlight and fall color tours of the Bay and surrounding marshes.

In 2013, the Park Authority began canoe and kayak launches onto the Potomac River from White's Ford Regional Park - a 295-acre tract of land just north of Temple Hall Farm in Leesburg. White's Ford is the northern most point of water access for NVRPA, and provides a dramatically different view of the Potomac and the adjoining wildlife (see its historic background on page 17).

Competitive and recreational rowing and sculling activities are centered at Sandy Run Regional Park, located on the Occoquan Reservoir in Fairfax County, and at Bull Run Marina. The fully-equipped facilities serve eight local high schools and one college rowing program. Regattas include those



Paddlers explore the marsh areas around Pohick Bay Regional Park. The Park Authority leads several tours of the area in the spring, summer and fall.

held by the National Capital Area Scholastic Rowing Association, George Mason University, the Occoquan Boat Club and the Northern Virginia Rowing Club, totaling 28,750 rowing crew participants.

The Region, overnight

One of the most important assets the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority has are its camping areas. Situated in two of its largest parks - Bull Run Regional Park in Centreville and Pohick Bay Regional Park in Lorton - NVRPA's camping offerings include RV spaces or campsites with electrical and water hookups, standard primitive tent sites and deluxe cabins. The latter are the perfect hybrid of an outdoor experi-

ence with some of the creature comforts of home - minimal quarters that feature mostly a sleeping area and small living area, but are complete with air conditioning or heat, electricity and a small refrigerator. So, while the units certainly make things a bit more comfortable, especially overnight, users will typically want to spend most of their evening outside - grilling, hanging out on the porch swing, or roasting marshmallows by the fire.

Both parks have identical offerings in terms of camping, the obvious difference being the different amenities offered at each park's location.

In the very near future, however, Pohick Bay will also offer deluxe cabins, which feature

private bathrooms and a small kitchen. In recent years, NVRPA has begun a campaign designed to package these amenities together, offering “backyard vacations.” For a single price, park goers can stay over night and enjoy things like boating, water-parks, hiking, picnicking and more.

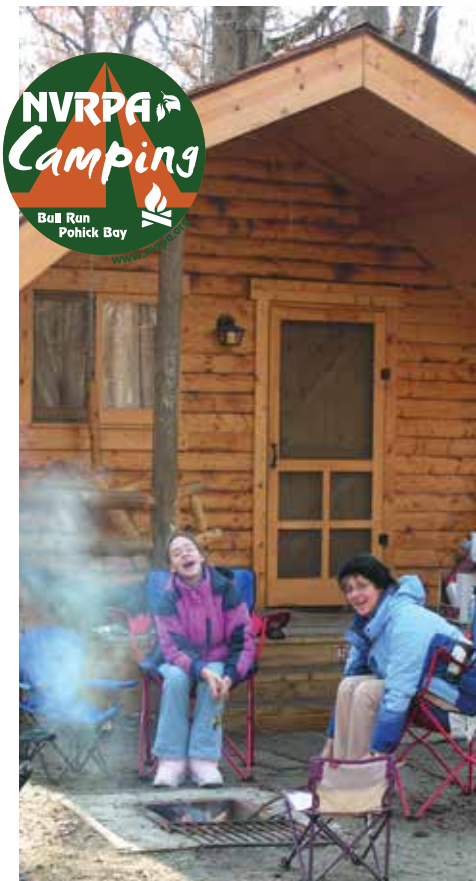
Then there are the overnight stay options at Algonkian Regional Park in Sterling. Far from “roughing it,” Algonkian offers cottages along the Potomac River year round.

These cottages, which are essentially single family homes for rent, offer the finest in overnight or extended stays - including full kitchens, televisions, internet, living space, multiple bedrooms, grills, decks and in some cases, hot tubs.

With immediate proximity to the Algonkian Golf Course, as well as Volcano Island Waterpark, users can truly create a deluxe all-in-one park vacation.



The Regional Park Authority offers a wide variety of different accommodations. Algonkian’s Riverfront Cottages (above) are the ultimate overnight stay option, featuring amenities like kitchens, bedrooms, and flat screen televisions, while the cabins (below left) located at Pohick Bay and Bull Run are far more rustic, sheltering its guests from the elements but with a much more outdoors feel.



Group camping offerings

One of NVRPA’s most popular camping options is group camping. Designed for scout groups, the Park Authority has several different group camping sites, designed to keep the group together and offer a centralized meeting place.

Located in Bluemont on the eastern slope of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Loudoun County, Blue Ridge Regional Park offers the ideal setting for an escape to the mountains for organized youth group tent camping. This 168-acre park offers 3 primitive camping areas that can accommodate 30 campers each. Basic necessities, such as vehicle parking, fire rings, picnic tables and portable restrooms are provided. Access to the park is limited to registered campers only.

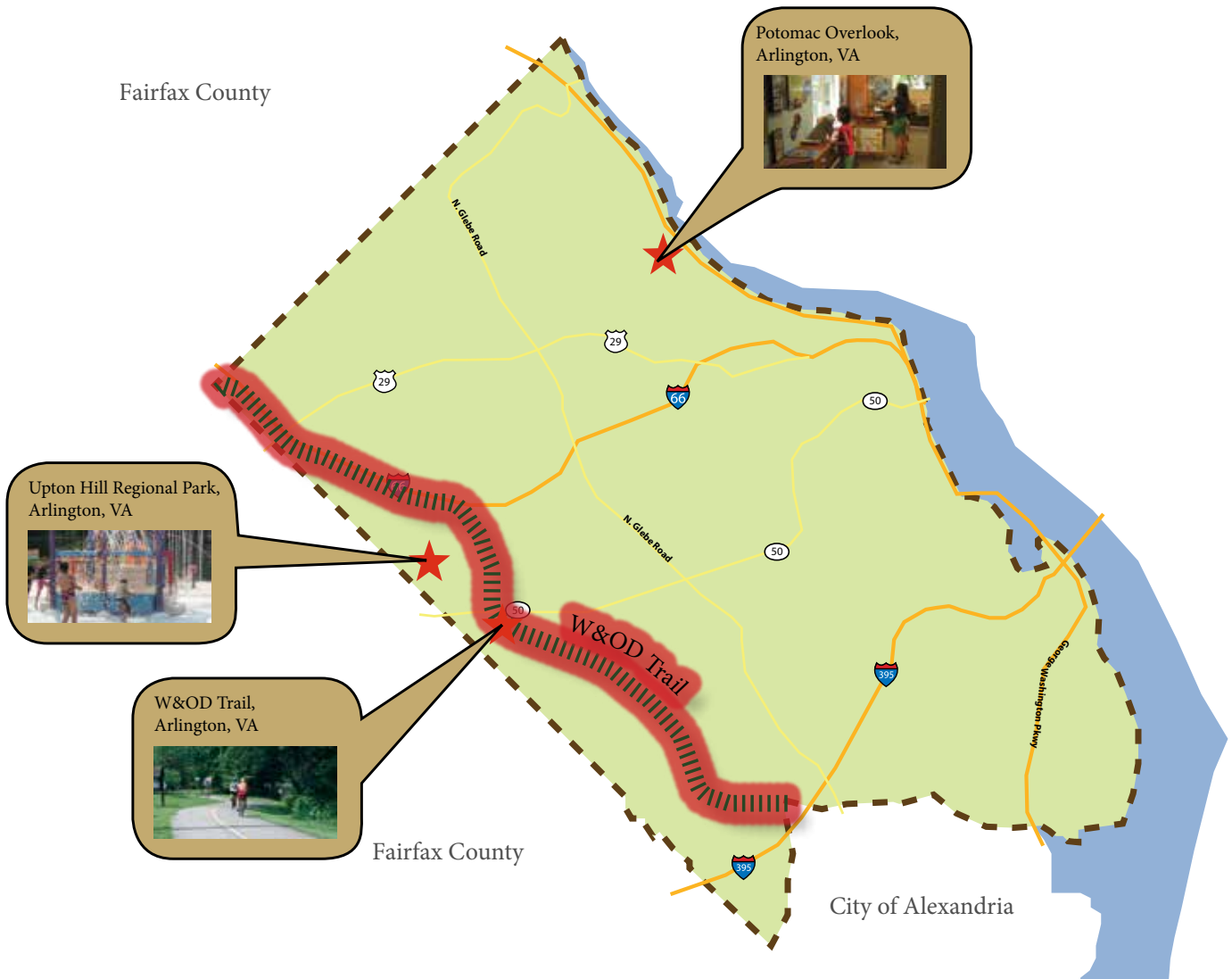
Camp Wilson, located at Pohick Bay, is linked to the main park by a one-mile trail. The amphitheater and an open play field are available on a first come, first served basis and must be shared by all campers. The park operates Camp Wilson as a short-term camping facility, and the camp is used exclusively by organized youth groups including but not limited to Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, church youth groups and school groups.

In Centreville, Bull Run Regional Park also offers a group camping area. The sites are centrally located and within walking distance of the other park facilities. These sites are exclusively for organized youth groups. Each of the two group sites has a maximum capacity of 35 campers.

Our Jurisdictions: Arlington County



Arlington County was one of the flagship members of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority. In 1971, Potomac Overlook Regional Park, Arlington's first actual NVRPA property, opened to the public. Upton Hill Regional Park, which would eventually be home to a fantastic local waterpark, would follow within a few years. Both parks are considered local treasures by Arlington residents; Potomac Overlook for its Nature Center and abundance of great nature programs, and Upton, which basically stands as the community's summer hot spot.



Scan to learn more about this location!



Potomac Overlook Regional Park, Arlington, VA

Potomac Overlook's annual May Day Celebration brings adults and children into the park in waves, easily the location's busiest (and most festive) day of the year. Above, children celebrate the afternoon by decorating the May Pole, a traditional spring event at Potomac Overlook. Above left, golfers take aim at Upton Hill Regional Park's mini golf course.

NVRPA Golf: On par excellence



Above, Brambleton Golf Course, and its beautiful green fairways and scenic vistas. At right, Pohick Bay Golf Course in Lorton is a far different animal, with hilly fairways lined by trees.

For NVRPA, golf and parks go hand in hand. That's because in addition to making sure that its golf courses are in perfect harmony with their natural surroundings, the Park Authority also goes out of its way to hold Audubon International certification - a mandate that dictates just how the Park Authority must maintain and improve its golf courses, always in keeping with principles that keep its courses one hundred percent nature (and player) friendly. Audubon certification is so rare that only a few courses on the East Coast are a part of the program.

NVRPA boasts three 18-hole golf courses, including Algonkian, Brambleton and Pohick Bay. Each has a style and a charm all their own - a unique look and feel that offers three distinctly different layouts. Here's an in-depth look at each of NVRPA's three courses:

Algonkian Golf Course

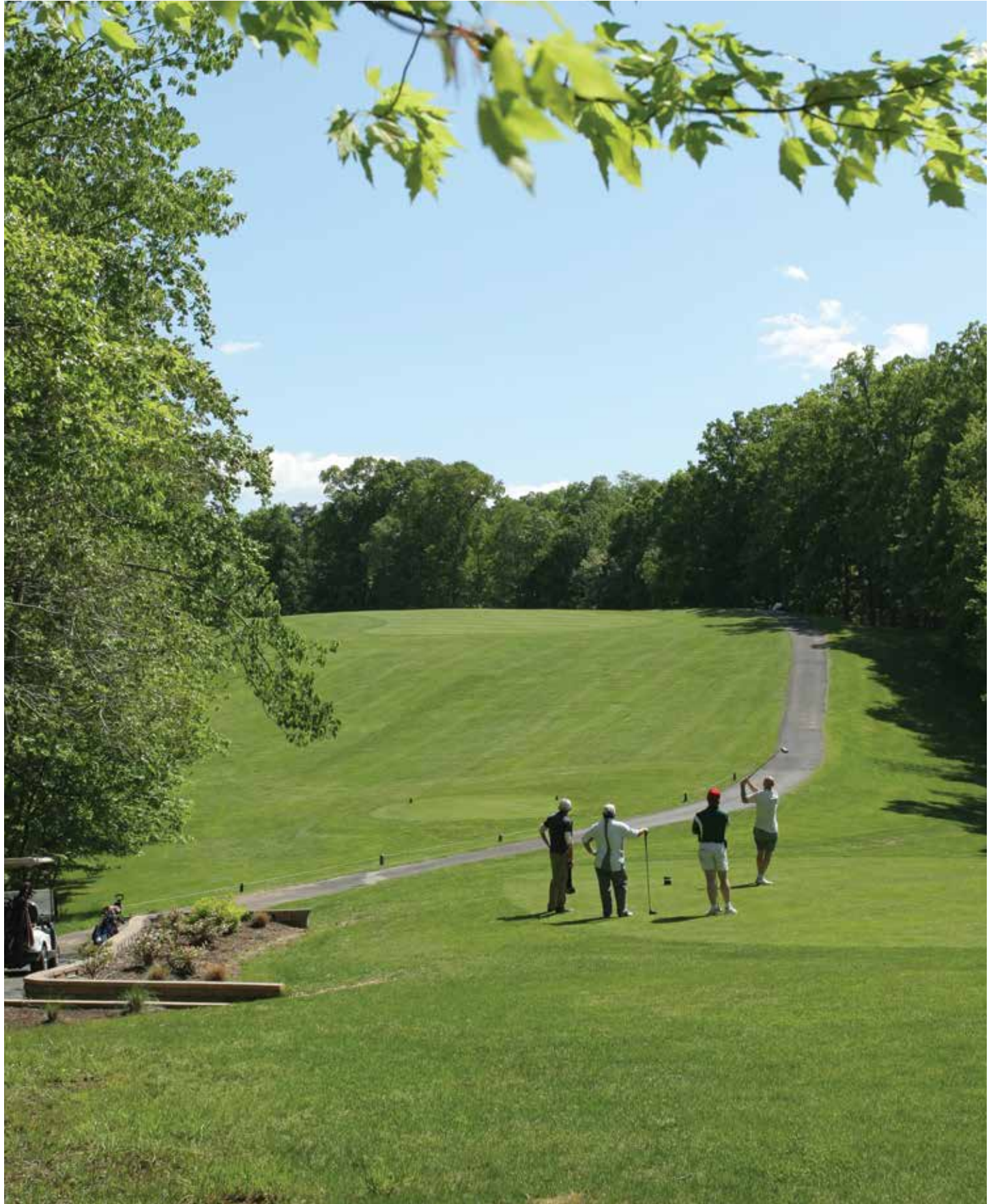
Located in Sterling, Algonkian Golf Course remains one of the area's most popular public courses. Originally designed by Ed Ault in 1962, the course offers 18 challenging holes, measuring almost 7,000 yards from the tips, offering the distance and challenge for today's long hitters, perfect for the serious golfer, but forgiving enough for the occasional player.

Its location along the Potomac river provides an optimal setting, combining the wildlife and setting of a park with the beauty of a perfectly manicured golf course. Golfers will find a long, mature tree lined front nine with water in play



on three holes, paired with a rolling back nine, dotted with an in-play stream on four holes.

Bermuda grass fairways, which give way to large greens, provide the perfect playing surface. Golfers will especially enjoy Algonkian's signature holes on number 6 - a mammoth, 526 yard par 5 (dog leg left), as well as number 16 - a par 3 that plays up



NVRPA Golf: continued



Narrow, tree-lined fairways like the one at right are typical of Algonkian Golf Course in Sterling. The course is large, and can be very challenging at times, offering a truly great playing experience.

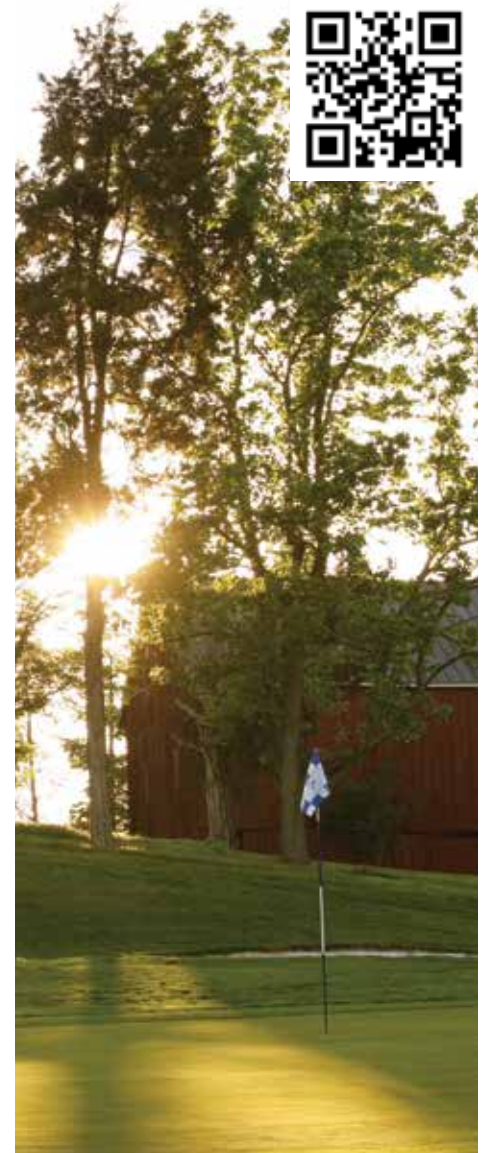


to 240 yards, with a wide but not particularly deep green.

The course also features a spacious event center, featuring two rooms accommodating from 25-200 people, providing local and out-of-town guests meeting and party space for family reunions, weddings, corporate events and club meetings (see page 48 for full details). In addition, the park itself offers riverfront cottages available for rent, a waterpark and a miniature golf course (in season), perfect for you and your guests to enjoy a great weekend of golf.

Brambleton Golf Course

Enjoy the grandeur and beauty of Brambleton Golf Course, located in Ashburn, just off the Dulles Greenway. Built on rolling farmland and designed by Hank Gordon, this picturesque course opened in 1994. Evidence of the scope of the original property lies in play throughout the course, especially in the form of the old stacked stone wall that runs throughout the property.



Pohick Bay Golf Course at sunset. The popular Lorton course is a favorite among players due to its rigorous layout and conditions. The course is adjacent to Pohick Bay Regional Park.

Brambleton measures almost 6,800 total yards from the back tees, and features several tiered greens, as well as significant water in play on six holes from the front nine, as well as two on the back. Signature holes include number 7 – a par 5, almost 600 yards from the back tees with a narrow landing area off the tee. Your second shot offers a more than 200 yard carry to clear the water, giving golfers the option of laying up, or risking a long, danger-filled attempt at the green. Number 12 is a 145-160 yard par 3, with a beautiful downhill shot to a green surrounded on three sides by water. The green slopes from back to front, so golfers will be challenged to stay below the pin to have a decent shot at a birdie. Brambleton also offers a deluxe meeting & event pavilion, perfect for corporate events, weddings or large family gatherings.

Pohick Bay Golf Course

This scenic course, originally built in 1982, is located on the Mason Neck Peninsula in

Lorton. Designed by George Cobb (who also designed the Par 3 Course at Augusta National), Pohick Bay's 18 holes run 6,400 yards from the back tees, and feature bent grass from tee to green with a mix of poa annua.

Add to that a 132 slope rating, rolling terrain throughout and several significant water hazards, and it quickly becomes clear that course management is the name of the game. The course's signature holes are a great example. On hole 2, a par 3 that measures 168 yards from the back (157 from the whites), golfers are challenged to lift their shots high up and over a deep ravine that stretches from the tee box to just short of the green. On hole 18, players will find a par 5 that measures over 500 yards from the tips, in which a good tee shot puts you in position to navigate the slight dog leg left, down to the green.

One of NVRPA's recent goals has been to offer more diverse playing options than simply the standard 9 or 18. Golfers have the

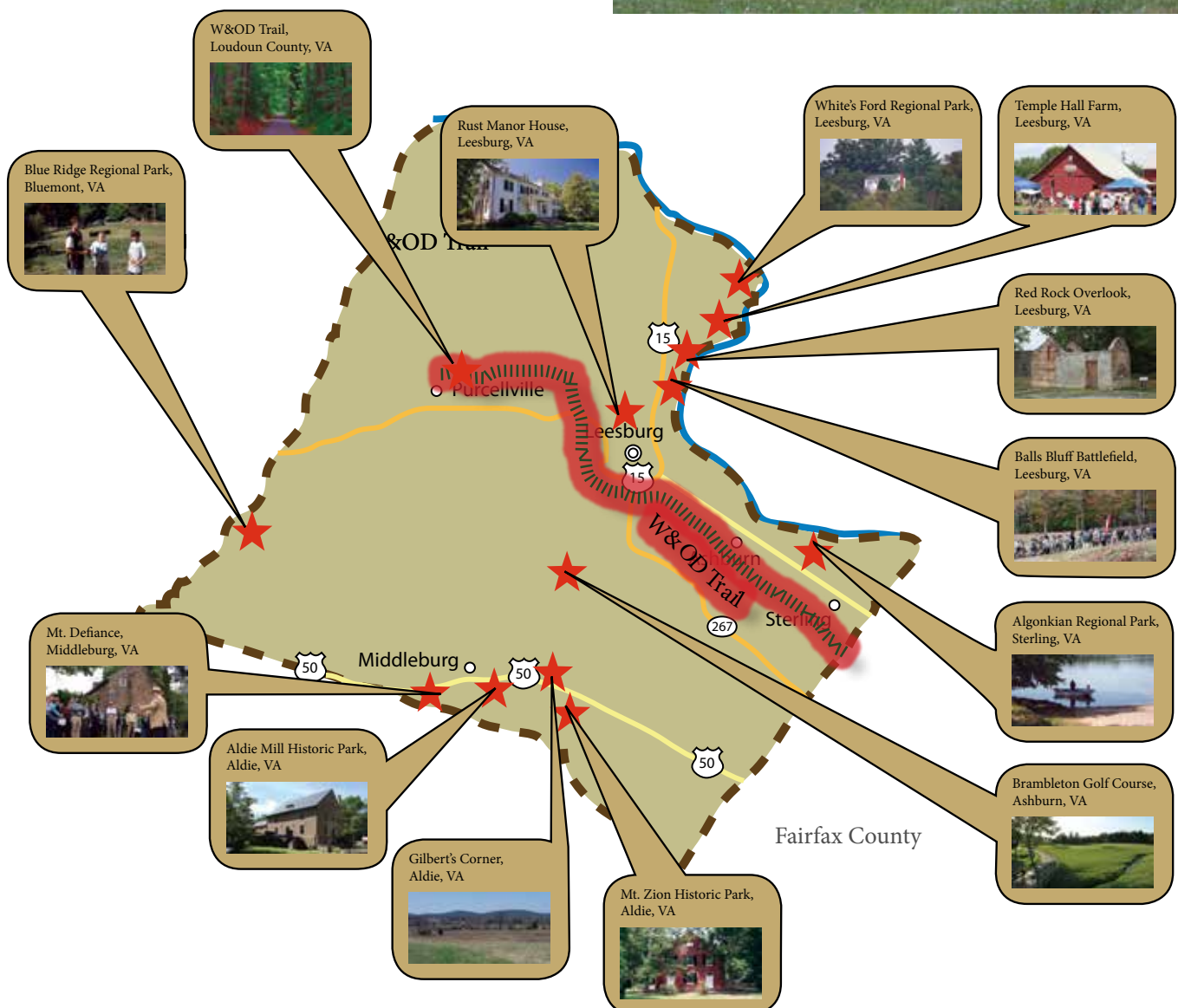
option of playing just a few holes through the Park Authority's "quick play" program, or take advantage of 9 or 18 hole rounds. The Park Authority also has a multi-tiered membership program, which allows golfers to use all three golf courses for one annual price.

Our websites allow anyone to book their tee times in advance, without ever picking up the phone.

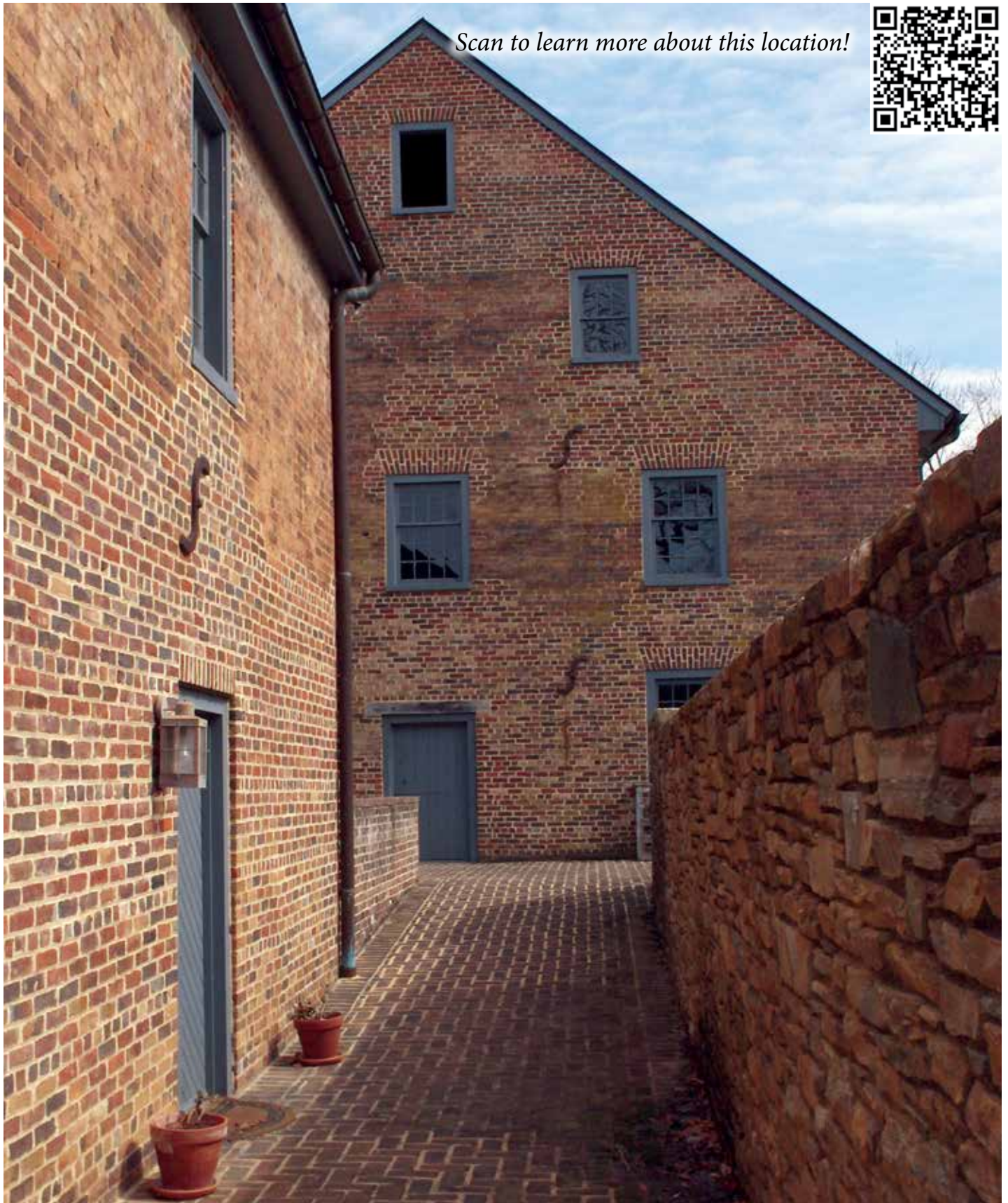
Our Jurisdictions: Loudoun County



Loudoun County joined the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority in 1973, after the Park Authority purchased 511 acres of land along the Potomac River in Sterling that had belonged to the power company, PEPCO. Two years later, that riverside acreage became Algonkian Regional Park, the first NVRPA park in Loudoun. It would certainly not be the last. NVRPA has added more parks in Loudoun in the last 20 years than any other jurisdiction. NVRPA's Loudoun offerings include a large portion of the W&OD Trail, a working farm, two golf courses, a group camping site, and several different historical properties.



Scan to learn more about this location!



Aldie Mill Historic Park, Aldie, VA

A view of the corridor separating the two main buildings, which make up Aldie Mill. Acquired by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority in 2006, the facility is open on weekends from April to November for tours and grinding demonstrations.

Out of the ordinary: NVPRA's destination parks



The gazebo at Lake Caroline in the fall at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens in Vienna. The park is open year round, and is home to a fine array of plant collections, as well as lakes, a visitor center and a Korean Bell Garden. At lower right, the Atrium at Meadowlark is a premier area event facility.

One of the things NVRPA takes great pride in is offering facilities and attractions not found in many, if any, other local venues. While our golf courses, waterparks and camping offerings certainly separate us as a park agency with a variety of opportunities, our highly unique venues truly set us apart – those parks that are destinations in their own right.

Meadowlark Botanical Gardens

In 1935, Harvard-trained economist Gardiner Means and social historian Caroline Ware bought a 74-acre farm in Virginia's rolling Piedmont outside Washington, D.C.

Very quickly, they became ingrained in Washington's lively political and academic scene. Over 50 years, they grew to love the farm- raising sheep dogs, farming wheat, and planting flower gardens while writing and teaching.

By the 1970's Washington's suburbs were fast surrounding the once rural farm. Life-long environmentalists, Means and Ware wondered if their land might make a good public park- perhaps an arboretum or public garden. Donating the land, Means and Ware entrusted their beloved 74-acre farm to the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA) in the summer of 1980. NVRPA already owned several thousand acres of parkland in Northern Virginia. Caroline Ware simply stated the



property should “create a permanence in the land...a way by which the farm could remain a haven for trees, shrubs and flowers to preserve the bounty of the Virginia country side.” Following these wishes, NVRPA bought a contiguous 21-acre parcel and started planning a public garden.

The 95-acre site is unparalleled in the Washington region for development of a public garden. Topographically, the property embodies the Virginia Piedmont with large hills dropping off to small streams, forested hollows, and expansive views. As early as 1607, Captain John Smith recognized the beauty of the Potomac Piedmont: “The country is not mountainous nor yet low but such pleasant plaine hills and fertile valleys, one prettily crossing an other and watered so conveniently with the sweete brooks and christall springs, as if art it selfe had devised them.”

By the mid-80s, three lakes were added to the largest stream course. Several trails outlined in an early master plan took shape. Collections of hosta, daylilies and ornamental cherry trees were planted. Later, an azalea garden, lilac collection and a Siberian iris and native tree trail were added. Three gazebos were built in different areas of the garden. Meadowlark opened officially in April 1987 with Means and Ware as the guests of honor. Less than three years later, both had passed away, but their vision of a public garden was taking shape. The Meadowlark Visitor Center opened in 1992, featuring a gift shop, library, large fireplace and high vaulted ceilings. A short time later, the garden received a large donation of dwarf conifers from the private collection of Dr. Albert Paulsen. Perennial, butterfly, herb gardens, and an ornamental grass collection were established by the mid-90s, concurrent with irrigation expansion.

In 1998, The Atrium, an event facility, opened. Built to match the Visitor Center in the architectural style and attended by an exquisite White Garden, The Atrium rapidly became a premier public garden event venue. In 2000, Washingtonian Magazine voted it among the top three



The Korean Bell Garden, as viewed from inside the complex. After breaking ground in 2007, the site underwent a variety of changes and improvements before creating the finished product above.

Korean Bell Garden

Just off Lake Caroline at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens stands one of the most unique venues in Northern Virginia - the Korean Bell Garden. Created via a joint effort between NVRPA and the Korean American Cultural Committee (KACC), this great endeavor began with a proposal in 2007.

“[Fairfax County] Supervisor Penny Gross introduced us to the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, and they have been wonderful to work with. I feel we have a real partnership,” stated Jeung Hwa Elmejrad-Yi, President of the Korean American Cultural Committee.

Since then, the Garden continued to take shape, adding key elements and forever changing the landscape on an otherwise unused hill. After plans were initially approved, the bulk of the work began in 2010, over 100 trees and shrubs native to Korea were planted, and stones were placed. This event was celebrated with a huge gathering of politicians, committee members, friends and members of the public, who came out to help and lend a hand planting the trees and celebrating the moment.

During the summer, a team of expert Korean artisans arrived and constructed the central pavilion that holds a one-of-a-kind bell. The structure was completely built by hand in a way that has been used for thousands of years. The bell was created in South Korea with many traditional Korean images such as birds, plants and animals, as well as images of symbols of Virginia.

Today, if you visit the Korean Bell Garden at Meadowlark, you’ll see the finished product, complete with replicas of ancient Korean monuments and statues, walls and stone structures adorned with traditional Korean symbols, and a flowing water way. The development was made possible through donations to KACC, including gifts from the Republic of Korea and Gyeonggi Province, as well as private donations.

Destination Parks: continued



event venues in the Washington metropolitan area.

Meadowlark has also initiated development of a regional native plant conservation program. Like most native collections, the objective is to foster conservation of native plants and their habitats through public education and display. The administrators of the gardens deemed it important that the new collection be regional in scope. Instead of allowing political boundaries to define the native plants of this particular region, staff developed a criteria based on biogeographic factors. Regional geology, topography and forest composition are important to development of the collection. Within this framework, Meadowlark identified the Potomac River Valley as a geographic province that determines which native plants they cultivate.

With a balance between ornamental and conservation collections, Meadowlark is expanding programmatically. Classes and tours teach topics in ornamental horticulture throughout the year. A new Biodiversity Series education program started four years ago. Participants can join wildflower and birding hikes, study the Gaia Theory, canoe a wetland marsh or learn about invasive species and plan diversity. Interns from local universities and community colleges join the staff each year for training opportunities. Meadowlark co-ops education programs with Elder Hostel, Smithsonian Associates, garden clubs, public schools and regional community centers. The garden also works with the U.S. Department of State training elite Diplomatic Security Service agents for visits to public gardens and museums. Embassy staff, diplomats and members of Congress use the garden as a retreat from the city and for entertaining.



Above left, Temple Hall's new LEED Gold Visitor Center.

Above, workers use vintage equipment during a farm demonstration.



At left, scouts navigate through the 24-acre corn maze, planted each year at the farm as part of the Corn Maize and Fall Festival.

In 2012, Meadowlark added a new, seasonal feature called "The Winter Walk of Lights." This holiday stroll is slightly more than a half mile long and features hundreds of thousands of LED lights and displays. In its first year, the event was a huge hit, and has quickly become a regional holiday favorite.

Temple Hall Farm

Temple Hall Farm Regional Park is a beautiful working farm, dedicated to preserving the agricultural and natural resources of Loudoun County. The 286-acre farm serves as an excellent educational and recreational facility. The park provides a wonderful opportunity for both children and adults to

learn about the diverse aspects of animal and crop farming.

The farm was donated to NVRPA in 1985 by Valeria Symington to preserve from development the farm and home she moved into as a newlywed in 1940. She and her husband restored the early 1800s mansion of William Temple Thomson Mason, a nephew of George Mason, and ran a variety of agricultural endeavors through the years.

Today, the property is as much a park and tourist attraction as it is a farm. Visitors can use the designated picnic areas for lunches or birthday parties, stroll around and see the many farm animals, or take a walk across the creek to the nature trail. On weekends,



Shooters take aim on the five stand target range. The Shooting Center is open year round, and located within Bull Run Regional Park.

a farm interpreter is available for free farm tours and to answer any questions.

In 2012, the Park Authority completed work on the farm's AV Symington Visitor Center. The Center is an LEED Gold (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified "green" building. LEED is an internationally recognized green building certification system that provides third-party verification that a building or community was designed and built using strategies aimed at improving performance across all the metrics that matter most: energy savings, water efficiency, CO2 emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts.

The Visitor Center highlights the mission of Temple Hall Farm Regional Park and the LEED aspects of the new building. Visitors can begin their Temple Hall Farm Park experience at the Visitor Center where they'll find site maps, directions to exhibits and information and brochures about Temple Hall Farm and events.

The center includes a multi-purpose room that can be used for meetings and gatherings of various types, including birthday parties, exhibits highlighting agriculture in Loudoun County (past and present), public restrooms and office facilities. The adjacent exhibit barn features opportunities for children and adults to get "up close" to a variety of farm animals and learn about their care and feeding. It also features hands-on exhibits related to farming and agriculture. Fully self-guided visitor experiences and opportunities for interpreter-led discoveries are available as well. School and youth groups can take advantage of the educational programs provided. The farm acts as a great outdoor classroom to educate all ages on Northern Virginia farming heritage.

A little over a dozen years ago, the farm created the area's first giant corn maze. A massive design was carved into a multi-acre corn field, and the resulting picture "grew up" in Temple Hall's fields. Today, that idea has become one of the Park Authority's most popular events – the Temple Hall Farm Corn Maize & Fall Festival. The event happens annually from late September

through early November, and in addition to the maze – which has grown to 24 full acres – it features many different attractions to please the whole family.

Bull Run Public Shooting Center

Located inside the confines of Bull Run Regional Park in Centreville lies the Bull Run Public Shooting Center. This one-of-a-kind shotgun facility is the only public shotgun shooting range in Northern Virginia, and offers a unique perspective on the sport with its wide range of target challenges.

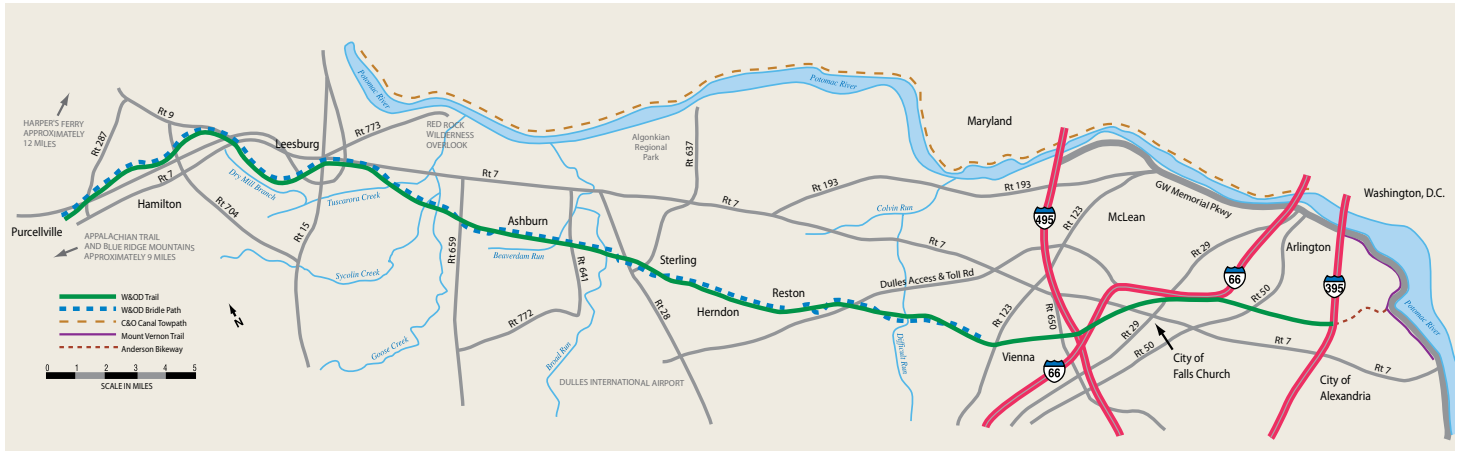
Originally developed as one of several Winchester Gun Clubs, it was acquired by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority in 1967. The Shooting Center features five major shooting games, including Trap, Wobble Trap, Skeet, Sporting Clays and Five Stand. The facility offers classes for novices, and all shooters are required to take an instructional class before shooting at the range for the first time.

The property features a full service pro shop, which includes ammunition and gun rentals. The facility also houses an indoor archery range, with 18 lanes and a max distance of 20 yards. Like the shooting center itself, the archery range also offers instruction for beginners and for advanced shooters.



A shooting station on the route of the Bull Run Public Shooting Center's Sporting Clays course.

Destination Parks: continued



The Shooting Center's five stand is exactly as it sounds – a wooden deck that holds five different shooting positions, ideal for groups. Other games – like Trap and Wobble Trap – offer target shooting from a different perspective entirely. Shooters must be prepared for targets from any angle, including some that “run” across the ground, or come simultaneously from



A cyclist rides on the W&OD Trail. The Trail sees more than 2 million cyclists each year, as well as roller bladers, walkers, runners and equestrians.

two different starting points.

But the Sporting Clays are probably the Bull Run Shooting Center's most remarkable feature. Spread over 15 different stations in the fields adjacent to the shooting center building, the clays are all automated with a mix of field and woods shots. At its heart, this unique feature (which has been referred to as “golf with a shotgun”) boasts a 50 foot tower, which launches sporting clays that essentially simulate birds in flight.

Bull Run Shooting Center has hosted and continues to host a variety of tournaments, including those of the National Sporting Clays Association (NSCA). The Shooting Center is also two-time host of the Virginia State Sporting Clays Championships. In addition, the range is a host practice facility for a local college shooting team as well as shooting leagues. Corporate packages for groups are also available by reservation.

The Washington and Old Dominion Trail

While NVRPA boasts over 100 miles of trails throughout Northern Virginia, none resemble anything close to the traffic on the W&OD Trail. The 100-foot-wide W&OD has been called “the skinniest park in Virginia.” But it is also one of the longest parks; 45 miles of paved trail for walking, running, bicycling and skating and 32 miles of adjacent gravel trail for horseback riding. Built

on the roadbed of the former Washington & Old Dominion Railroad, the multi-use W&OD Trail runs through the urban heartland and countryside of Northern Virginia.

“We hear time and again how important the W&OD is to its users and the people of Northern Virginia in general,” said NVRPA Director of Operations Chris Pauley. “It’s one of the first venues residents think of when they talk about NVRPA.”

Snaking its way through the heart of Northern Virginia, the W&OD has end points in Shirlington (off Route 395) in Arlington County, and, 45 miles away, in Purcellville in Loudoun County. As a recreational trail, the route is vital to the hundreds of thousands who make their way along its route each year – on foot, via bicycle, on in-line skates or on horseback. Some find it a great method to commute to work each day. Others, a perfect segue from point A to B on a Sunday afternoon stroll. For many more, it’s a haven for fitness – miles and miles of trail with challenging inclines, declines and fantastic scenery. And that scenery changes as the Trail advances - from urban and residential to the northeast, flowing through valleys and suburban crossing, and finishing under beautiful tree canopies to southwest. It winds over highways, through cities and towns, over creeks and waterways. Its surroundings can go from the bustling rush of Northern Virginia rush hour to vast planes of silence in only a few miles.

Decades ago, however, the Trail was a vital route for a far different group of travelers. As the W&OD Railroad, this route was once



A great look at the versatility of the W&OD Trail and its users, as riders on horseback gallop alongside cyclists. The W&OD has 32 miles of adjacent gravel trail for horseback riding.

considered vital following its inception in 1847, with a primary goal of spreading commerce from the Alexandria seaport inland to the growing communities to the west. And while its life as a commercial route never quite evolved the way the railroad's developers envisioned, the route saw more than its fair share of history. The route was the site of a few skirmishes during the Civil War, and was truly witness to the development of Northern Virginia based largely on its route. The tracks wound through what is today Arlington, Falls Church, Vienna, Reston, Herndon, Sterling, Leesburg and Purcellville – all significant modern sites, many

of which are key for economic development.

When the railroad finally encountered its demise in 1967, it underwent a series of changes – first at the hands of VEPCO – which had formerly been the local Virginia Power Company – and then later in 1974 by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority. The ribbon on the first section of the W&OD Trail was cut on Sept. 7, 1974 by then Falls Church mayor Harold Miller – the first of what would be many events as the park expanded in both directions. On November 5, 1988, the Park Authority celebrated the opening of the Trail's final nine

miles into Purcellville. Today, the Trail is an artery for visitors and commuters year round. Because of its high volume, safety is always part of the W&OD's concern.

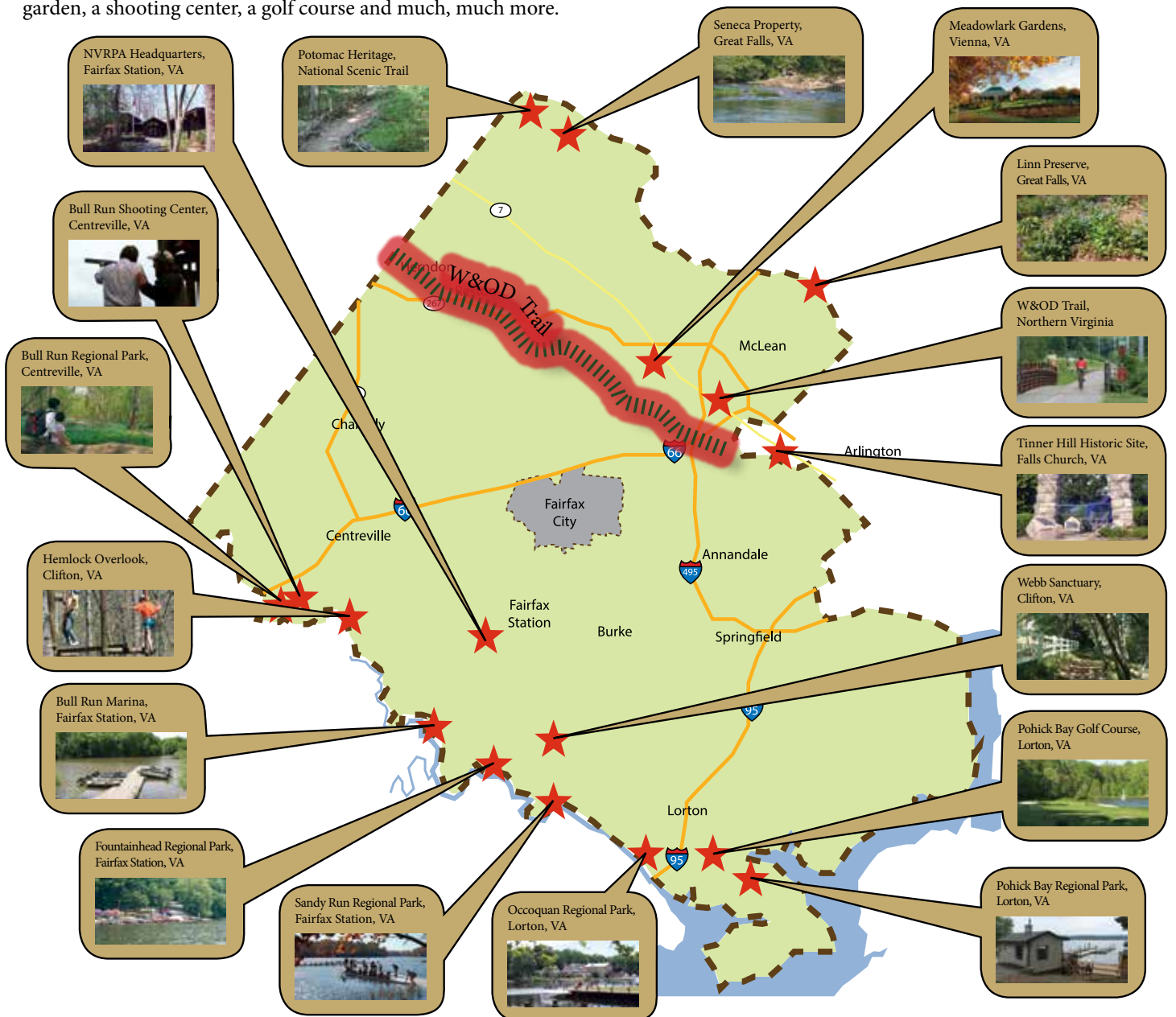
Over the years, NVRPA has sought to minimize accidents by increasing signage and using the latest safety techniques.

Part of what has made the Trail such a great route over the last decade is the involvement of the very users who traverse it. The Friends of the W&OD Trail, through their membership program, assist the Park Authority in keeping the Trail safe and clean.

Our Jurisdictions: Fairfax County



In 1959, Fairfax County, along with Arlington County and the City of Falls Church, formed what would eventually become the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority. Fittingly, NVRPA's first land purchase came in Fairfax County, at what would become Bull Run Regional Park. The county's proximity to the Occoquan Reservoir has made it a natural fit for the Park Authority, who has sought to protect the land across this key body of water, and in doing so, create some of the most beautiful parks in the county. NVRPA's offerings in Fairfax include a botanical garden, a shooting center, a golf course and much, much more.



Scan to learn more about this location!



Bull Run Special Events Center, Bull Run Regional Park, Centreville, VA

A huge crowd assembles on a perfect day during the Vintage Virginia Wine Festival at the Bull Run Special Events Center. The Special Events Center is home to concerts, cultural festivals, beer and wine festivals, as well as sporting events like area cross country races. Above left, the shores of Occoquan Regional Park.

Nature, education and Reg, the squirrel



A child in the Nature Nuts program takes the ultimate plunge - engaging the zip wire at Hemlock Overlook Regional Park in Clifton.

In 2011, NVRPA turned its attention to a growing problem – one affecting the nation as a whole, but certainly Northern Virginia – the growing lack of time that children spend in nature. Referring to the problem as “Nature Deficit Disorder,” the Park Authority considered a wide variety of potential programs and solutions.

NVRPA boasts educational material and information all over its dozens of parks. However, the bulk of NVRPA’s concentrated efforts in this arena has come in the form of educational camps, as well as programs like our Roving Naturalist program (a roving staffer who brings plants, animals and insects to various sites and conducts an on-site educational lesson) and facilities like the Energerium (a Nature Center-style facility with displays and interactive kiosks that highlight the connection that energy forges between the human and natural worlds).

In the end, NVRPA centered on a multi-tiered solution built around a program known as “Nature Nuts,” a region-wide program to reconnect children with the outdoors. The program would not only forge a new branded approach to education, but manage to tie in the rest of NVRPA’s efforts in the process.



In some ways, the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority has been engaged in this effort for over 50 years. Many of NVRPA’s facilities and programs that help connect children with the environment have been in operation for decades, while others are new. In 2008, NVRPA was one of the first park agencies to join the national “No Child Left Inside Coalition.” On an annual basis, over 85,000 children and adolescents currently connect with nature through the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.

- 48,000 children camp in Regional Parks,

nearly 3,000 through youth organizations like Scouting and 45,000 through family camping.

- Close to 10,000 connect with nature while boating in Regional Parks, over 1,200 local high school students row on the Occoquan Reservoir, and over 8,500 use rented kayaks or canoes or are boating with friends and family on boats they launch at a Regional Park.
- Over 15,000 children go through the adventure course run by Adventure Links at Hemlock Overlook Regional Park.
- Over 13,000 children learn about nature from an NVRPA naturalist or park staff as part of a children-focused nature education program.

The Nature Nuts program enhances currently existing programs in parks all over the Northern Virginia area, with the goal of giving half a million children a meaningful outdoor experience that positively affects them through education, health benefits and interaction and education of the environment.

Education

Educational programs are offered year-round at many NVRPA parks. As a part of Nature Nuts, programs such as the Junior Naturalist camp at Potomac Overlook in Arlington

and Camp Grow at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens in Vienna, offer children a unique educational camp experience where they can enjoy nature through hands-on activities.

Nature interpretation programs with the NVRPA Roving Naturalist are developed with specific educational objectives in mind. Through guided nature walks, hikes, canoe and kayak tours, night explorations, stream and pond studies and live animal programs, participants gain the opportunity to discover our native flora and fauna in a safe and fun environment. Scout programs run by the Roving Naturalist tailor specific educational and environmental goals into programs at NVRPA parks.

Hemlock Overlook is an Outdoor Education Center, an ACA accredited camp, in cooperation with the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority. The facility offers a variety of outdoor and environmen-

tal education, team development programs for public and private schools, religious groups, community groups, sports teams, corporations, professional organizations, as well as local, state, and federal government and military agencies.



Reg, the Regional Squirrel (and official Nature Nuts mascot) is used in various places to show the many activities that are a part of the Nature Nuts program.

Camp NVRPA: A new take on summer camps

In 2012, NVRPA took a new look at its educational camp programs. While the agency had never had a particularly large foray into children's summer camps, NVRPA's new, more streamlined thrust towards educational programs in general caused the Park Authority to reassess. NVRPA was able to then utilize its existing properties to easily facilitate its camp programs, marrying three different camp models under the moniker "Camp NVRPA."

Camp Carlyle, held at Carlyle House in Alexandria, packs stories, games and opportunities into a week of fun and hands-on experiences, including dressing up in period costume, writing with quill pens, making butter, playing 18th century games, and taking field trips to relevant local sites in Old Town. The Naturalists camps held at Potomac Overlook Regional Park in Arlington, on the other hand, are more traditional in focus, with engaging, sometimes challenging programs like soil painting, stream hikes, aquatic studies, swimming, restoring natural habitats, canoeing and more. At Camp Grow, which is held at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens in Vienna, the thrust is slightly different - offering a more holistic approach with the intention of having its participants embrace the natural world. Activities include preparing and planting vegetable gardens, yoga, storytelling in a drum circle, taking care of animals, games, crafts, music and more.



Educational Programs: continued

NVRPA's Roving Naturalist Programs in high demand

The NVRPA Roving Naturalist on a nature hike with some local Daisy Scouts near Fountainhead Regional Park. In addition to guided hikes and tours, the NVRPA Roving Naturalist also appears at a variety of different NVRPA events and facilities.



The mission of the NVRPA Roving Naturalist Program is to connect the citizens of Northern Virginia with the natural world in our Regional Parks.

Through guided nature walks, hikes, canoe and kayak tours, night explorations, stream and pond studies, and live animal programs, participants gain the opportunity to discover our native flora and fauna in a safe and fun environment. Programs are catered to kids, adults, and anyone interested in the natural world.

Programs are offered in many of the Northern Virginia Regional Parks including Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, Pohick Bay Regional Park, Bull Run Regional Park, Fountainhead Regional Park, Occoquan Regional Park, Algonkian Regional Park, Temple Hall Farm Regional Park, Hemlock Overlook Regional Park, and all five NVRPA waterpark facilities (in-season only).

Hemlock Overlook also carefully institutes Standards of Learning (SOL) practices at the facility. Additional programs built around SOL programs can be found at parks such as Potomac Overlook, Temple Hall Farm, Meadowlark Botanical Gardens and Hemlock Overlook. The goal of these programs is to enhance and expand opportunities for cultural and environmental interpretation and education that foster an understanding of the relationship between people and the environment.

Environment

Nature Nuts supports programs offered through NVRPA that benefit participants through environmental educational experiences. Learning about the environment affects how participants treat the environment throughout their life. In Arlington, visitors get a better understanding of the natural world and our connection with energy at the Energerium Nature Center at Potomac Overlook Regional Park. At Hemlock Overlook, it's become a right of passage for 5th and 6th graders in area schools, as they test themselves on the zip line and other challenges, while learning about the environment. Youth group camping at Camp Wilson at Pohick Bay, as well as Bull Run

and Blue Ridge Regional Parks, is a place where young people sleep under the stars. Increasing programs for children, including a summer camp, are happening at Meadowlark Gardens. Temple Hall Farm Park helps thousands of 4th graders understand agriculture.

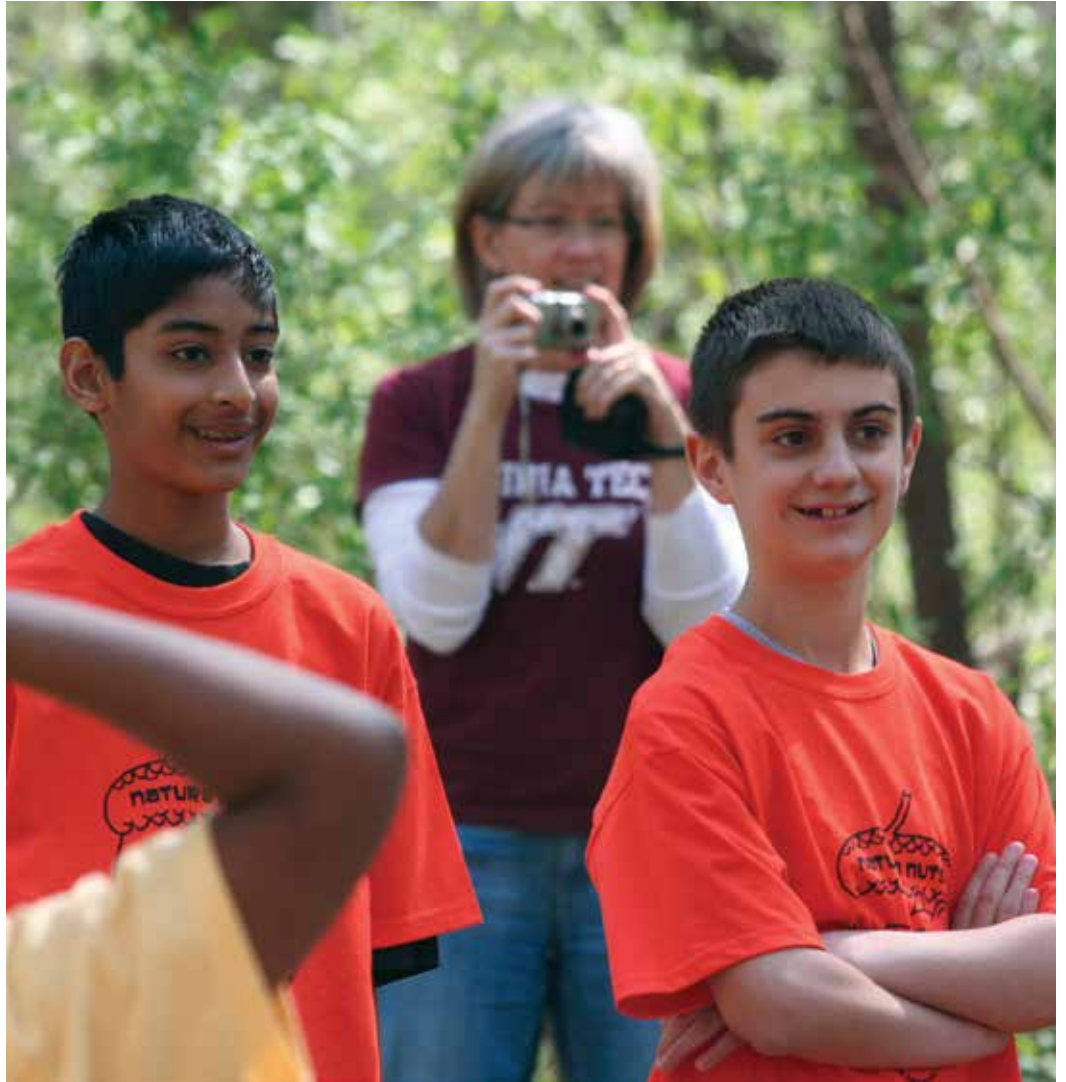
Health

In his bestselling book *Last Child in the Woods*, Richard Louv brought public attention to the fact that children today are significantly less engaged with nature than children were a generation ago. More time spent in front of screens, and more structured and scheduled after school activities result in less time for today's generation of children to explore the outdoors. The results are predictable - things like childhood obesity, an increase in diabetes, and so on.

A growing body of studies is showing that these issues can be significantly improved when children have more time to play in a natural environment. According to one government estimate, the average American spends 90% of his or her life indoors, and, as we get older, we become even more inclined not to venture out.



Here again is where the Park Authority believes that, by way of its Nature Nuts program, it can help address these growing issues. The program takes a two tracked approach of not only enhancing youth based programming, but also working to encourage more families with children to make outdoor recreation a part of their family traditions to ensure a healthier future population. In doing so, the benefits become obvious - better moods, increases in vitamin D, and better overall health.



Kids in action during a Nature Nuts event at Hemlock Overlook Regional Park in Fairfax Station.

The Foundation - A critical partner

The Northern Virginia Regional Park Foundation was created in 2004, to generate new sources of revenue that will enable expansion, improvement and conservation of Northern Virginia's special natural and historic places and parklands.

Since its inception, the Foundation has done a great deal of work on behalf of its mission, accepting donations and putting them towards a variety of projects, either those geared at improving an NVRPA park, or in the form of events which raise the profile of both the Foundation and the Park Authority.

In September of 2008 and 2009, the Foundation hosted a pair of successful "Wheel to Work" days on the W&OD Trail, designed to help promote bicycle safety and education along the trail and its surrounding roadways. The events included participation of local businesses as well as cycling advocacy groups and associations.



In 2009, the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority celebrated its 50th Anniversary, by cutting two ribbons in each of its six jurisdictions - either on a new park, a new park feature, or a new park improvement.

As a part of this effort, the Nature Center at Potomac Overlook was dedicated and renamed the James I. Mayer Center for Environmental Education. Home to the Energerium, this facility offers visitors a fun and accessible way to learn energy basics as well as ways they can help create sustainable energy solutions at the individual, community and national levels. The displays blend lessons from ecology, earth science, physics, chemistry and other topics in clear, understandable ways. The project was funded by grants from Exxon Mobil and donations to the James I. Mayer Fund.

The Foundation also helps NVRPA through its Historic Legacy Program, which supports and encourages engagement in learning about history through experiences at North-



Members of the Foundation gather with Camp Grow/Nature Nuts participants at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens.

ern Virginia Regional Park Authority facilities. Essentially, at parks like Ball's Bluff Battlefield, Aldie Mill, White's Ford, Mt. Zion, Carlyle House, the W&OD Trail, Blackburn's Ford, Mt. Defiance and others, the Foundation is working to expand programs that engage visitors in learning about history.

Built with a goal of enhancing existing programs in parks all over the Northern Virginia area, Nature Nuts hopes to give half a million children a meaningful outdoor experience that positively affects them through education, health benefits and interaction, and education of the environment. The Foundation has established the Nature Nuts Fund to support the goals of the Nature Nuts program. Monies donated to this fund will be used to support activities that further the goals of the

program, including:

- Grants to help elementary schools defray the costs of field trips to Hemlock Overlook;
- Grants to help send kids to camps like the Junior Naturalist Camp at Potomac Overlook or Camp Grow at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens;
- Expansion of NVRPA's Roving Naturalist Program;
- Facility improvements at youth camping sites;
- Expansion of rental kayak and canoe operations;
- Promotional materials and efforts to get children involved in Nature Nuts.

Because of these amazing contributions and those certain to follow in the future, the Foundation remains a critical part of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.



An NVRPA naturalist educates young visitors on snakes and reptiles at an event on the W&OD Trail in Ashburn. The Foundation spends a great deal of time and resources to bring programs like this one to life.

Partnerships build a strong regional agency



A scholastic crew team takes to the water at Sandy Run Regional Park, on the Occoquan Reservoir. The regattas are operated through a partnership with the Virginia Scholastic Rowing Association.

One way the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority has been able to maximize its relationship with the region is through a series of successful partnerships.

By working with outside organizations or groups, NVRPA is able to enhance its facilities and programs by utilizing the talents and efforts of various groups or volunteers.

Some partnerships are ongoing - Pohick Bay Regional Park, for example, works closely with the Bureau of Land Management on trail improvements. The Mid-Atlantic Off Road Enthusiasts group (MORE) does fantastic work through its volunteer programs to keep the Mountain Bike Trail at Fountainhead Regional Park in Fairfax Station looking great and functioning.

At Meadowlark Botanical Gardens in Vienna (see page 33) for example, NVRPA paired

with the Korean American Cultural Committee (KACC) to realize the Korean Bell Garden. The group approached NVRPA in 2007 about the possibility of creating this one-of-a-kind feature, and over the next five years, the two organizations made it work. The Korean Bell Garden was officially opened to the public - complete - in 2012.

Formed in 2000, the Occoquan Water-trail Trail League (OWL), for example, is a community-based group of active paddlers and advocates of the Occoquan Water Trail (OWT). The League assists in providing long-term stewardship of the trail, which it accomplishes through various activities and social paddling events. OWL funds these projects through its membership program, which in turn provides access to private boat launches within the NVRPA system. NVRPA also actively promotes the OWL program on its website and through

various signage along the Occoquan Water Trail.

Near the mouth of that water trail lies Occoquan Regional Park. Most noted for its picturesque access to the Occoquan River, as well as sports fields and batting cages, Occoquan Regional Park is also home to the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial (see page 16). On July 27, 2008, NVRPA and the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area formally dedicated Turning Point Plaza, which honors the women who were imprisoned at the Occoquan Workhouse located across from the current Occoquan Regional Park.

The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area continues to work towards getting donations (in cooperation with the Northern Virginia Regional Park Foundation) to bring this dream to life. Phase II of the Turning Point Plaza will be a fitting suffragist memorial,



Above, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chair Sharon Bulova is strapped into a zip wire harness at Hemlock Overlook Regional Park. Below, the Korean Bell Garden, created via a partnership between NVRPA and the Korean American Cultural Committee.



which will include inserted plaques to commemorate the suffragist struggle for American women's right to vote.

Sandy Run Regional Park lies along the Occoquan Reservoir and operates through the Agency's relationship with the Virginia Scholastic Rowing Association (VASRA). NVRPA provides Sandy Run (and to a lesser extent, Bull Run Marina), while VASRA provides the organization, resources and oversight for scholastic competitive rowing regattas. The result is that many of the area's best scholastic regattas are held at Sandy Run (for example, the facility once hosted an Olympic rowing qualifier) and bring in a throng of fans and families to this NVRPA facility.

At the beginning of 2013, NVRPA and the Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS) entered into a long term lease agreement by which NVRPA would take over the day-to-day management of Rust Sanctuary, a 68-acre property just west of Leesburg, which was donated by the Rust family in 2000.

The partnership between the agencies is unique – while the Park Authority manages the facility (including Rust Manor House, a large event venue on site), ANS continues to do mission critical programming such as summer camps, school and home school programs, and daily programs. This creates an atmosphere in which the two agencies are literally working side-by-side, a win for both agencies, and a gain for the region as a whole. Going forward, the arrangement may even present an opportunity for Audubon to integrate its programs at other existing NVRPA facilities.

Of course, the most significant partnership NVRPA currently holds is with Adventure Links, which operates the challenge course team building program at Hemlock Overlook Regional Park. The park includes 275 acres of rolling woodlands, situated on the banks of Bull Run in Clifton. Also included are cabins, rest room/shower buildings, mess hall, administration building and several picnic shelters.

When NVRPA's relationship with a different partner expired, the Park Authority found another in Adventure Links. Programs at Hemlock Overlook are open to the public and groups by reservation. Only the hiking and horse trails may be used without prior arrangement.

NVRPA event facilities - At your service



A look at the beautiful interior of the Woodlands at Algonkian. Known as the Loudoun Room, this facility is a perfect site for wedding receptions, as well as major corporate and business gatherings.

While the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority is known for its open spaces, golf courses, historical assets and family fun, it's also become a key part of a different regional landscape: Weddings and major social events.

The Regional Park Authority boasts three premier event facilities that offer the true full service experience for weddings and other social events. In addition, the Park Authority has an in-house catering service, known as Great Blue Heron Catering. GBH is the preferred caterer at all NVRPA event facilities, and the designation is truly deserved: the service's creative menus and fantastic cuisine garner accolades from guests on a regular basis.

In Vienna, the Park Authority owns and operates the Atrium at Meadowlark Botanical

Gardens. The glass walls of the building look out on the 95-acre Meadowlark Botanical Gardens with some of the best ornamental collections right outside the venue walls. The facility is adorned with lush foliage, flowers, fountains and a meandering stream that brings outdoor garden beauty indoors and provides a unique, natural setting for your special event, any time of year. The Atrium features a two-thousand square foot skylight, indoor stream and fountain. While wedding celebrations are most common, the Atrium is also host to corporate banquets, holiday celebrations and more.

Meadowlark also features alternate areas that create very unique event experiences, including gazebos, a huge outdoor patio area, and, of course, the Korean Bell Garden (see page 33). The Atrium remains a favorite among brides in the Northern Virginia area. In early



Mt. Zion Historic Park, above, is an excellent venue for modest-sized weddings and other smaller gatherings.

2013, NVRPA completed an outdoor pavilion. As a result, the facility now offers even more wedding options, with a variety of different backdrops.

In Sterling, Algonkian Regional Park is home to The Woodlands, one of Loudoun County's premier event facilities. The Woodlands provides a beautiful natural setting for a picturesque wedding.

Nestled by the wooded banks of the Potomac River, this venue offers patrons plenty of space for a ceremony and reception. Walk through our entryway into the formal reception space, and guests are presented with soaring ceilings, a striking stone fireplace, a dance floor and windows that stretch to the ceiling, offering a lovely view of our golf course.

The facility is also built to handle outside ceremonies in its charming pergola on The Woodlands' lawn.

Business organizations, clubs, school groups and others can also utilize the event space at The Woodlands. Events can be held in one or two of its rooms for learning, networking, planning or celebrating.

The Woodlands' other amenities dovetail



The Loudoun Room at The Woodlands is also perfect for a variety of corporate functions.

Great Blue Heron Catering Services: A cut above the ordinary



No event at a Park Authority facility would be complete without Great Blue Heron Catering, NVRPA's in-house catering service. GBH is the preferred caterer at all NVRPA event sites (namely The Atrium at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, The Woodlands at Algonkian and Rust Manor House).

Great Blue Heron Catering offers the finest cuisine for its guests, and its experienced chefs offer a wide array of dining options, including plated dinners, buffets and full beverage service. Menus are typically determined by having the managers and chefs at GBH meet with the bride and groom (or event coordinator), and creating a customized menu for the occasion. The result is a beautiful, tasteful array of appetizers, entrees and desserts, creating a perfect event.



A corporate picnic under the Barn Pavilion at Bull Run Regional Park, with catering provided by GBH Catering.

Great Blue Heron also offers picnic services, a wonderful option for corporate events and large gatherings, at two outstanding sites - Bull Run Regional Park and Cameron Run Regional Park. Located in Centreville, Bull Run offers wide open spaces, camping, a waterpark and more. Immediately adjacent to two children's playgrounds and restrooms, the Barn Pavilion is the perfect setting for any group of 150-1,500. Play exciting picnic games including horseshoes, bag toss, volleyball and kickball in the spacious fields of the Barn Pavilion. Carnival add-ons and moon bounces are available through GBH Catering. Visitors can use all the great features available at Bull Run, including Atlantis Waterpark (see page 9).

At Great Waves, the agency's largest waterpark (located at Cameron Run Regional Park in Alexandria), there are a number of large pavilions built to accommodate such events. Businesses or visitors may rent a pavilion and cater a lunch, all while enjoying one of the region's biggest and most fun waterparks. Great Waves' two large corporate shelters - Pipeline Pavilion and Coral Reef Pavilion - provide the perfect venue for corporate events, family reunions and other large gatherings (up to 300 people). The pavilions provide direct access into the waterpark while keeping your event private. All food and beverage needs, as well as Carnival add-ons moon bounces, and discount all-facility tickets are available through GBH Catering.

Event Venues continued

quite nicely with its event services. During weddings or other social events, the riverside cottages offer a great overnight option. Extended stay groups, during the proper times of year, could also take advantage of the waterpark as well as the golf course.

In 2013, NVRPA added a new facility to its events lineup in Loudoun County - Rust Manor House. Formerly operated by Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS), Rust functioned for years as a popular events facility and nature sanctuary. When NVRPA began operating the site, much of the existing operation was revamped and improved. Today, the facility is one of the finest formal event venues in the region.

The stately Rust Manor House is an excellent choice for weddings or other special events – anniversary celebrations, corporate receptions, picnics and more. Truly a hidden treasure, situated on a 68-acre nature sanctuary on the edge of historic Leesburg, Virginia, seat of Loudoun County, this storied mansion resides at the heart of the Rust Nature Sanctuary, a serene nature preserve given to the Audubon Naturalist Society by Margaret Dole Rust in 2000.

Surrounded by six habitats that are home to native birds and woodland creatures, flowers,



The interior of the Atrium at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens in Vienna, set for a wedding. The facility is extremely popular for weddings, but is also available as a corporate event venue.



A bride and groom pose on the steps at the portico of Rust Manor House, which became one of NVRPA's newest event facilities in 2013.

trees, fields, pond and even a vernal pool, this peaceful setting belies the Rust Manor House & Sanctuary's very convenient location – just half an hour's drive from Dulles International Airport and an hour from the nation's capital.

The facility is unique in its partnership. The Park Authority manages the facility (including Rust Manor House), meanwhile, ANS continues to do mission critical programming such as summer camps, school and home school programs, and daily programs. During the indoor season, the Manor House can accommodate 65 guests. And during the outdoor season, Rust Manor House and its gardens welcome up to 200 guests.

While NVRPA certainly puts its best foot forward with these three premier event sites, the agency also offers a wide array of alternative sites that can be extremely appealing, depending on group size, budget, etc. Carlyle House (see page 14) for example, features a tented Magnolia Terrace, available for late afternoon and evening rentals April 1 through October 31, with a maximum group size of 100 guests. Events take place overlooking the lovely gardens and the 18th-century style summerhouse. The mansion is open for tours during any function.

Brambleton Golf Course (see page 26) in Ashburn offers a beautiful outdoor wedding and event pavilion. Sitting adjacent to the clubhouse and surrounded by the picturesque views of the golf course, the Pavilion is perfect in any weather. It features capacity for up to 150 under the covered portion, or up to 200 including the patio.

Mount Zion (see page 15) in Aldie, built in 1851, is located at what had been the intersection of a critical crossroads in South-eastern Loudoun County. The church was an eyewitness to much of the history of this area, in particular the Civil War. Mt. Zion is available as a unique setting for weddings, business meetings or social events.

Seating for up to 100 people is offered inside the church, and the grounds are perfect for a party under a tent. The rustic church setting is a wonderful and picturesque venue for any wedding or event.



A bride and groom pose next to a tree following a wedding held at the Atrium at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens. The Gardens are a popular site for wedding photographs.

Fall/Winter Festivals bring parks to life



The Maize, in the only way it can be truly viewed - from 1000 feet in the air. The 24 acre attraction is a fall favorite for residents throughout the region.



Kids launch into the air from the Billy Goat Bounce, one of the many attractions of the Temple Hall Farm Maize and Fall Festival.

While the fall and winter months typically represent down times for most park agencies, it's one of the busiest times of year for the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.

With three major annual events in full swing beginning in late September and running through the beginning of the following calendar year, NVRPA turns three different parks into seasonal hot spots that feature big crowds and big fun.

Temple Hall Maize & Fall Festival

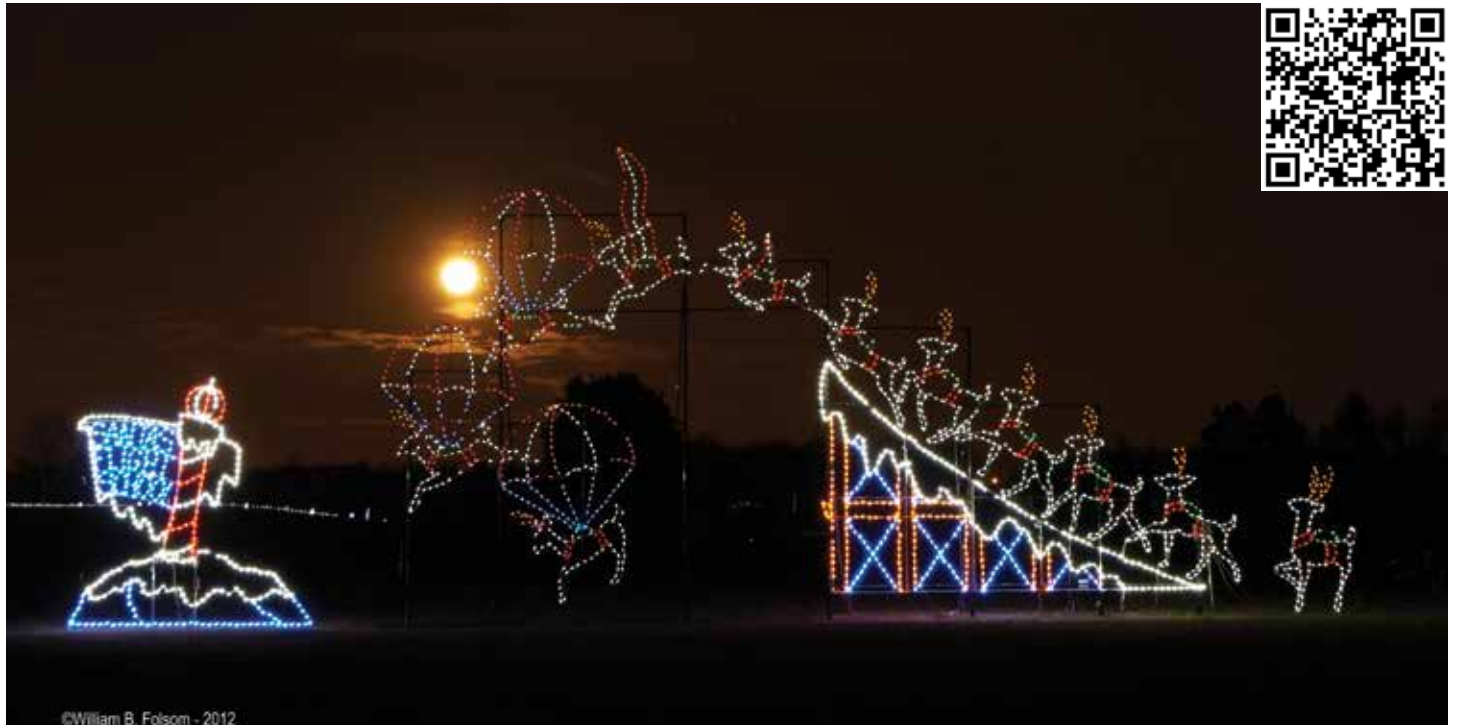
In the fall, the fun begins at the Temple Hall

Farm Maize and Fall Festival, held at Temple Hall Farm Regional Park in Leesburg (see page 34). More than just your typical fall festival, this event offers some truly unique experiences for kids (and adults) of all ages, at this historic working farm.

At its heart sits the gigantic, 24-acre field that holds each year's annual maze design. Previous designs have included the 250th Anniversary of the Town of Leesburg, the 100th Anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America, and the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War.

Over the years, despite the Maize being one of the area's biggest attractions, NVRPA has worked fervently to grow the Fall Festival portion of the event. As a result, the growth

Scan to learn more about this event!



Santa's Reindeer School is one of the popular light displays at the Bull Run Festival of Lights, in Centreville.

of the festival has been exponential.

Want to launch a pumpkin 100 yards through the air? The Maize and Fall Festival has the perfect toy for you - Pumpkin Blasters. Imagine what are essentially big artillery (safe for all ages) pieces that load and fire pumpkins at long range targets. The feature is amazingly popular, as folks line up to pepper targets placed in the adjacent field.

Across the farm, the Park Authority added giant jumping pillows. These huge air filled bubbles serve as wall-less moon bounces, as patrons bounce many feet into the air, producing unlimited fun for everyone. There's even a smaller one just for the little guys.

The festival also includes another major fan favorite - a paintball shooting gallery. Patrons blast away at targets in an enclosed gallery. The Fall Festival also includes a playground, a pick your own pumpkin patch, and a children's attraction called Water Wars. Of course, no visit to the Maize and Fall Festival would be complete without Temple Hall's famous pig races, which run several times a day and



Snowtubes are one of the recent additions to the Bull Run Festival of Lights, offering the unique feeling of falling snow during your drive.

Festivals continued



A breath-taking view of the Winter Walk of Lights from just outside the Visitor Center at Meadowlark.

always draw a big crowd.

The advent of the Farm's new Visitor Center has also changed the Festival's face - adding restrooms, a gift shop, and classroom areas for interpretive displays. The Maize and Fall Festival are held weekends each fall, from the last week in September to the first week in November. For more information visit www.templehallfallfest.com

Within a few weeks of the end of the Maize and Fall Festival, NVRPA is making final preparations for its largest annual event - the Bull Run Festival of Lights.

Bull Run Festival of Lights

Open evenings from just prior to Thanksgiving Weekend through the first week of January, the Bull Run Festival of Lights

features over two and a half miles of beautiful holiday light displays, meandering through Bull Run Regional Park in Centreville. The event has drawn thousands of visitors from hundreds of miles away to the popular park, and its attendance grows every year.

The show uses LED lights, which in addition to being virtually indestructible, consume far less energy. The show features more than two dozen two-dimensional light displays, with themes including the Wizard of Oz, the 12 Days of Christmas, Toy Soldiers and more.

At the show's conclusion, visitors have the option of stopping at the Holiday Village. Complete with food, fire pits for marshmallow roasting, carnival rides and hay rides, the village is also the gateway to Santa's Enchanted Lights, the animated, set-to-music light show, featuring over 40,000 lights. And don't forget to get your

picture taken with Santa!

In 2012-13, the Festival of Lights added a new attraction to its offerings - an annual race event. This 2.5 mile fun run or walk is perfect for holiday enthusiasts of all ages, allowing patrons to enjoy a special preview of the Festival of Lights on foot, and take a picture with their favorite display. The event saw more than 600 participants in its first year, and that number is expected to grow in years to come.

The Festival remains busy on weekdays and weekends alike, drawing a healthy line of cars from its opening weekend all the way through its finale. Still, weekends and obviously holidays - Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Years - deliver the largest crowds. Learn more at www.bullrunfestivaloflights.com

Scan to learn more about this event!

Meadowlark's Winter Walk of Lights

In 2012, NVRPA saw an opportunity to add a third major event to this holiday corridor, one that would take a park with very little foot traffic in winter, and turn it into a hot bed buzzing with patrons. Hosted at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens in Vienna (see page 32), Meadowlark's Winter Walk of Lights was born. The concept was fairly simple - a light show, in principle very much like the Bull Run Festival of Lights - featuring a variety of light displays.

But that's where the similarities end. Patrons walk through Meadowlark rather than drive. That fact alone changes the entire experience and offers a wealth of opportunities for both the patrons and the park. Visitors to the Winter Walk of Lights can purchase coffee or hot chocolate for their half mile stroll through the Meadowlark grounds.

During their walk, they'll see a number of unique and beautiful light displays - from a dazzling glowing stream filled with jumping fish to wrapped trees and shrubbery.

Halfway through the walk, visitors will find an animated light show, coordinated with holiday music, complete with a seating area to stop and enjoy the show.

The Winter Walk of Lights also features the Snowflake Shoppe, complete with souvenirs and gifts, as well as light refreshments, which include coffee, hot chocolate, cookies and other treats. Patrons can even roast marshmallows and make s'mores on the outdoor fire pits.

The idea was certainly a winner. The Winter Walk of Lights had a massive opening season, and its final numbers rivaled that of the Bull Run Festival of Lights.

Further improvements are planned as the event goes forward, and the coming years look to be even more fun. More information can be found at www.winterwalkoflights.com



The Butterfly Garden display at the Meadowlark Winter Walk of Lights. The Winter Walk contained more than 20 unique displays. The show also featured Lakeside Lights, an animated show set to music.

NVRPA Board: Meet our decision makers



Members of the NVRPA Board deliberate during a spring meeting at Aldie Mill Historic Park. The Board typically meets every other month, often at NVRPA headquarters, but on occasion at various park sites. Meetings are open to the public.

The NVRPA Board is comprised of 12 members, two from each member jurisdiction (Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church, Counties of Loudoun, Fairfax and Arlington). The Board meets on a bi-monthly basis, normally on the third Thursday of every month. Meetings are held at NVRPA Headquarters in Fairfax Station, or at various locations throughout the park system. Meetings are open to the public.

The Board is the governance body for the Authority setting strategic direction, creating policy, directing land acquisition, and providing financial oversight. The Board hires the auditors, receives monthly financial data, and does an intensive review of the trends and current data for the financial performance of all of our operations every four months. In addition to normal meetings, the Board holds an annual two day retreat to focus on big issues that take more time than a regular meeting allows to explore. In recent years, the Board has undertaken several studies of the Authority's retirement plan, looking at long-term trend information, and has reviewed a number of major new development projects.

One of the most important roles of the Board is to decide on the acquisition of new parkland. Over the last 5 years, the Board has acted to acquire 9 new areas of parkland totaling over 500 acres. The Board reviews every potential property based on a Board-adopted Land Selection Criteria, considering the regional significance, ecological and/or historic value, development potential, and value. Through the Board's foresight over the years, over 11,000 acres have been preserved, and some of the area's most iconic public places have been created.

Board members are appointed to staggered four-year terms, by their respective jurisdictions. Annually, Board members elect officers with a limit of three consecutive years in the positions of Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer. For 2013, officers and members of the Executive Committee include:

- **Brian Knapp – Chairman**
- **Stella Koch – Vice Chairman**
- **David Pritzker – Treasurer**
- **Michael Nardolilli – Member of Executive Committee**

Walter Mess: A lasting legacy

Walter L. Mess, who established the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority and was a member of its Board for more than 45 years, passed away on May 26, 2013 at the age of 99.



Mr. Mess grew up in Alexandria with a passion for outdoor adventures like hunting, fishing, hiking and boating, which he did throughout the region. In 1939, before the U.S. had entered World War II, he was recruited by a professor at Catholic University Law School to join the British Secret Service. When the U.S. entered the war, he joined the Office of Strategic Services (OSS; predecessor to the CIA) and later conducted commando missions into North Africa prior to the Allied invasion. He later was sent to Asia where he commanded a speed boat (similar to a PT Boat) in operations in and around Burma. Decades later, he was given an honorary Green Beret status for his bravery and innovation in special operations.

Interestingly, it was via his military service that Mr. Mess was inspired to create a future park agency in his home state. While stationed in San Diego, California, he visited Balboa Park, a 1,200-acre urban park that was used as a Navy base during the war. Seeing this great park influenced his actions for years to come.

In 1951, the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority was created. By 1961, Bull Run Regional Park was established with 537 acres. Just 10 years later, NVRPA had over 4,000 acres. By the time Mr. Mess stepped down from the Park Authority Board, it had over 10,000 acres. During his tenure on the Board, the Authority also expanded to include the Cities of Alexandria and Fairfax as well as Loudoun County. As a Regional Park Agency with six member jurisdictions, NVRPA is unique in Virginia.



David M. Pritzker
City of Alexandria



Scott Price
City of Alexandria



Paul Ferguson
Arlington County



Michael Nardolilli
Arlington County



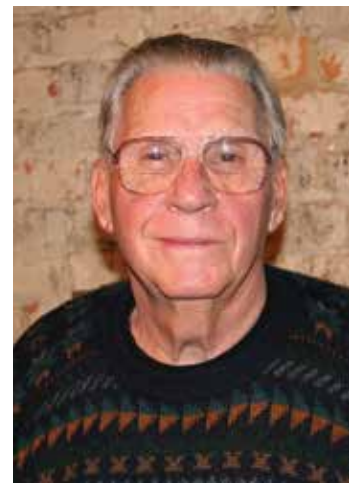
Stella Koch
Fairfax County



Jean R. Packard
Fairfax County



Brian D. Knapp
City of Fairfax



Arthur F. Little
City of Fairfax



Barry D. Buschow
City of Falls Church



Jeffrey Tarbert
City of Falls Church



Joan G. Rokus
Loudoun County



Daniel Kaseman
Loudoun County

NVRPA senior staff members



Paul Gilbert
Executive Director



Todd Hafner
Director of Planning & Development



Chris Pauley
Director of Operations



Steve Bergstrom
Director of Finance



Cindy Hudson
Human Resources Administrator



Laura McCarty
Operations Superintendent



Blythe Russian
Operations Superintendent



Kate Rudacille
Deputy Director of Planning & Grants



Dennis Rust
Central Maintenance Administrator



Dave Zickafoose
Information Technology Administrator



Brian F. Bauer
Marketing & Communications Administrator



Kim McCleskey
Budget Administrator



An annual employee meeting at the Atrium at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens in Vienna. NVRPA holds these meetings in an effort to update all levels of agency staff members on past performance and future objectives.



NVRPA played host to a Special Park Districts Forum in 2011, which attracted employees from park agencies all over the country. Above, attendees take a walking tour of the Bull Run Occoquan Trail.



Located in Fairfax Station, the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority headquarters building was constructed in 1973, and received a significant addition in 1982. It was later renamed the Walter L. Mess Building, in honor of the agency's founder.

NVRPA dollars & cents: by the numbers

Fiscal Year 2014

Total Operating Budget:
\$21,924,965

Total Capital Budget:
\$12,170,240

An Entrepreneurial Approach

One of the greatest strengths of our organization is that we are primarily self-funded, and this helps reduce our dependency on general funds. The first revenue-generating operation for NVRPA was boat rentals at Bull Run Marina in 1966. By 2005, NVRPA was at a 78% level of self-funded operations, and today that number tops 84%! The na-

tional average for enterprise revenue generation is about 30%.

Why are enterprise operations important?

As a regional park agency, our focus is to create unique destination parks. These are the kinds of memorable places that define what is best about an area. While we work along-side national, state and local park systems, NVRPA serves a unique role excelling at providing the memorable destinations that drive the tourism economy and make the region a wonderful place to live.



The waterparks, campgrounds, event venues, golf courses and other revenue-producing sites offset the costs of nature education and conservation, historic preservation and other programs that contribute to the health and vitality of the region.

A focus on serving our various customers keeps the organization nimble and committed to finding new ways to make our parks and programs more appealing to our diverse population. This results in a better park system for everyone.

Enterprise Revenue Growth

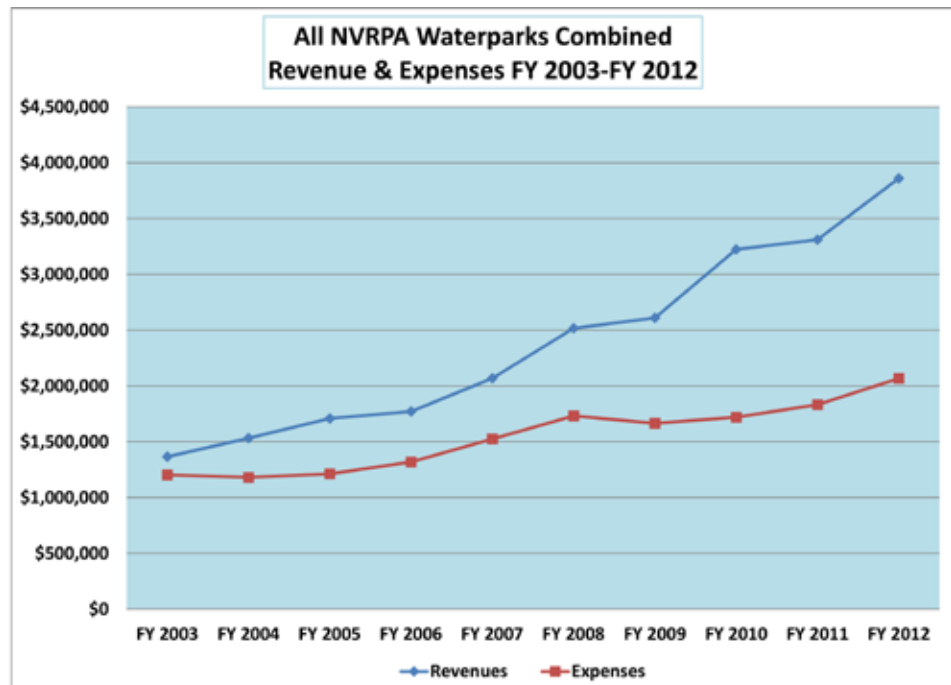
Over the last ten years, we have grown from \$8.8 million in enterprise funds in 2003 to \$16.2 million in 2013 (non-jurisdictional) revenue. This is an 84% growth over ten years.

What is the Secret?

We have succeeded and grown in a wide number of ways over the last decade. This kind of diversified growth is not the result of one great idea, but rather the result of business acumen and an entrepreneurial spirit that is a truly unique approach among government agencies. The key secret to this is a results-focused organization. This focus is expressed in the mission, strategic plan and budgets and is demonstrated every day in the organizational culture.

Aquatics

Over the last ten years, we have averaged



a 28% annual revenue growth. The fundamental truth that has led to this performance has been to understand that our primary target market is families with children who are 3-12 years old. When we started developing our product with our target audience in mind, the results were remarkable.

Special Events (including light shows)

Seven years ago, we made management changes, improved the facility at the Bull Run Special Events Center and started to promote it more effectively. Around the same time, we created our own all LED winter light show. As a result of these changes between 2005 and 2007, our revenues for these activities went from \$54K to \$569K, and continued to grow. In the winter of 2012, we launched our second light show at Meadowlark, which was a great success. In the last 10 years, we have added over \$1.1 million in new revenue from our two light shows and the Special Events Center.

September – December Revenue

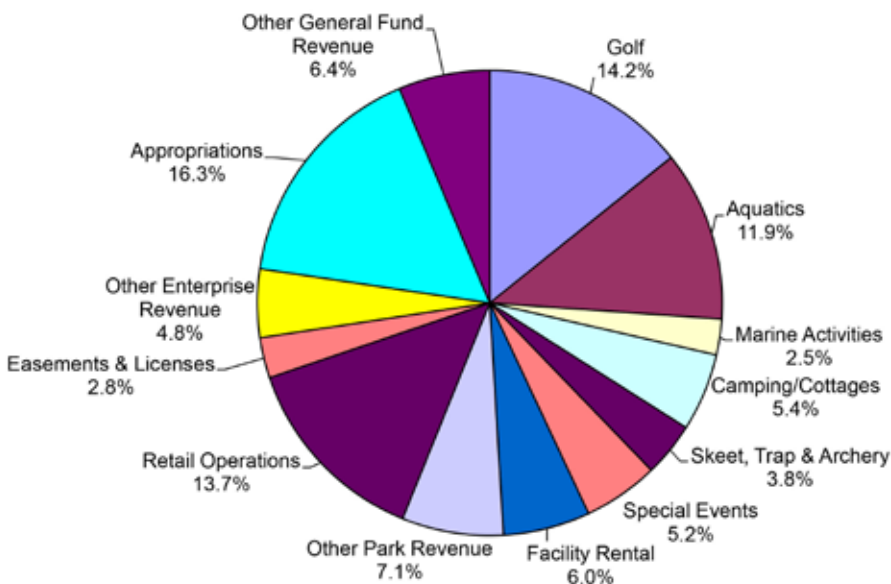
For most of its history, the Park Authority was largely dependent on the summer season. Over the last decade, we have diversified our revenues by building more non-summer activities. The Temple Hall Corn Maze started a little over a decade ago and has grown into a major fall festival. In-sourcing the Bull Run Light Show and growing that operation over the last 8 years, has become a major revenue producer, and our addition of the successful Meadowlark Winter Walk of Lights last year builds the

fall/winter season into one of our busiest periods of the year.

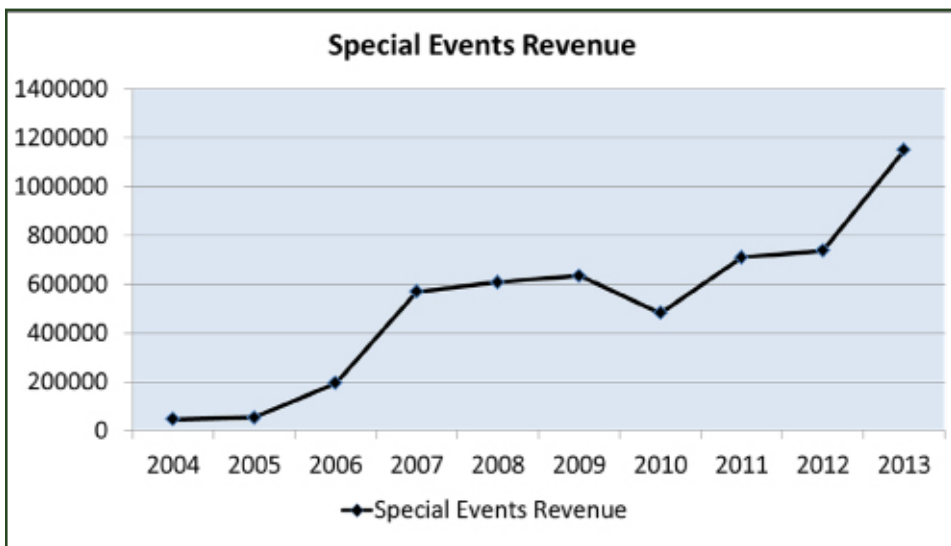
Over the last 10 years, we have more than doubled the enterprise activity during this season, generating \$2.5 million more in revenue during what used to be an “off season.”

Because of a focus on serving customers in unique and innovative ways, NVRPA has been able to enhance the lives of over 1.7 million people in the region at a taxpayer investment of just \$4.46 per person annually. The unique destination parks of NVR-

**ACTUAL FY 2013
REVENUE BY SOURCE**

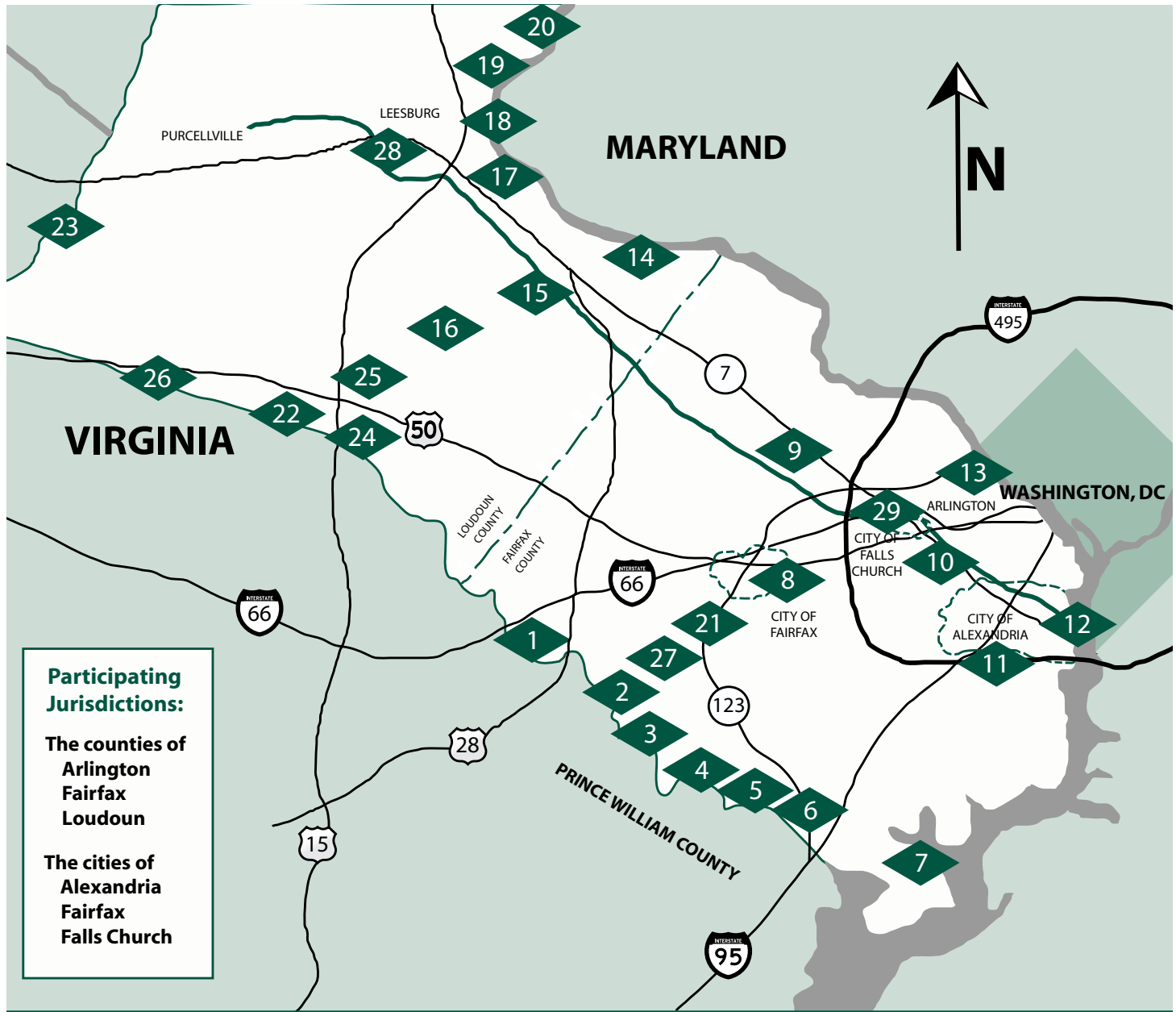


PA infuse millions of dollars annually into the tourism economy of the region. The secret to playing a large regional role with a small public investment has been an entrepreneurial approach to all that we try to accomplish.



A guest at Pirate’s Cove Waterpark at Pohick Bay happily reaches the 42-inch height requirement - the minimum necessary to ride the park’s new pair of waterslides, which officially opened in 2012.

NVRPA Park Directory



1 Bull Run Regional Park

7700 Bull Run Drive
Centreville, Virginia 20121
1,568 Acres

- Atlantis Waterpark, including waterslides
- Special event centers/amphitheater
- Family campground and group campsites
- Rental cabins
- Bull Run Festival of Lights
- Disc golf
- Bridle path and staging area
- Bull Run Occoquan Trail

- Scenic, historic, nature & hiking trails
- Rental picnic shelters
- Corporate and large group picnic area
- Tournament soccer fields
- Children's playground
- Boat and RV storage
- Public shooting center with skeet, trap, 5-stand and sporting clays
- Indoor archery range

2 Hemlock Overlook Regional Park

13220 Yates Ford Road
Clifton, Virginia 20124

- 426 Acres
- Outdoor education center
- Dormitories for overnight lodging
- Dining hall and meeting rooms
- Bull Run Occoquan Trail

3 Bull Run Marina

Old Yates Ford Road
Clifton, Virginia
100 Acres

- Boat launch ramp
- Bull Run Occoquan Trail
- Scholastic rowing facility

4 Fountainhead Regional Park

10875 Hampton Road
Fairfax Station, Virginia 22039
1,993 Acres

- Boat launch ramp
- Marina building and snack bar
- Fishing pier
- Canoe, kayak, jon boat and electric motor rentals
- Bull Run Occoquan Trail
- Mountain bike trail
- Rental picnic shelter
- Miniature golf
- Hiking and bridle trails

5 Sandy Run Regional Park

10450 Van Thompson Road
Fairfax Station, Virginia 22039
952 Acres

- Scholastic rowing facility with 3 boathouses
- 2,000 meter Class A racecourse
- Parking areas and spectator seating for local and national regattas

6 Occoquan Regional Park

9751 Ox Road
Lorton, Virginia 22079
350 Acres

- Boat launch ramp
- Marina building and snack bar
- Batting cage
- Rental picnic shelter and gazebos
- Soccer, softball and baseball fields
- Boat and RV storage

7 Pohick Bay Regional Park

6501 Pohick Bay Drive
Lorton, Virginia 22079
1,002 Acres

- Pirate's Cove Waterpark
- Miniature golf
- Disc golf
- Family campground and group campsites
- Rental cabins
- Canoe, sea kayak, sailboat, jon boat and pedalboat rentals
- Boat launch ramp
- Boat and RV storage
- Marina building and snack bar
- Rental picnic shelters
- Bridle path, 4 miles

Pohick Bay Golf Course
10301 Gunston Road

Lorton, Virginia 22079

- 18-hole, par-72 golf course with driving range
- Clubhouse with pro shop and snack bar

8 Gateway Regional Park

The W&OD/ City of Fairfax Connector Trail is a combination of paved trail, on-road bike routes and side streets. Located at the intersection of the Connector Trail, the City of Fairfax's trail system and the Fairfax County Park Authority's Accotink Creek Trail.
1 Acre

- Trail wayside shelter and drinking fountain
- Information displays of Northern Virginia trail connections

9 Meadowlark Botanical Gardens

9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court
Vienna, Virginia 22182
96 Acres

- Landscaped gardens
- The Atrium event center
- Winter Walk of Lights
- Visitor Center and gift shop
- Rental gazebos
- Restored 18th century log cabin
- Korean Bell Garden

10 Upton Hill Regional Park

6060 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, Virginia 22205
27 Acres

- Ocean Dunes Waterpark
- Snack bar
- Rental shelter
- Miniature golf
- Batting cage
- Walking trails
- Children's playground

11 Cameron Run Regional Park

4001 Eisenhower Avenue
Alexandria, Virginia 22304
26 Acres

- Great Waves Waterpark with wavepool, 3-flume waterslide, water playground, snack bar, kids lagoon, Shark Shack gift shop, and so much more.
- Miniature golf course

- Batting cage
- Rental picnic shelters
- Fishing piers on Lake Cook
- Paradise Play

12 Carlyle House Historic Park

121 N. Fairfax Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
1 Acre

- 18th century Palladian-style historic home constructed by John Carlyle
- Museum and gift shop
- Event rental terrace with Carlyle House access

13 Potomac Overlook Regional Park

2845 N. Marcey Road
Arlington, Virginia 22207
67 Acres

- Nature Center and interpretive displays
- Meeting room
- Rental shelter
- Energerium

14 Algonkian Regional Park

47001 Fairway Drive
Sterling, Virginia 20165
838 Acres

- Meeting and events center
- 18-hole, par-72 golf course
- Clubhouse, pro shop and snack bar
- Driving range
- Riverfront vacation cottages
- Miniature golf
- Volcano Island Waterpark
- Boat and RV storage
- Boat launch ramp
- Rental picnic shelters
- Children's playground
- Paved and natural surface hiking trails
- Soccer fields

15 Washington & Old Dominion Trail

21293 Smiths Switch Road
Ashburn, Virginia 20147
531 Acres

- 45-mile long paved trail connecting Shirlington and Purcellville
- Safe for walkers/runners, cyclists, roller blading
- 32-mile long adjacent

- equestrian trail
- Interpretive areas
- Multiple parking areas

16 Brambleton Regional Park

42180 Ryan Road
Ashburn, Virginia 20148
368 Acres

- 18-hole, par-72 golf course
- Clubhouse with pro shop and snack bar
- Driving range
- Events pavilion
- Site of National Recreation and Park Association Headquarters

17 Red Rock Overlook Regional Park

43098 Edwards Ferry Road
Leesburg, Virginia 43098
67 Acres

- Nature trails
- Scenic overlook
- Parking

18 Ball's Bluff Battlefield Regional Park

Ball's Bluff Road
Leesburg, Virginia 20176
223 Acres

- Ball's Bluff National Cemetery
- 2-mile interpretive trail loop
- Natural surface hiking trails

19 Temple Hall Farm Regional Park

15789 Temple Hall Lane
Leesburg, Virginia
286 Acres

- 286-acre working farm
- Interpretive programs
- Corn Maize and Fall Festival

20 White's Ford Regional Park

43646 Hibler Road
Leesburg, Virginia
294.58 Acres.

- Currently under construction (as of January 2013). Expected to begin business in summer 2013.

When it opens, it will have river access, canoe and kayak launch, hiking trails and interpretive signs.

NVRPA Park Directory continued



Above, Mount Zion Historic Church is located in Aldie not far from Aldie Mill, and directly across from Gilbert's Corner Regional Park. Above left, the boat ramp at Algonkian Regional Park in Sterling with its beautiful view of the Potomac River.



21 NVRPA Headquarters

5400 Ox Road
Fairfax Station, Virginia 22039
3 Acres

- Administrative building for park agency. Offers a limited visitor center with park information.

22 Aldie Mill Historic Park

39401 John Mosby Highway
Aldie, Virginia 20105
1 Acre

- Historic gristmill

23 Blue Ridge Regional Park

19178 Blue Ridge Mountain Road
Bluemont, Virginia 20135
168 Acres

- Group camping area
- Natural surface hiking trails

24 Mt Zion Historic Church

40309 John Mosby Highway
Aldie, Virginia 20105
5.8 Acres

- A historic church and cemetery
- Space available to rent for weddings or social gatherings

25 Gilbert's Corner Regional Park

23575 Watson Road
Aldie, Virginia 20105
156.9 Acres

- Site still largely in development as of early 2013. Future amenities planned include hiking trails and interpretive signage.

26 Mt. Defiance Historic Park

35945 John Mosby Highway
Middleburg Virginia 20117
5.08 Acres

- Site still largely in development as of early 2013. Future amenities planned include trails, signage, various interpretive displays.

27 Webb Sanctuary Regional Park

12829 Chestnut Street
Clifton Virginia 20124
20 Acres

- Walking and hiking trails
- Interpretive signage
- Native plantings

28 Rust Manor House & Rust Sanctuary

802 Children's Center Road
Leesburg, Virginia 20175
68 Acres

- Trails, nature pond, manor house and tent for banquets and events
- Meadows, forests, and ponds with a variety of wildlife and plants.
- Hosting weddings, receptions, parties and meetings
- Artwork collection from the family of Roger Tory Peterson.
- Audubon Naturalist Society educational programming

29 Tinner Hill Historic Site

106 Tinner Hill
Falls Church, VA 22046
1 Acre

- Site still largely in development as of early 2013.



Above, Rust Manor House and Rust Sanctuary. Located in Leesburg, the property became a part of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority family in 2012. The Manor House is ideal for weddings and major social gatherings, and the facility features an outdoor tent ideal for large parties.

At left, Sandy Run Regional Park, located in Fairfax Station on the Occoquan Reservoir. While the park is not typically open to the public, it gets extremely busy during crew season, when hundreds of high school students and their families come to witness regattas.



An army of kayakers prepares for a boat launch at Pohick Bay Regional Park in Lorton. The park offers users a variety of boating options, including canoes, kayaks, stand up paddle boards and jon boats.