



Bulletin of the Proceedings of the Friends of Accotink Creek

Our meeting notes serve as bulletins of our activities, interests, and discussions, supplemented by your submissions.

Friends of Accotink Creek Town Meeting – April 18, 2023

Next Meeting: May 16, 2023 (Third Tuesday of each month via on-line meeting: Login info will be posted with the meeting notice in the [Friends of Accotink calendar](#).)

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Present: Gary Bangs, Sandy Collins, Avril Garland, Philip Latasa, Andrew Butterbaugh and Peter Clark all via on-line meeting.

• Represent FACC

- o [Microsoft Planting](#), April 20, 2023 Philip provided that Microsoft has provided a grant of \$40,000 to the Park Authority for invasives control in Lake Accotink Park. There will be a kickoff tree planting at Beverley's IMA site on April 20th, 9 – 11 AM. We had understood Microsoft volunteers would be doing the planting, but apparently not. Beverley's regular volunteers can handle the work, but everyone is welcome.
- o *Mount Vernon District Environment Expo, April 22, 2023* Sandy said she and Dave are attending and setting up an information table with materials.
- o *Fairfax City HisTree, April 22, 2023* Philip provided that he and Katy will have a table at the Fairfax City Earth Day and history event. We will be giving away plants rescued from the Stafford Drive Stream Restoration. Those rescues are continuing through the summer.
- o *Choralis Concert, April 30, 2023* Gary and Avril will attend and setup information table in the lobby of the church prior to the concert. We've scheduled a cleanup at the location of the concert and we hope some of the attendees will join us May 13th.

• [Cinder Bed Road Bikeway](#): Philip reported that our presentation to the Amberleigh residents is tomorrow evening, April 19. Every home in Amberleigh received a doorhanger announcing the presentation and nonresident landlords were sent postcards. Nature Forward and Northern Virginia Audubon split the printing and postage costs three ways with FACC, each paying \$90.75.

We are also going to have a walk along the proposed Bikeway route with Delegates Vivian Watts and Mark Sickles on April 24th. The Bikeway is not a state-level project, but there are state-level permitting issues.

- [Potomac Watershed Cleanup](#): Philip stated that we had a special cleanup on Americana Drive with the West End Rugby Team on April 1st. Working in the rain, the team, coaches, and family removed an estimated two tons of construction debris. VDOT needed two trucks to haul it all away.

On April 8th, we had cleanups at Fullerton Road, Franconia-Springfield Parkway, and Telegraph Road. We had a total of 23 volunteers who collected 25 bags of trash. Five of those bags were collected for us by a homeless man living in the woods off Telegraph Road. Our most unusual find was a portable restroom door.



Portable restroom door

- [Lake Accotink Dredging](#):
 - [Dam Repair](#)

Philip said that the water level in Lake Accotink has been lowered 2 to 3 feet for dam repairs, causing the lake to lose an estimated 30 to 50 percent of its surface area. This gives us some indications of what would happen in a future without dredging. Accotink Creek stays in a single channel moving directly to the dam, leaving much of the former lake dry and subject to colonization by vegetation and trees.

One surprise seen out on the exposed mudflats was an unexpected number of freshwater mussel shells. While it was only a few dozen, it was better than the near zero population that might have been expected.



Didn't there used to be a lake here?

- [Vernal Pools Video](#): Philip said we now have the [second vernal pool video](#), produced by Kathryn Pasternak, Fairfax Master Naturalist independent filmmaker. This one is intended for a second grade school audience. Please share with any and all who may benefit from it. Kathryn is working on another version for Grade 6, but it may be awhile before it is ready.
- [Oil Spill](#): Philip reported on March 23rd an estimated 300 gallon oil spill occurred at Ourisman Toyota in Fairfax City. The Fire Marshal responded, but the next day there was still a moving oil sheen visible in the water along with a distinct odor at least three quarters of a mile downstream in the North Fork of Accotink Creek. There was no evidence of fish kill.

Rather disappointingly, there was no immediate notice of the incident on the City website. A notice did later appear briefly, but was then taken down.

A question was asked whether DEQ was notified. They have been and report is online.

<https://portal.deq.virginia.gov/v2/prep/prepReport/308697>

- [State of Streams](#): Gary indicated that he, Kim, Katy, Dave, and Philip will participate on this project. The State of Streams is a program led by Nature Forward to highlight the condition of local streams. Accotink Creek is among the three to be highlighted in 2023. The first organizational meeting is Friday April 28. This project presents opportunities for everyone to contribute their impressions and experiences of Accotink Creek.
- [Brookfield Park Pesticides](#): Gary provided that there was a Facebook warning for Brookfield Park because "pesticides" had just been sprayed on the grassy portions of the dam. A woman at the park had been told by the apparent contractor that she should keep her dog off the grassy berm area because of it, but no signs were posted. She indicated a strong odor was noticed. Gary is going to keep following up to try to determine what it was and whether there are concerns.
- [Shutterfly Share Sites](#): Philip said he has done nothing on this since our last meeting.
- [Whither FACC](#): *Anyone?*
We are at 997 Facebook followers, just a bit short of our longtime goal of 1000.