

Announcements

Franklin Park events

by Bill Burton

There is one event in May being sponsored by the Barns at Franklin Park Performing Arts Center and NOVAC. It will be held at Franklin Park, in Purcellville, Virginia.

Solar System Festival

Saturday, May 18 • 8 PM to Midnight

Five planets and the first quarter moon will be visible starting at sundown. This is great opportunity to take a tour of the solar system!

Public admission: \$3/carload; NOVAC members with telescopes will be admitted for free

Directions to Franklin Park: Take Route 7 west to the Round Hill exit; turn left and go east on Business Route 7 for about a mile; the entrance to Franklin Park is on the right. Pass the swimming pool on the right; turn right at T-intersection and proceed to parking lot above theater and silo.

Annual picnic: June 15, Crockett Park

NOVAC will hold its annual picnic and swap meet on June 15 at the Panorama Shelter at Crockett Park. Burgers, hot dogs, and drinks will be provided by the club. Please bring a hot dish or dessert to share, and bring any astronomical equipment you would like to sell or trade. The swap meet will begin at 3:00 and food will be served at 4:30.

New article available on the Web

"Reflections in the Eyepiece—Observing Variable Stars,"
by Robert Bunge

There are many ways to pursue the hobby of amateur astronomy. Many amateurs are content with exploring the sky for their own pleasure, but some are driven to contribute to the science of astronomy. Bob describes one simple way to make such a contribution: watch variable stars and report your observations. Such an observing program requires only a little experience and remarkably simple equipment. www.novac.com/nl/articles/aavso_index.html

Correction: In the March/April issue, new member Alex Hazzouri's e-mail was misspelled. The correct address is alex@balloonyideas.com.

NASM/Einstein Planetarium public observing

2002 Schedule Sky Meadows State Park, Paris, VA

Join Sean O'Brien, staff astronomer of the Albert Einstein Planetarium, and other local amateur astronomers, for public telescopic observing under dark, star-filled skies, away from city lights. The evening begins with a short night sky orientation at dusk, followed by telescopic observing of various astronomical objects, ending at 11 pm.

Directions to Sky Meadows State Park: Sky Meadows State Park is west of Washington, D.C. on US Route 17 North, 1 mile south of US Route 50, or 7 miles north of Interstate 66, Exit 23. The park contact phone number is (540) 592-3556. There is a \$2 parking fee per car. Please cover flashlights with a red filter or a brown paper bag. Dress warmly. In case of clouds or rain, an amateur astronomer will lead a short alternate program.

Date (all Saturdays)	Comments
May 4	Last Quarter Moon
June 1	1 day before Last Quarter
July 13	3 days after New Moon
August 10	2 days after New Moon
September 7	1 day after New Moon
October 5	1 day before New Moon
November 9	2 days before 1st Quarter

Editor's Note: This is a fun program for NOVAC members to help out with. Sky Meadows park has great skies, and the public is always very receptive.

Newsletter now available via e-mail

As an added convenience, members may now elect to receive their newsletter in electronic form via e-mail. The electronic version will be in Adobe PDF format and will typically be 500 to 800 kilobytes. Photos will appear with much better resolution in the electronic copy.

If you would like to receive the newsletter in PDF format, send your name, mailing address, and the e-mail address to which you want the newsletter delivered to mjmills@fpcc.net. Please put "Newsletter PDF" in the subject line. Changes will take effect with the July/August issue. Please note: if you choose to receive the electronic copy, you will not receive a paper copy.