

# THE NOVAC CORONA

to observe and to  
help others observe

MORE OBSERVATIONS?  
UPCOMING MEETING?  
SEE DETAILS INSIDE

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## THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA ASTRONOMY CLUB

Issue No. 15

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Secretary/Treasurer, John Huggins 703-644-4331

NOVAC Computer BBS's: 703-256-4777 - ASTRO-TECH  
703-644-5510 - The FROG

### CALENDAR

For more information about activities call 703-644-4331

September 19 - Sunset..... Observation at Greenville  
September 25 - Sunset..... Observation at Greenville  
September 26 - Sunset...NASM Public Observing Night at Sky Meadows  
Park near Paris VA. Contact Geoff Chester  
at 379-8218  
October 16 - Sunset..... Observation at Greenville  
October 17 - Sunset..... **Observation at Fauquier**  
October 18 - 2:00 pm.....Costea Memorial Observatory Grand Opening  
October 23 - Sunset..... **Observation at Fauquier**  
October 24 - Sunset..... Observation at Greenville  
November 13 - Sunset..... **Observation at Fauquier**  
November 14 - Sunset..... Observation at Greenville  
November 20 - Sunset..... Observation at Greenville  
November 21 - Sunset..... **Observation at Fauquier**  
December 11 - Sunset..... Observation at Greenville  
December 12 - Sunset..... **Observation at Fauquier**  
December 18 - Sunset..... **Observation at Fauquier**  
December 19 - Sunset..... Observation at Greenville

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN  
Blaine Korcel

AS OF NOW, WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO SECURE A MEETING ROOM. BY THE TIME YOU GET THIS NEWSLETTER WE SHOULD HAVE A DATE SCHEDULED. PLEASE CALL THE NOVAC RECORDING **NOW** TO FIND OUT THE NEXT MEETING DATE. 703-644-4331.

HIGHLIGHTS WILL INCLUDE THIS YEAR'S STELLAFANE SLIDES, THE NEW OBSERVATORY MOUNT, AND A WELCOMED 16" TELESCOPE TO THE CLUB!

*Joe Macre  
DS16 Meade  
Dobson Mt*

Well It's time for us to start thinking about our winter observing. Several changes as well as additions have been made to our schedule and membership. These are the increased number of observing sessions and the merging of the Fauquier Astronomical Society (FAS).

*19 mem*

First, our chances of having one out of two observing sessions is pretty slim. By increasing the number of observations, we increase the likelihood of having at least one clear night. Since our club mainly focuses on hands on experience, we should try to be more active.

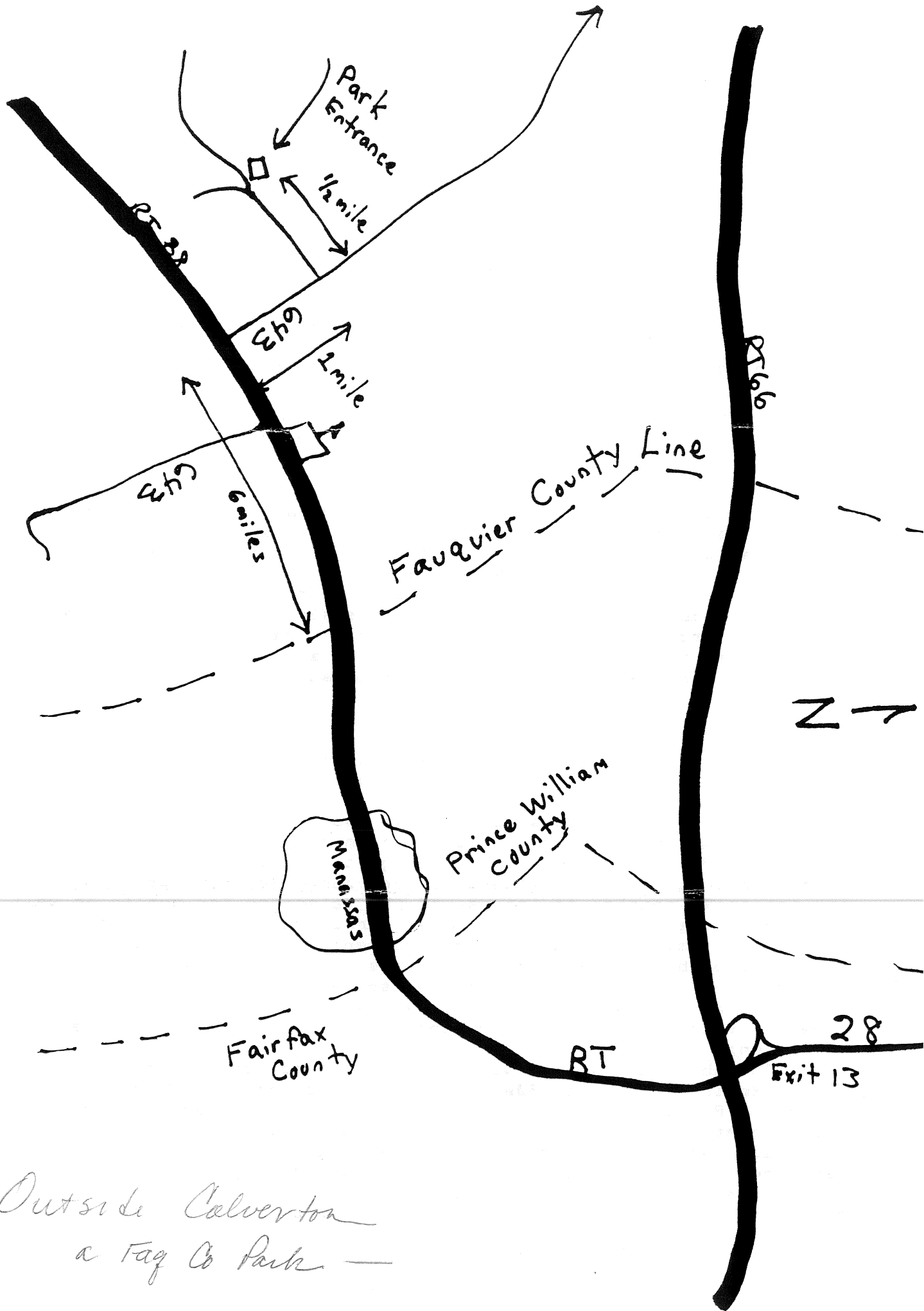
Second, we have merged with the Fauquier Astronomical Society. I would like to welcome all the members of FAS and thank them for their generous contribution to NOVAC. We hope we can live up to your expectations. To help FAS as well as the rest of NOVAC, we have worked on obtaining another observing site. This one is located about two miles further than Calverton Virginia. More on this topic later.

Previously, we had scheduled two observations a month. This left both a Friday and a Saturday free for rain dates. Those rain dates are now full fledged observing sessions. Please make note on your calendar those days which are scheduled.

The Park is located about two miles west of Calverton VA. To get there, take I-66 West to Route 28 (Centerville). After taking the exit, turn right onto Route 28, South, to cross I-66. After crossing the Prince William and Fauquier county line, go about 6 more miles until you get to route 643. The first 643 you come to will only turn left. Go another 1/2 mile and you will see another route 643 that turns right. Turn right onto 643. Go about 1 mile and make a left turn onto the first REAL road you come to (Rogues Road; Route 602). Look for the sign that says road ends 1/2 mile. Continue until you reach the end of the road and look for the entrance to the park where the booth is. Look for signs that will lead the way to the observing site. See the map for more details and call the recording for cancellation information. You can also call the park at 703-788-4867. Ask for Roger Pence, Park Manager.

BLTM87 was a great success this year. With somewhat clear weather and heavily light polluted skies, we were able to present an award Saturday night for best optical quality. This was awarded to Doug Megenity. Congratulations Doug! Next year we WILL be holding BLTM at a dark sky site. This site has yet to be determined. Also, more awards will be given due to the increased numbers that have turned out over the past few years. Bring your ideas to the next meeting.

To the new observing site!



Outside Calverton  
a Fauq Co Park

Anyone interested in producing the newsletter full time?  
Anyone willing to devise a nifty calendar two months at a  
time which gives astronomical events as well as observations?  
If anyone is interested, contact the club President at  
703-256-4430.

555  
Treasurer's Report  
John Huggins

With the addition of the funds from the Fauquier Astronomical Society we have about \$850.00.

The next batch of overdue notices goes out soon. Luckily there are only a few.

Donation  
John Huggins

Larry Bohlayer has kindly decided to donate the old mount of the Middleburg observatory to the club. It is a typical equatorial mount that will support a twelve inch scope. This should prove to be a useful addition to the NOVAC telescope equipment pool. It will be up to you all to come up with a good use for the thing. We don't have a telescope for it yet. We could possibly adapt my mountless scope for temporary use by the club. That idea would include retrofitting the mount with stepper motors and computer control at my expense. Please think about it. Your suggestions will be gladly received.

Two New Observatories  
John Huggins

We now have limited access to two observatories; one is in Middleburg while the other is near Warrenton.

The Middleburg observatory belongs to the private girls prep school that Larry Bohlayer used to work for. He arranged with the new astronomy teacher to let us use the telescope for public as well as some photographic use. The sliding roof building is located on the school campus well away from prominent lights. The skies are quite acceptable on the clearest nights justifying the long drive out route 50 to Middleburg. The telescope is mounted on a very sturdy mount that was custom made by Byers. More information will come later as we plan on the potential public uses of this fine instrument.

The observatory near Warrenton is located on a plot of land off of Route 29 on Route 600. The land is being rented to the Arlington Public School system for one dollar per year for use by the students as an outdoor laboratory. Among the many programs held there are nature walks, biological teaching, etc. Recently the personnel at the Arlington Planetarium raised support and money for the construction of an observatory on this land. Construction completed, it now houses the 10" f/8 Criterion reflector telescope

the school already owns. The telescope will be primarily used for educating the school children about astronomy. We as a club have been asked to help out with this task. As a result we might gain some research time with the instrument. Steve Smith of the Arlington Planetarium has invited NOVAC members to attend the Grand Opening Ceremony to commemorate the building. This will happen on October 18, 1987 at 2:00 PM. Please come if you can.

*Where?  
Not known.*

CLOSING REMARKS FOR BLTM  
Huggins

Well folks, another BLTM has come and gone and this one was as exciting as ever. The slide shows were adequately presented and were well received. The observing was adequate from the public's point of view; the amateur astronomers did wish it was a bit clearer. We at last presented an award to an astronomer for the best optical quality. A surprised and proud Doug Megenity won the award with his 13" Odyssey Dobsonian scope. One of the runner ups had an interesting hand ground 5" refractor made of brass. The owner claims that he bought the scope from the maker for \$50.00; it was being sold for the brass.

The Schumann's really did a superior job at showing off their telescope and the night objects. When I watched them explain things to kids they got the point across and kept them intrigued. I can learn a lot from them.

To the rest of you who were there, you looked great. There was a line behind every scope. I received many complements from the people. You all impressed them.

BLTM will most likely be held somewhere else next year due to the increasing sky glow at Burke Lake. Public programs will continue to be held at Burke Lake because of its convenience. If you know of any good spots for next years telescope meet please voice them, we need to know.

Well folks I really appreciate all the help you gave at this years main event. Let's make next year just as successful.

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The NOVAC Corona is published six times a year. All material regarding the club including that for publication should be directed to John Huggins, Secretary/Treasurer, 5608 Flag Run Drive, Springfield, VA 22151-2725, 703-644-4331.

