



# FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



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## Information Release

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## New Facility at Observatory Park at Turner Farm to Open

A ribbon-cutting ceremony will take place on October 1, 2016, for the new roll-top observatory at Observatory Park at Turner Farm in Great Falls, Virginia. The observatory will offer the public a chance to see the night sky from one of Fairfax County's darkest spots through permanently mounted telescopes. The ceremony takes place at 10 a.m.

Visitors to the new facility will find an Orientation Room that will serve as an instructional space for educational programs and an Observation Room that includes three telescopes, with room for a fourth telescope as private funding becomes available in the future. The observatory features a retractable roof that will roll over the top of the fixed roof that covers the Orientation Room.

Initiated in 2007 in collaboration with the Analemma Society, the million-dollar facility was funded in part by the 2008 and 2012 Park Bonds, telecommunications funds, Mastenbrook grant money and donations provided by Jean and Ric Edelman through the Fairfax County Park Foundation. The facility was designed by Shaffer Wilson Sarver & Gray of Herndon, Va. and constructed by Brown and Root of Arlington, Va.

The Analemma Society will provide programming for the public at the observatory that will include nighttime viewing, and classes on astronomy and related sciences. Analemma Society founder Charles H. Olin notes that Turner Farm provides a "unique opportunity" to open the skies to members of the public and allow them to stimulate their imaginations by gazing through a telescope.

Programs will begin in the spring, and Friday night viewing will continue for the public. The roll-top will be open only during public sessions. Information about programming will be posted on the Analemma Society's website at <http://www.analemma.org/> and the Turner Farm website at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/turnerfarm/>.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony will feature local officials, Park Authority Board members and staff, members of the Analemma Society, the community, donors and supporters. Turner Farm is located at 925 Springvale Road, Great Falls, Va. Light refreshments will follow this brief ceremony.

For additional information, please contact the Public Information Office at 703-324-8662.

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If accommodations and/or alternative formats are needed, please call (703) 324-8563, at least 10 working days in advance of the registration deadline or event. TTY (703) 803-3354.