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Eclipse Safety Tips from *Coryell Health*

Be prepared for the total solar eclipse on **Monday, April 8th** with these safety tips:

- Make sure that your eclipse glasses comply with the ISO 12312-2 standard
- Wear plenty of sunscreen, a hat and protective clothing
- Do not use cameras, binoculars or telescopes without a solar filter attached to the lens
- Drink lots of water
- Use eclipse glasses, not regular sunglasses



This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity in Gatesville.
Stay safe and make it count!

What is a Total Eclipse?

BY ALEXANDRA MEELBUSCH
Staff Writer

On Monday, April 8, a total solar eclipse will cross North America, passing over Mexico, the United States, and Canada.

A total solar eclipse happens when the moon passes between the sun and earth, completely blocking the face of the Sun.

According to NASA, "The sky will darken as if it were dawn or dusk."

For this celestial event, the longest period of darkness will occur for about two minutes and 40 seconds. The last time the U.S. saw a total eclipse was in 1979.

Exactly how the sun, moon, and earth align determines what kind of eclipse we see.

With a Total Eclipse, the moon moves directly in front of the sun and barely covers the solar disk. This allows observers in the center of the moon's shadow to briefly see the sun's outer atmosphere, the corona, which is too dim to see when the bright solar disk is not covered.

The shadow that the moon casts has two main parts, which are the darker inner shadow called the umbra and a fainter outer shadow called the penumbra. Within the umbra, the sun's light is completely blocked. In the penumbra, the sun's light is only partially blocked.

To see a total solar eclipse, an observer must be within the umbra. Observers in the penumbra will witness a partial eclipse, with only part of the sun covered by

the moon. Those outside the moon's shadow will see no eclipse at all.

As the shadow extends away from the moon, the umbra narrows or gets smaller. By the time it reaches earth, the umbra covers a relatively small area on our planet compared to the penumbra. That means the area that experiences a total eclipse is much smaller than the area that experiences a partial eclipse. A typical umbral path may be less than 50 miles wide, while the penumbral zone can span a thousand miles or more.

Because earth is continuously rotating, and the moon is constantly moving in its orbit, the moon's shadow will travel across earth's surface, tracing a path. This is called the eclipse path. Within this area is a smaller path traced by the umbra, called the path of totality. The rapid movement of the moon in its orbit causes the shadow of the moon to sweep across the face of earth in just four to five hours. At any location along the path of totality, the total phase of a solar eclipse may last only a few minutes, or even less.

This will be the last total solar eclipse visible from the United States until August of 2044.

For further information, visit science.nasa.gov.



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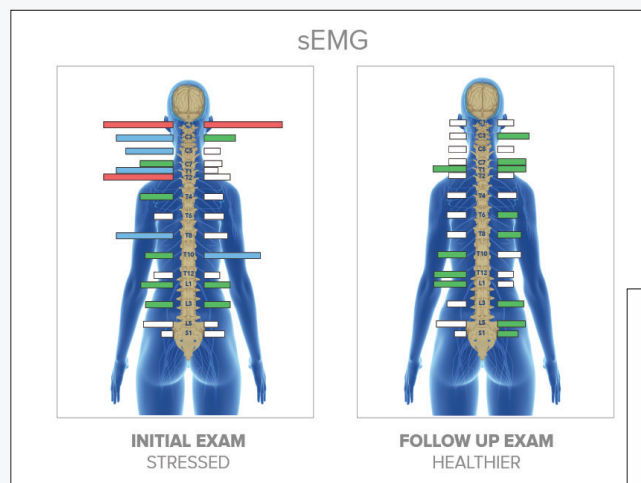
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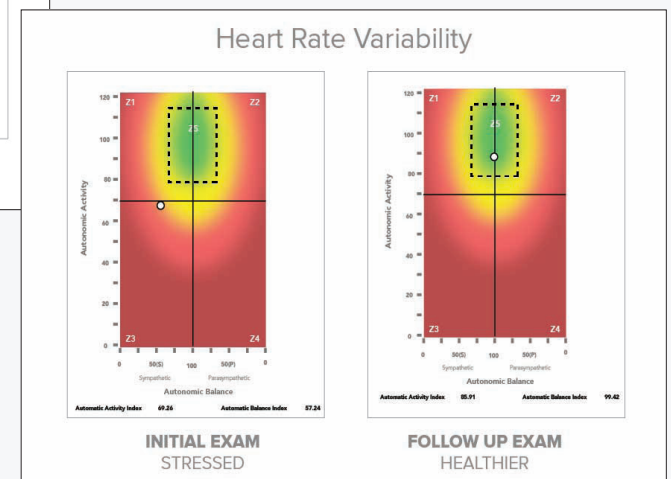
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Landy Joyce Ranchtx Solar Eclipse Weekend Event									
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Eyes on the eclipse

BY DAVID SCOTT
Staff Writer

As reported on the Mayo Clinic website, Dr. William Brown stated that staring directly at the sun can seriously damage your eyes if you aren't using specifically designed eclipse glasses.

Dr. Brown noted that the only time the sun can be viewed without proper safety glasses will be during the total eclipse - that short time when the moon covers the sun completely. "The sun is so intense. Regular sunglasses only absorb maybe 90 percent of the sunlight and the light in our environment. Eclipse glasses absorb more like 99.9999 percent," says Dr. Brown.

He continued, "I liken it to a camera flash. When a camera flashes, you get this afterimage because the rods and the cones [in your eyes] have to recover from that. When you're staring at the sun, they don't have a chance to recover, and they may totally be lost due to the damage that can occur from looking at the sun."

"When we have intense light, the eyes don't have the ability to recover, and we can lose visual function. Depending upon the length of time that we're staring at

that bright light, it can either be temporary loss or it can be permanent loss. So, that's that danger of looking at the sun [during the eclipse]," Dr. Brown said.

According to PreventBlindness.org, the symptoms that can occur from looking at a solar eclipse without proper eye protection can include: loss of central vision (solar retinopathy), distorted vision, and altered color vision.

The NASA website suggests that when watching a solar eclipse directly with your eyes you must look through safe solar viewing glasses (eclipse glasses). Eclipse glasses are NOT regular sunglasses. No matter how dark, they are not safe for viewing the sun. Safe solar viewers are thousands of times dark and should comply with the ISO 12312-2 international standard.

NASA advises that eclipse glasses or handheld viewers should be examined before use to make sure they are not torn, scratched, or otherwise damaged. If damage is found, the device should be discarded.

It is also advised NOT to use eclipse glasses or handheld viewers with cameras, binoculars, or telescopes. Those

devices require different types of solar filters.

PreventBlindness.org also gave the following tips on how NOT to watch the solar eclipse:

- Do NOT use your camera viewfinder: Never look at a solar eclipse through the optical viewfinder of a camera. It can damage your eyes in the same way as looking directly at the sun.
- Do NOT use unsafe filters: Unless specifically designed for viewing a solar eclipse. Solar filters designed for eyepieces that come with inexpensive telescopes are also unsafe.

The public is advised to be careful when viewing the solar eclipse on April 8th due to the risk of permanently damaging your eyes.



COURTESY PHOTO

Staring directly at the sun can seriously damage your eyes if you aren't using specifically designed eclipse glasses.

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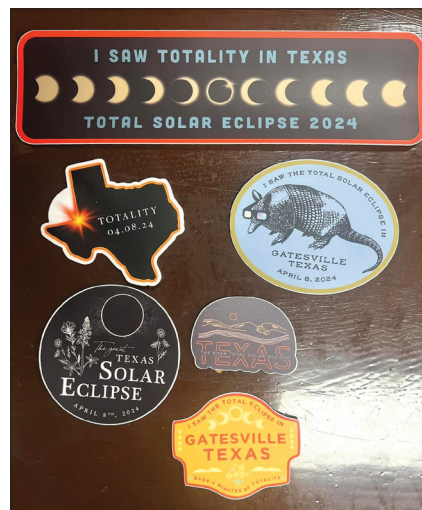
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Get ready for the eclipse with Gatesville's Block (Out the Sun) Party

BY KAYLEE DUSANG

Staff writer

kaylee@gatesvillemessenger.com

For those looking for ways to celebrate the 2024 Great American Eclipse, Gatesville's pre-eclipse festival provides an opportunity to gather and enjoy some local entertainment.

The "Block (Out the Sun) Party" will take place in the downtown square during Saturday and Sunday leading up to the total eclipse on Monday, April 8. The festival will feature a variety of food trucks, vendors, and various activities for kids and adults.

"Some cities have planned large events in the hopes of drawing in a large number of visitors. We approached our plans a little differently," Eclipse Coordinator Cheri Shepherd said. "We knew that a certain number of people would be com-

ing to Gatesville, regardless of what we planned. We wanted to make sure that our residents and visitors had the best possible experience during and leading up to the eclipse."

Activities include a petting zoo, painting with a twist, goat roping, photo props, pickleball and cornhole tournaments, live music, and more. Visitors will also have a chance to view and support local artists through the "Art in the Shadow" exhibit that will feature various mediums of Texas and eclipse themed artwork.

With thousands of out-of-town visitors expected to arrive in Gatesville, the festival will also be an opportunity to support local businesses and organizations.

"It was an opportunity to educate and entertain residents and visitors while allowing small businesses and non-profits to benefit," Shepherd said.

The event will be held Saturday, April

6, from 10am-8pm and Sunday, April 7, from 10am-6pm. Admission to the festival is free.

After the event on Saturday, NASA ambassador, Liam Finn, will provide a sold-out educational presentation called Syzygy at 6 p.m. in the Gatesville City Auditorium. Ticket holders should arrive by 5:45 p.m. Any seats that are unclaimed shortly before 6 p.m. will be released to the public first come, first served.

However, for those missing out on the talk, NASA representatives will return on the day of the eclipse to set up viewing equipment at the Gatesville Sports Complex baseball fields and will share educational information with visitors. Tickets are available at GatesvilleTxEclipse.com.

"As plans have evolved, I think the festival will be an opportunity for residents and visitors to make some won-

derful memories surrounding the eclipse experience," Shepherd said.

For more updates about the festival and to sign up as a volunteer or vendor, visit www.gatesvilletxeclipse.com/block-out-the-sun-party





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Gatesville Public Library offers Total Eclipse glasses

Staff Reports

The Gatesville Public Library is offering three ways to get glasses for the Total Eclipse that will happen in April.

One way to obtain your pair of eclipse glasses would be to check out a space- or science-related book. There will be one pair per family while supplies last.

There will be a free NASA program called SYZYGY at the City Auditorium on Saturday, April 8. To get a pair of eclipse glasses, all you would need to do is attend the event. To reserve your spot in the program, visit gatesvilletxeclipse.com/SZY.

Another way would be to purchase a parking spot at the NASA event on Saturday, April 8. Once the parking space is purchased, be sure to present your parking receipt that morning to the staff to receive your pair of glasses. For parking reservations, visit gatesvilletxeclipse.com/eclipseviewing.

For further details, contact the Gatesville Public Library at 254-865-5367.

The Gatesville Public Library is located at 111 N. 8th Street.



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What to expect during a total solar eclipse

BY KAYLEE DUSANG

Staff writer

kaylee@gatesvillemessenger.com

After months of waiting to catch the upcoming total solar eclipse, many people might wonder what they will experience when it finally arrives.

A total eclipse occurs when the earth, moon, and sun line up in space, leading to a several minutes of darkness when the moon blocks the sun. The development of a total eclipse occurs in several stages. According to NASA, the moon spends approximately one hour gradually covering the sun.

During the partial phases of the eclipse, people might notice shadows of small solar crescents on the ground. It is essential to use protective solar glasses during this

stage of the eclipse.

About 15 minutes before totality, the light will begin to change and grow darker. According to NASA, "The light may look eerie or strange. Even if it's cloudy and you can't see the sun, the skies will still grow darker."

The natural environment might also notice the gradual shift. This includes changes in wildlife behavior, such as birds and insects that act like night or dusk is approaching.

According to the Weather Channel, people could experience changes in the weather. During the 2017 total eclipse, many locations reported a 5 to 15 degrees drop in temperature and that the winds changed direction.

The weather can make a difference in the appearance of a total eclipse. If the skies are cloudy or rainy, it can obscure

the view. NASA recommends checking the weather before choosing a spot to watch the eclipse.

However, if the weather is clear, the moon's shadow will begin to become visible one to three minutes before the total eclipse. On clear, light-colored surfaces one might also notice "shadow bands" from the sun. NASA describes this phenomenon as light from the thin, crescent sun that "produces faint, rippling waves of light and dark."

Just before totality, the moon and sun will create a diamond ring effect called "Baily's Beads" where slivers of sunlight will shine through the valleys and craters of the moon.

Once the eclipse reaches totality, the sun's outer layer, known as the corona, will be visible from behind the moon. This is the only stage of the eclipse where it is

considered safe to remove eye protection.

One might also notice bright pink spots at the sun's edges. According to the San Francisco Exploratorium, these spots are large loops of plasma that rise from the sun's surface called "prominences."

Along with the covered sun, viewers might also notice bright stars, planets, and a glow known as a 360-degree sunset during totality.

While the length of total solar eclipses varies, the one on April 8 will last 4 minutes and 28 seconds max in places near the centerline of totality. The 2024 Great American Eclipse website says that the total eclipse first enters Texas near the Mexico border at 1:27 p.m. and leaves the Oklahoma and Arkansas border at 1:49 p.m.

For more information, visit science.nasa.gov/eclipses.



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Local businesses prepare for total eclipse takeover

BY ALEXANDRA MEELBUSCH

Staff Writer

With the Total Eclipse upon us, businesses in Gatesville have been preparing for the chance to spotlight their establishments to welcome visitors during this celestial phenomenon.

As there are many restaurants and businesses within the community, The Gatesville Messenger has highlighted the ones that will stay open during this once in a lifetime event.

Studebakers Pizza will remain open all throughout the Total Eclipse weekend, as well as on the day of the eclipse on Monday, April 8.

On the day of the eclipse, there will be various specials for visitors and locals to enjoy and T-shirts will also be sold during that time.

A local, veteran-owned, family business, Studebakers prides itself on serving fresh homemade pizzas, salads, sub sandwiches, pastas, and a variety of ice cream and desserts.

Studebakers Pizza is located at 2701 East Main Street.

Ranchers Steak House & Grill will be open on the day of the Total Eclipse to serve their usual menu along with the salad bar.

This establishment has been in business since 1997 and is inspired by the everyday family cooking that locals grew up enjoying.

Ranchers Steak House & Grill is located at 107 TX-36 North.

The Feed Mill will be open during the weekend of the eclipse. On Sunday, April 7, it will be open from 10:30 to 8 p.m., and on Monday, April 8, from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. or possibly later depending on the outcome.

On the day of the eclipse, the restaurant will sell eclipse T-shirts and eclipse glasses as well as have an eclipse special.

"We are trying to order ahead for different things," Tana Snoddy, owner of Feed Mill said. "But then again, how do you order if you don't really know."

The establishment is preparing for the eclipse by ordering cups, food, and other necessities in advance.

The Feed Mill has been in operation since 2010 and continues to serve the community with homestyle cooking.

The Feed Mill is located at 108 North 6th Street.

Bare Bones BBQ will be open during the weekend of the Total Eclipse and will host a concert with a performance

by Stoney LaRue on Friday, April 5. The restaurant will open on the day of the eclipse on Monday, April 8.

There will be Total Eclipse glasses sold at Bare Bones BBQ as well.

Bare Bones BBQ is located at 4305 TX-36.

New Rodeo Mexican Grill will be open on the day of the eclipse on Monday, April 8.

They will be operating at normal hours.

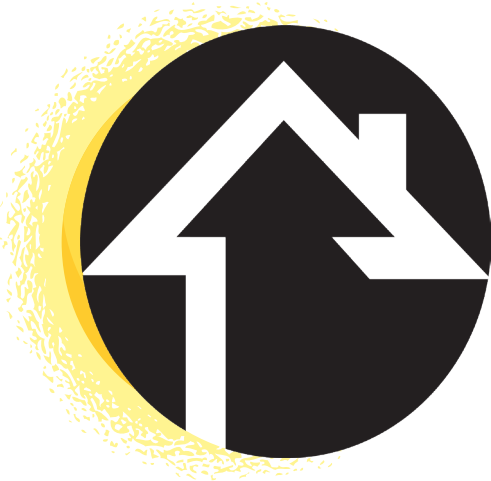
This establishment has been in business since 2013 and serves the community with authentic and traditional Mexican food.

New Rodeo Mexican Grill is located at 309 TX-36.

Visit www.gatesvilletxeclipse.com for more information about Gatesville's preparations for the eclipse.



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Local road closures during eclipse

BY DAVID SCOTT

Staff Writer

david@gatesvillemessenger.com

Texas officials are beginning to warn Texas drivers about the major traffic surge during the total solar eclipse.

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is forecasting major congestion along the path of the eclipse in the days before, during, and after the moon completely blocks out the view of the sun.

This warning also applies to the City of Gatesville, which estimates a great number of visitors to the city and the county.

Gatesville Chief of Police, Brad Hunt, said that on Friday, April 5, through Tuesday, April 9, access to Faut Le Roy Park will be limited, to allow for camping at the park.

Hunt also stated that on Saturday, April 6, and Sunday, April 7, the only roads that will be closed will be around the courthouse square, in the same manner as they are closed for such events as Boozaar and Spur Fest.

Hunt also added that on the day of the eclipse, April 8th, the only roads in town that will be closed, potentially, are around the GISD campus. Lovers Lane will be open

from about 9 a.m. through the rest of the day, while the other campus-bordering roads, Hornet Way and 27th Street will be controlled access for the event only.

He also stated that vehicle access to the Gatesville Sports Complex and Civic Center will be limited to those who pre-purchased parking passes, though access to the fields themselves will not require any additional entry fee.

In addition, Hunt also mentioned that "US 84 and Hwy. 36, and all major TxDOT highways and FM roads will not be closed, but we've been advising folks that it will be difficult to traverse throughout the weekend, and it will likely be stop and go for several hours on the afternoon of April 8th."

During the last solar eclipse in 2017, extensive traffic jams were reported throughout the country in the days leading up to the event. According to TxDOT, some areas in Texas saw up to a 200 percent increase in traffic.

ADVICE GIVEN BY TXDOT FOR THE ECLIPSE INCLUDE:

- Expect heavy traffic and sudden stops by drivers.
- Be on alert for distracted pedestrians looking to the sky.



COURTESY PHOTO

April 6 April 7, the only roads that will be closed will be around the courthouse square

- Keep your headlights on while driving, even in the daylight.
- Do not wear eclipse glasses while driving.
- Always keep your eyes on the road. Only view the eclipse once safely parked away from the flow of traffic.

TxDOT also offered one other piece of advice - eclipse watchers should wait a

day or two before traveling back as the heaviest traffic is likely to occur just after totality ends. Heading to less densely populated cities along major highways, sacrificing a few seconds or minutes of totality at a less busy location could also be worthwhile for drivers.

For more information about road closures, contact the Gatesville Police Department at 254-865-2226.

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How will animals behave during the total solar eclipse?

During previous eclipses, some viewers
BY KAYLEE DUSANG
Staff writer
kaylee@gatesvillemessenger.com

While a total solar eclipse is an exciting experience for humans, many scientists and members of the public are preparing to capture how animals will also react to the rare event.

have reported that unusual animal and insect behavior occurs once the moon passes over the sun, including claims that crickets begin to chirp, bees return to their hives, and birds fall silent. Although there is only a handful of research on the topic, a study published in the journal *Animals* found that approximately 75% of observed species at a zoo in South Carolina exhibited surprising behaviors during the Great American Eclipse in 2017.

Professor Adam Hartstone-Rose, a professor at North Carolina State University who led the study, said his team observed that many animals, including a troop of gorillas, started to engage in their nighttime routines.

“As totality set in, they started going toward their nighttime enclosure where they get their meal before they go to bed,” Hartstone-Rose said. As daylight resumed, he adds that the gorillas came back out of their enclosure.

Other animals had strange reactions to the eclipse, such as Siamang gibbons, a species of ape, that made unusual calls to each other and Galapagos tortoises that started breeding. Giraffes also galloped in what seemed like “pacing behavior” caused by stress or anxiety.

In April, Hartstone-Rose and his team will travel to the Fort Worth Zoo to learn if their research is consistent with their findings in 2017. For this study, they are enlisting help from the public by asking participants to observe animals not only at their local zoos, but also wildlife out in nature, farm animals, and pets. Known as the Solar Eclipse Safari project, willing participants can submit their observations via phone, tablet, or data collection sheets located on the project’s website.

“We are also really interested in data that’s collected not just on the path of totality, but also in any place in North America, because one of the questions that we have is – we’re building an idea that some animals have a reaction to an eclipse,” Hartstone-Rose said. “We’re

building an idea of how different animals

react to an eclipse, but we’re hoping to gather enough data to be able to say what amount of eclipse is necessary to cause a behavioral change.”

Other citizen science projects include NASA’s Eclipse Soundscapes, which aims to collect sounds and sensory observations from the public to find how an eclipse might affect various ecosystems.

“Eclipses have always presented scientists with unique opportunities to learn about our solar system,” MaryKay Severino, co-lead of the Eclipse Soundscapes Project, said in a press release. “The Eclipse Soundscapes Project is not only an opportunity for NASA to gather a large amount of scientific data, it’s an opportunity for our participants to learn about the eclipse in a multi-sensory manner.”

Both projects stem from a study in the 1930s that also used public observations to reveal how an eclipse might affect wildlife.

With areas throughout Central and North Texas expected to experience several minutes of totality, many regional wildlife reserves and zoos plan to do their own observations on how animals in their parks will respond to the total eclipse.

Avery Elander, a spokesperson for the Fort Worth Zoo, said that the zoo is open to the public on April 8. Visitors are also invited to submit their observations to Hartstone-Rose’s research team.

“We expect that if changes in behavior are observed, they will likely be animals behaving like they typically would at dawn or dusk such as nest building, change in vocalizations, increased activity/feeding, or moving toward their overnight barns,” Elander said.

Director of the Cameron Park Zoo in Waco, Brendan Wiley, said they plan to closely watch the behavior of the elephants and orangutans.

“Both of those species are incredibly intelligent and perceptive, so we are naturally curious to see how they react,” Wiley

said.

Wiley adds that the zoo has a group of 200-300 wild black vultures that visit the facility during the day but depart once evening approaches.

“(We’re) curious to see if they make an early departure,” he said.

Jake Mayhew, the ranch manager for Buena Vista Wildlife Safari in Evant, said they intend to conduct some visual observations of their animals.

“Most animals are fairly based on how the sun comes up – sun phases and moon phases and things like that because that’s how they feed,” Mayhew said. “And they’re not used to sudden darkness, and that alarms them, in my opinion, is what I think happens.”

Fossil Rim Wildlife Center in Glen

Rose hopes to participate in the Eclipse Soundscapes Project by recording animal sounds with an audio device during the eclipse.

“The goal would be to help contribute to the NASA (Soundscape) project,” said Warren Lewis, Chief Marketing Officer for Fossil Rim. “We would place it in our wolf area to see how our wolves react to the eclipse.”

For those interested in helping scientists study animal behavior or how nature responds during the total solar eclipse, visit Solar Eclipse Safari at scistarter.org/solar-eclipse-safari-resources or the Eclipse Soundscapes Project at eclipse-soundscapes.org.



COURTESY PHOTO

During previous eclipses, some viewers have reported that unusual animal and insect behavior occurs once the moon passes over the sun, including claims that crickets begin to chirp, bees return to their hives, and birds fall silent.

Public Library offers free Total Eclipse glasses

BY ALEXANDRA MEELBUSCH

Staff Writer
alex@gatesvillemessenger.com

In light of the Total Eclipse which will arrive in early April, the Gatesville Public Library is offering free eclipse glasses with three different ways to obtain them.

By checking out a book at the library that is space or science-related, one pair of glasses will be given per family while supplies last.

Another way to get a pair of eclipse glasses is to attend the SYZYGY presentation on Saturday, April 6, at the City Auditorium.

If you are an astronomy enthusiast or simply curious about rare astronomical events, then this will be an informative event to attend. The presentation will feature NASA Ambassador Liam Finn who will dive into the details of the eclipse, examining the path and characteristics, as well as exploring the science behind the occurrence.

The audience will learn about the features of each type of eclipse and what you can expect to see during each one. There will be discussions about how modern science has advanced our understanding of celestial events.

There will be safety tips provided at the presentation as well.

For further details regarding the SYZYGY event, visit gatesvillexclipse.com/SZY.

The final option to obtain a pair of glasses is to purchase a parking spot at the Gatesville Civic Center/Sports Complex for the NASA event on Saturday, April 8.

The area will feature open space for unobscured viewing, public restrooms, food/merchandise, vendors, and NASA Ambassadors providing information/education on the baseball field.

Chairs, telescopes, cameras, and coolers will be allowed.

Parking spaces can be reserved beginning at 6 a.m. on the day of the eclipse. Pre-purchase of a parking space assures you a legal and safe area to park and observe, as there is ample space to move around the grounds and set up your own viewing spot.

Parking Passes cover all occupants of a standard vehicle such as a car, a pickup, or an SUV, although oversized vehicles, which include buses, recreational vehicles, or commercial trucks should email sharp@gatesvillex.com to make arrangements for a larger space.

Once the parking space is purchased, present your parking receipt that morning to the staff to receive your pair of glasses.

Be sure to save your receipt as proof of purchase, and an email will also be sent out with more details and reminders around a week before the day of the eclipse.

For parking reservations, visit gatesvillexclipse.com/eclipseviewing.

For further details, contact the Gatesville Public Library at 254-865-5367.

The Gatesville Public Library is located at 111 N. 8th Street.

The City Auditorium is located at 110 N. 8th Street.

The Gatesville Civic Center/Sports Complex is located at 301 Veteran's Memorial Loop.



ALEXANDRA MEELBUSCH | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

Pictured is Librarian Shea Harp with the Gatesville Public Library wearing the eclipse glasses that can be obtained by various ways through the establishment.



DAVID SCOTT | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

Mother Neff State Park Superintendent Melissa Chadwick displays some of the eclipse items including t-shirts and eclipse glasses that will be on sale in the park's visitor center.

Mother Neff State Park at capacity for eclipse

BY DAVID SCOTT

Staff Writer
david@gatesvillemessenger.com

Mother Neff State Park, located in the southeastern portion of Coryell County, will be one of the 31 state parks in the direct path experiencing the total solar eclipse on April 8th.

According to Mother Neff State Park Superintendent, Melissa Chadwick, no special events will be held at the park on the day of the total eclipse, although she stated that all campsites at the park have been reserved for several months. "Not as much for overnight rentals," she said.

Chadwick reported that approximately 15 campsites had been previously rented with a few that were set aside for park staff and emergency vehicles. She also mentioned that additional park security would be needed on the day of the eclipse.

According to Texas Parks and Wildlife, it is recommended to head to your designated park early to allow for heavy traffic. It is also recommended to fuel up your vehicle before coming to the park in case of traffic delays.

Chadwick stated that the "day permits" to the park became available to the public on March 8th at 8 a.m., and that in less than an hour, the day permits were sold out, which numbered 70 in total.

Mother Neff Park has approximately 90 parking places available, then again, with some set aside for staff and law enforcement officers.

"We expect to be very busy on April 8th and for several days prior to the eclipse. Additional staff, volunteers, and the first responders will be on hand to assist with the larger-than-normal visitation we are anticipating," Chadwick said.

Regarding food and water, she said, "We have asked our vending machine vendors to have items fully stocked, and there may be other items available for donations that would benefit the Mother Neff State Park Association."

"We recommend that folks check availability before heading out to any park on that day as capacity limits may be reached," she said. Texas Parks and Wildlife officials reminded park visitors that, following the eclipse, you may not be able to leave quickly, so be sure to stock up on food and drinks in case your departure is delayed by traffic.

"We are certainly looking forward to the eclipse and creating stellar memories with our visitors that will last a lifetime," Chadwick said.

For more information about Mother Neff State Park, please call 254-853-2389.

Solar Eclipses in former years

BY DAVID SCOTT

Staff Writer

david@gatesvillemessenger.com

Since day one, Texas has witnessed numerous solar eclipses.

In most recent years, it was reported in The Gatesville Messenger on March 5, 1970, that a “100-mile shadow will darken the face of the earth.” The article continued, “The largest area of the covered sun to be seen in Texas is 73.5 percent, according to the U.S. Air Force Cambridge Research Laboratory.”

In 1970, it was reported that in Gatesville the eclipse would be “lasting for more than two hours, the moon will appear to leave the surface of the sun, and the eclipse will end at 1:13 p.m.”

Also reported in the 1970 Gatesville Messenger article was that the last visible total solar eclipse in the United States had occurred in 1963, and the next total eclipse would be visible on April 8, 2024.

Once again, in 1979, The Gatesville Messenger reported another eclipse notice. “A few Gatesvilleites paused long enough in their daily doings to gaze up

into the sky. Those that did noticed something was eating the sun. What it was, was a solar eclipse.” The article continued, “Bob Scott didn’t miss it as he gazed through two exposed negatives, and Bill Herridge also took pictures constructed by a device for viewing the eclipse.”

In 1984, it was reported that Waldean Cummings, secretary of the Gatesville Chamber of Commerce, took a glimpse at the shadowed pattern of the sun as the moon separated the earth’s path from the sun causing the eclipse. An article written about the 1984 eclipse stated that “The only notable change in the sunlight was a hazy, subdued sky as the sun was only partially blocked (approximately 80%), leaving a lighted area resembling a quarter moon.”

It was also reported in 1984 that on-lookers viewed the phenomenon through welder’s helmets which were supplied by Raymond Massirer and Mike Blanchard.

Over the years, Texas has witnessed many solar eclipses, one of which, in 1878, acclaimed national attention.

In July of 1878, a group of astronomers from across the United States descend-



COURTESY PHOTO

Astronomers and their equipment set up on a farm near Fort Worth to observe the 1878 solar eclipse.

ed on a small farm just outside of Fort Worth to study and photograph a total solar eclipse. The astronomers’ discoveries were eventually published in 1879 in a book titled “Report of the Observations of the Total Solar Eclipse July 29, 1878, Made at Fort Worth, Texas.”

One of the earliest eclipses in Texas was estimated to be in the year 1397 – 626

years ago in the region now known as our state capital in Austin.

After April 8, 2024, the next solar eclipse to be witnessed in Texas will be in August of 2044.



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Where to view the 2024 Great American Eclipse

BY KAYLEE DUSANG

Staff writer

kaylee@gatesvillemessenger.com

On April 8, Gatesville will witness 4 minutes and 23.9 seconds of a total solar eclipse. Because this rare occurrence will not cross North America again until 2044, viewers will want to find the best spot to witness the historic event.

For those seeking a spot to watch the total eclipse with friends, family, and their community, here's a list of events and watch parties happening in and around Gatesville on the day of the eclipse:

Gatesville Sports Complex

Visitors and residents are invited to view the eclipse from Hyles Field where NASA ambassadors will bring their equipment and interact with the public. Friends of the Gatesville Public Library will offer paid parking at the Gatesville Civic Center and the Sports Complex parking lots beginning at 7 a.m. Chairs, telescopes, cameras, and coolers are allowed.

Reserve a parking space at gatesvilletxeclipse.com/eclipseviewing

McKamie Stadium

Gatesville Independent School District will host an eclipse watch party at McKamie Stadium. The event will include food, games, and eclipse information. Stadium gates open at 8 a.m. with activities starting at 9 a.m.

Tickets cost \$10 for adults and \$5 for children two years and older. Pricing includes parking plus a pair of protective solar eclipse glasses. Purchase tickets here: gatesvilleisd.revtrak.net/administration Eclipse at the Crosses

Coryell Community Church is holding a free eclipse viewing event in their parking lot from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The event includes food trucks, games, entertainment, worship, and more. While parking is free, the church asks attendees to reserve a parking spot.

Reserve a parking space here: <https://subsplash.com/coryellcommunitychurch/lb/ev/+kgw7326>

The Last Drive-In Picture Show

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Corvell Heath Total Solar Eclipse Trips to be safe

Submitted item

The last time Texas experienced a total solar eclipse was in 1878. On Monday, April 8th, Central Texans will have the chance to witness the moon passing between the sun and the Earth for the first time in 146 years.

Viewing this once-in-a-lifetime event without proper protection can cause permanent eye damage, harm your skin and more. Follow Coryell Health's seven tips to prepare for and stay safe during this year's total solar eclipse. To download and print these eclipse safety tips, click here.

WEAR ECLIPSE GLASSES

Wearing eclipse glasses during a total solar eclipse is one of the most effective ways to shield your eyes from the sun's rays and avoid permanent damage to your vision. Regular sunglasses are not dark enough to protect your eyes during an eclipse.

Your eclipse glasses should meet the ISO 12312-2 standard and be labeled accordingly. If you don't see the ISO

12312-2 label anywhere on your glasses, they're probably counterfeit and are unsafe to wear during an eclipse. As long as they're shade 14 or darker, welding glasses or welding hoods can be a safe alternative to eclipse glasses. Don't view the eclipse through any welding glass if you can't find its shade number.

The only time it's safe to directly look at the sun during a total solar eclipse is during totality, or when the moon completely blocks the face of the sun. During the rest of the eclipse, wear proper eye protection!

PLACE SOLAR FILTERS ON YOUR CAMERA, BINOCULARS OR TELESCOPE

You must secure a solar filter over your camera, binoculars, telescope or other viewing device, even if you're wearing eclipse glasses.

Wearing eclipse glasses while looking through a viewing device will cause serious damage to your eyes if there's no solar filter attached to the lens. The concentration of the sun's rays may burn through your eclipse glasses as you're looking through the viewfinder and cause severe eye injury.

Remove the solar filter from your camera lens during totality if you're photo-

graphing the total solar eclipse. As soon as the sun begins to come into view again, place your solar filter back on your lens and put your eye protection back on.

PROTECT YOUR SKIN, TOO!

When viewing a total solar eclipse, it's critical to wear sunscreen, a hat and other protective clothing. If you're watching the entire eclipse, you may be in direct sunlight for hours, and it's essential to cover up while drinking plenty of water.

Even though the sun is partially or completely covered during the phases of a total solar eclipse, that doesn't make the sun's rays any less dangerous for your skin.

ANTICIPATE TRAFFIC

Expect heavy traffic from Thursday, April 4th to Tuesday, April 9th (especially April 8th, the day of the eclipse). Schedule any appointments, grocery shopping or gas runs accordingly. Plan ahead so you don't have to travel to errands or appointments during this period.

The nation's last total solar eclipse in 2017 saw traffic congestion in some areas lasting up to 13 hours following the eclipse's totality. According to an analysis of traffic patterns from that year, the worst traffic tends to be after the eclipse ends, and many people are attempting to leave all at once. With this in mind,

PREPARE FOR SUPPLY SHORTAGES

Stock up on the essentials before the anticipated traffic hikes starting April 4th. Fill up your tank and purchase food, wa-

ter, toiletries and other supplies at least a few days before the eclipse on April 8th. If you have any maintenance medications in need of refill, it's best to plan ahead and make sure you are well-supplied before this event.

BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS

The world doesn't stop turning while a total solar eclipse is happening. Most people's attention will be up at the sky rather than where they're walking or driving, so you've got to be aware of your surroundings.

Thousands of visitors are expected to be heading to Central Texas to watch the eclipse. It's important to focus, especially if finding your eclipse viewing spot involves navigating a large group of people.

EMERGENCY SERVICES IN THE EVENT OF EYE DAMAGE

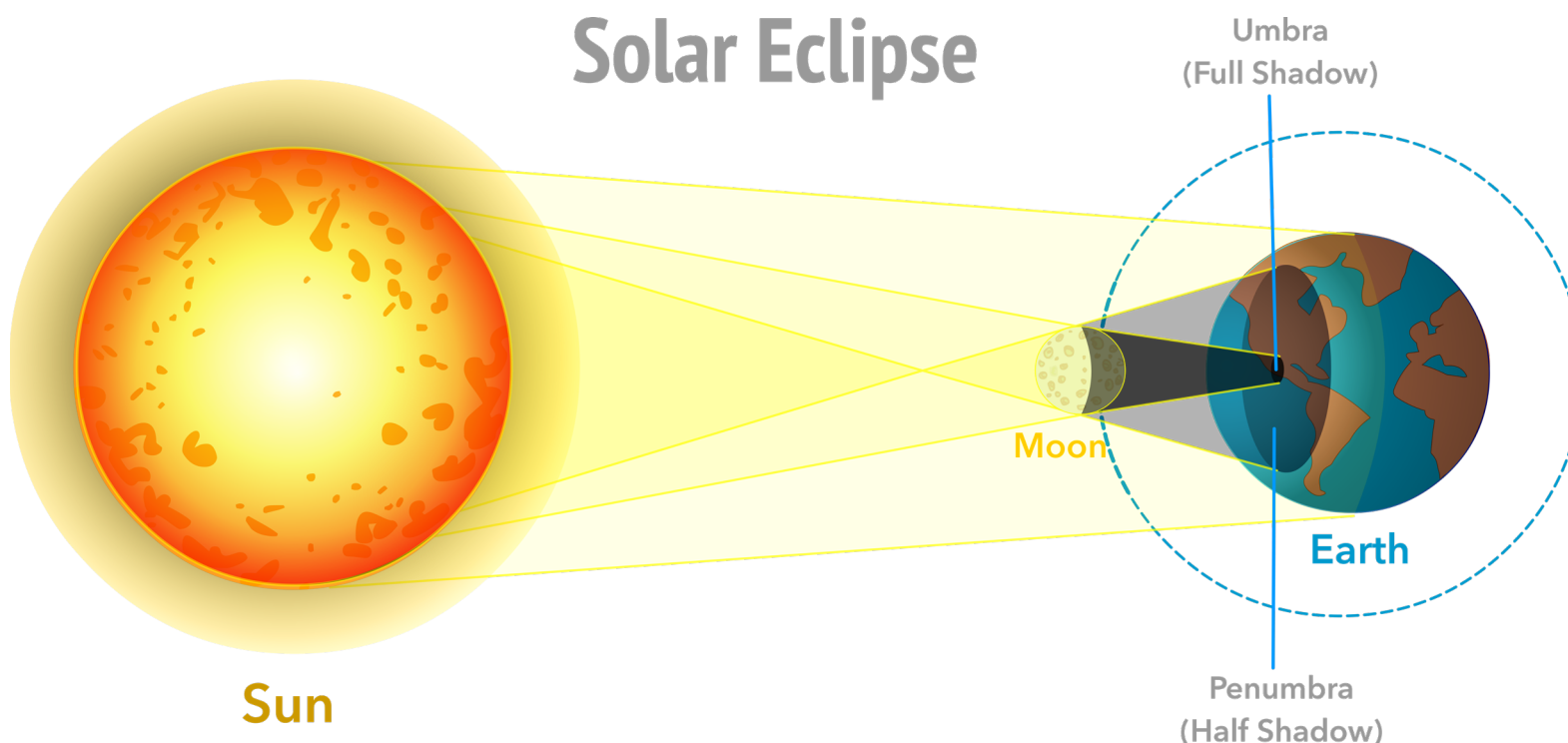
If you or someone with you suffers eye damage from the total solar eclipse, seek prompt medical attention. If you're in Gatesville, you can contact Coryell Health's emergency department at (254) 865-8251.

For more serious injuries, call 911.

By following these tips, you're set to safely enjoy this year's total solar eclipse on Monday, April 8th! For more health and wellness tips, contact your Coryell Health primary care physician.



Solar Eclipse



How the Eclipse works and what causes an eclipse to occur.

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ECLIPSE

FROM PAGE 19

Drive-In Picture Show located off 2912 State Highway 36. The watch party will feature food, mini golf, eclipse swag, and other activities. Gates will open at 10 a.m.

Each ticket includes premium parking for one vehicle with up to six passengers and two pairs of eclipse glasses for \$24.24. Tickets are available through The Last Drive-In Picture Show's Facebook page.

Higginbotham Brothers

Higginbotham Brothers will open their doors for an eclipse extravaganza that includes food trucks, door prizes, vendors, with flowers and hanging baskets for sale.

Store hours are 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

For more information, visit Gatesville's Higginbotham Brothers Facebook page.

For those hoping to catch the eclipse farther away from town, several local ranches and parks are also holding events, including:

6S River Ranch

6S River Ranch on Old Georgetown Road is offering activities throughout the weekend of the eclipse, but visitors can also purchase day-of eclipse passes. The ranch will provide a variety of entertainment and food options, including live music, BBQ and other food vendors, horseback riding, fishing, and more.

Eclipse glasses and parking are included in ticket pricing. Search "Solar Eclipse Viewing at 6S River Ranch" on Eventbrite.com to purchase weekend or day passes.

Dove Nest Estate

The Dove Nest Estate event venue on County Road 342 will host camping and activities throughout the weekend of the eclipse. Events on Sunday, April 7 and Monday, April 8 will include music, food, lawn games, and movies. The venue also allows guests to bring their ATVs or off-road vehicles to explore over 15 miles of trails on the property.

Daily passes are \$10. Visit Eventbrite.com and search for "Solar Eclipse Party at Dove Nest Estate" to purchase tickets and for more information on lodging and camping options.

LandJRanch

LandJRanch on King Ranch Road will host campers throughout the weekend and welcomes day-of-eclipse visitors. Activities include live music, volleyball, fishing, corn hole, food trucks, and more.

Day passes are available for \$20 when purchased in advance or \$25 when purchased the weekend of April 6-8.

Search for "LandJRanch 2024 Solar Eclipse Party" at Eventbrite.com to purchase passes or reserve a camping spot.

To ensure you don't miss the total eclipse, an interactive map showing its direct path through the region can also be found on coryellcounty.org.



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Eclipse at the Crosses

BY DAVID SCOTT

Staff Writer

david@gatesvillemessenger.com

Coryell Community Church is planning to have a free event, Eclipse at the Crosses, which will be open to the public, on Monday, April 8, from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. to view the solar eclipse in its totality.

“We started discussing the possibility of having this kind of event approximately a year ago when we realized the possibility of how many people were going to be in Gatesville. We immediately saw this as an opportunity to provide our community (and guests) with a family-centered environment to enjoy the eclipse. Our staff and elders have been working to prepare for the big day,” said CCC pastor, Dr. Eric Moffett.

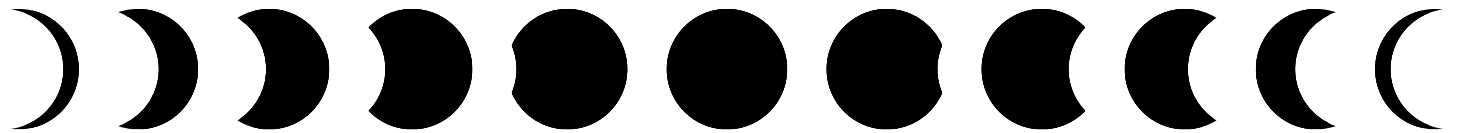
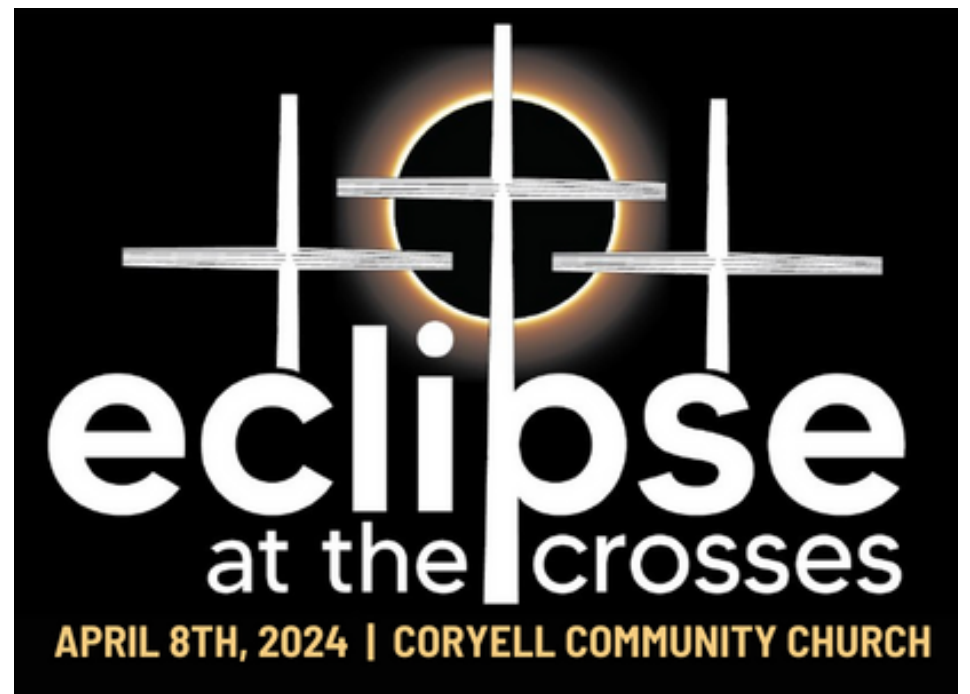
“We have 250 parking spots on our campus and right now and we have about 115 spots that are still open. The parking spots are free to reserve, and you can do so by going to www.coryell.church/events. We also have 1,000 free eclipse glasses that we will give out on the day of as well,” he said.

The event, beginning at 10 a.m., will

have corn hole, horseshoes, and GaGa ball. According to Moffett, the church’s worship team will be on hand to lead in worship prior to the time of the eclipse. Also, Christian comedian, Adam Bush, will be doing a set for those in attendance. In addition, there will be food trucks available on site.

The church playground will also be available for the children present. The CCC youth group will be helping through the day with the games.

“The eclipse is a unique opportunity for Coryell Community Church to share what we have with our community and with those visiting. We think that our campus is a beautiful and meaningful place in which to view this incredible event,” Moffett said.



THE PARROT IMPORTS

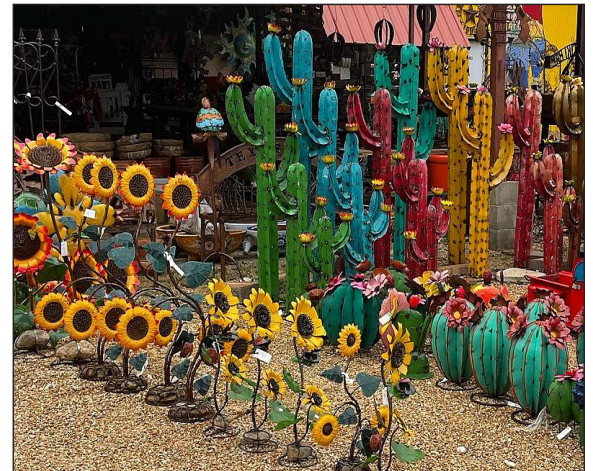
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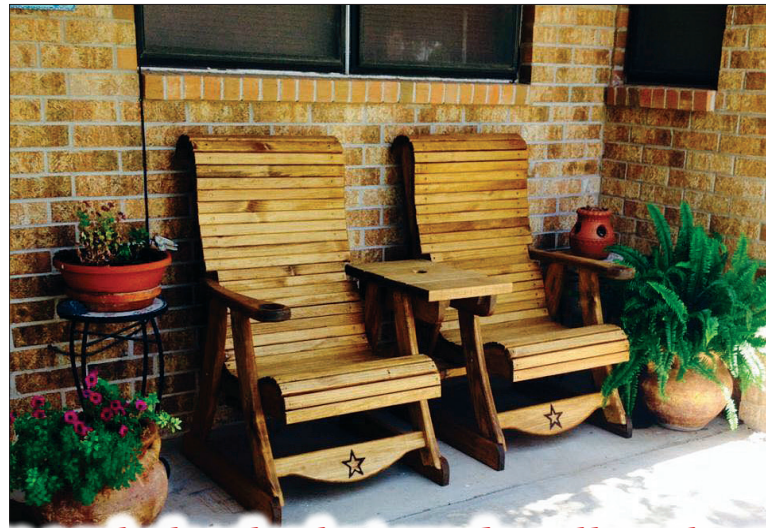
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- Common Illnesses - colds/flu, stomach virus, ear aches, sore throats
- migraines
- urinary/bladder infections
- fever/rashes
- sprains
- back pain
- minor cuts/burns
- minor broken bones

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or to speak with a nurse

QUICK CARE

QUICK CARE WALK-IN CLINIC treats non-life-threatening medical problems. (Including but not limited to):

Common illnesses:

- Colds/flu
- Stomach virus
- Vomiting
- Ear aches
- Sore throats
- Urinary and bladder infections

Common injuries:

- Simple cuts/burns
- Minor sprains
- Contusions, mild concussions
- Migraines, dizziness
- Insect bites, stings & poison ivy
- Pink eye
- Abdominal pain
- STD screening
- Simple foreign body removal
- Children who are 3 months or older

Coryell Health Medical Clinic, Bldg 2
227 Memorial Dr. Bldg. 2 Gatesville, TX 76528
M-F 10am-8pm, Sat 8am-6pm, Closed Sun Holidays

EMERGENCY CARE

Emergency Care when you need care right away. Symptoms that may indicate an emergency medical condition include:

- Chest pain, heart attack, or palpitations
- Sudden onset of severe abdominal pain
- Severe allergic reaction or anaphylaxis
- Severe shortness of breath
- Trauma
- Severe pain
- Head injuries
- Accidental poisoning
- Chemical exposure
- Loss of consciousness or shock
- Eye injuries
- Foreign body removal
- Severe burns
- Coughing or vomiting blood

Symptoms of a stroke: numbness in the face, arm or leg, slurred speech, sudden dizziness/weakness, loss of coordination/balance, sudden vision changes, severe headache

Coryell Health | Emergency Room
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While Coryell Health is here to care for you, The American Academy of Ophthalmology states that there is no treatment for solar retinopathy, which is why it is so important to wear eye protection during the eclipse.



WHERE YOU ALWAYS FEEL AT HOME

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Local officials and services prepare for Total Eclipse

BY ALEXANDRA MEELBUSCH

Staff Writer
alex@gatesvillemessenger.com

The total solar eclipse that will pass directly through the center of Gatesville is nearly upon us, which means city officials and services throughout the community have been preparing for April 8.

As Gatesville will be a prime viewing location for travelers throughout the United States, the population will expect a sudden increase.

"This event has never occurred in Gatesville's recorded history and has the potential to be the biggest event our town has ever seen," Gatesville Police Chief Brad Hunt said. "It is an opportunity to shine for our city government, local businesses, and for all residents of Gatesville."

The centerline of the eclipse will pass directly through Gatesville and will be one of the longer durations of totality in the State of Texas, at four minutes, twenty-three point nine seconds.

"We have conducted extensive research

into the 2017 total eclipse that crossed a smaller portion of the U.S., speaking to local and state governments in Wyoming and Illinois about their experiences," Hunt said. "We paid close attention to their lessons learned and have planned accordingly for the additional people coming to town, as well as the traffic issues we expect will occur."

"The lessons from 2017 taught us that, regardless of whether we hosted local events, people would come to town," Hunt said. "So, we began planning things for people to do on the day of the event and the weekend preceding it, to give our visitors a unique way to experience Gatesville."

The Gatesville Police Department and the City of Gatesville have made several statements regarding the eclipse about how a safe event equals a good event.

Hunt expressed that he expects greatly increased traffic through the weekend, with some delays likely.

"We have been planning for over a year and, now that we are less than four weeks away, we feel like we are more than ready for the day of the eclipse to arrive," Hunt said.

Hunt explained that the Gatesville Police Department is doubling their patrol pres-

ence the week of the eclipse as well as working with area partners and nearby cities to plan for any potential emergencies, such as Coryell County Sheriff's Office, Fort Cavazos, Texas Department of Public Safety, and others.

The city has increased their workforce at both the police and fire departments in preparation for the increased number of people through the weekend and on April 8, as well as collaborating with local and state partners for some time to ensure that the community will have the resources necessary to provide services throughout the event.

The Gatesville Police Department is working with the Texas Department of Transportation and surrounding communities to prepare traffic control and public safety plans.

The biggest traffic concerns include congestion on U.S. Highway 84 and State Highway 36, two major highways utilized by emergency vehicles and that lead to larger cities like Waco and Temple.

He added that his team will remain in contact with local entities including the fire department, EMS, and law enforcement in the area.

Recommendations for citizens when it comes to preparing for severe traffic in-

I Got Lost



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SOMEWHERE ELSE BAR


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cludes having a full tank of gas, carrying a tire repair kit and emergency supplies in the vehicle, and staying off the road during the evening of Monday, April 8.

“On Monday, April 8 from about 2 p.m. through the rest of the night, we expect drastic delays on all city streets and highways throughout our region,” Hunt said. “We are asking folks to pre-plan for significant delays on the afternoon of Monday, April 8.”

The Gatesville Police Department and the City of Gatesville are encouraging locals to sign up for Code Red Alerts to their cell phone, which is how pertinent information will be relayed about traffic or other topics.

The Code Red signup can be found on the city webpage at <https://www.gatesvilletx.com/>, under “How DO I?” tab.

The Gatesville Volunteer Fire Department, under the leadership of Chief Billy Vaden will be sure to have extra personnel on duty from Friday, April 5, to Tuesday, April 9.

A command post vehicle will be on standby during the downtown event on Saturday, April 6 and Sunday, April 7, as well as at the Sports Complex for the NASA event on Monday, April 8. The VFD will also be available to assist with any incident responses as needed.

The Gatesville VFD can be reached by contacting 254-865-6416.

The City of Gatesville Street Department

Director Jim Shepard will have all personnel on duty from Friday, April 5, to Tuesday, April 9. The street department will have staging cones and barricades at various event locations from Friday, April 5, to Monday, April 8, as well as assisting with any incident responses as needed.

The Gatesville Parks and Recreation Department Director Seth Phillips will have all personnel on duty from Friday, April 5, to Tuesday, April 9. The department will be primarily monitoring the camping grounds at Faunt Le Roy Park from Friday, April 5, to Tuesday, April 9, while also checking on all other city parks during that timeframe. They will be assisting with the NASA event, which will be located at the Sports Complex on Monday, April 8, and with any incident responses as needed.

There will be clean-ups conducted at each city park throughout the month of March to prepare for the event in early April.

Water Distribution Directors Chad Newman and Zeb Veazy will make sure that all personnel are on duty from Friday, April 5, to Tuesday, April 9. Their main responsibility will be to monitor water usage throughout the community and to adjust any levels as needed with increased demand. Throughout the month of March, the water distribution team has been preparing systems for increased usage from Saturday, April 6, to Tuesday, April 9.

Bobby Buster, Director of the Water Waste Department with the City of Gatesville, has made sure that all personnel will be on duty from Friday, April 5, to Tuesday, April 9. The department will mainly be focusing on the wastewater output and adjusting plant operations as needed with increased demand. Systems are being prepared during the month of March for increased usage from Saturday, April 6, to Tuesday, April 9.

Miguel Gamez with the Building Department is completing preparations at the City Auditorium for the NASA presentation, which expects high traffic.

Civic Manager Morgan Smart is coordinating with the Friends of the Public Library, city staff, the Gatesville Police Department, the parks, and the Gatesville Volunteer Fire Department, for the event to be held at the Sports Complex on Monday, April 8.

Director Shea Harp with the Gatesville Public Library is coordinating with the Friends of the Public Library to host an event at the Sports Complex on Monday, April 8. Harp will be assisting with the education and eclipse glasses distribution during the month of March as well leading up to the weekend event. She will be hosting the NASA presentation with Liam Finn at the City Auditorium on Saturday, April 6.

Nursing home Hillside Medical Lodge will have its parking lot entrance blocked

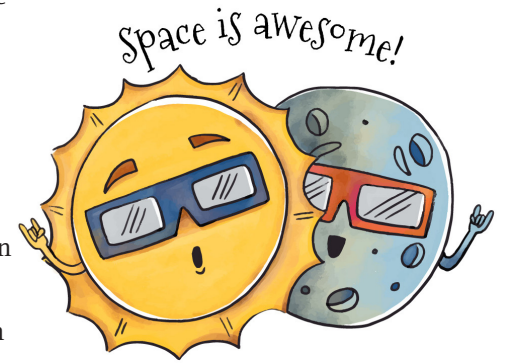
off to all visitors except for the families of the residents on Monday, April 8.

Police Chief Brad Hunt explained that lanes will be open for EMS services to travel to emergencies at Hillside Medical Lodge and RehabLiving at the Meadows.

For further details regarding the City of Gatesville’s preparations for the Total Eclipse, contact 254-865-8951.

Visit www.gatesvilletxeclipse.com for more information about Gatesville’s preparations for the eclipse.

The Gatesville City Auditorium is located at 110 N. 8th Street.



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