

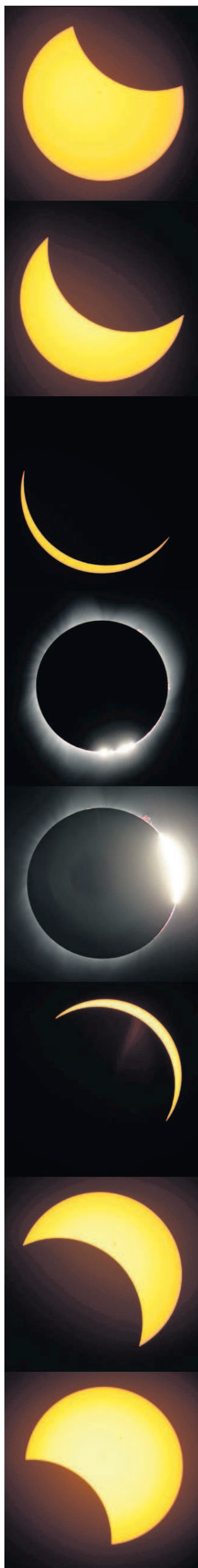
EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar



AP Photo/Ted S. Warren



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A map marked with pins place by visitors on their hometowns hangs at the industrial park during the eclipse on Monday in John Day.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Chien Chiang of Fremont, California, takes a photograph while watching the eclipse with his family on Monday in John Day.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Gabriel Porter, of Sandy, right, reacts to the start of the eclipse while watching it with his twin brother, Nathan, on Monday in John Day.

SOLAR SENSATION

Spectators flock to Oregon to catch a glimpse of the total eclipse

First of its kind since 1979

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**
East Oregonian

Anticipation turned to cheers Monday morning in John Day as visitors from around the world celebrated the arrival of the 2017 total solar eclipse.

For about two minutes, the moon came in perfect alignment with the sun, casting an otherworldly darkness that left spectators in awe. The skies remained mostly clear throughout the morning, offering a pristine view of the cosmic dance. Then, just as quickly as it came, it was over and light returned.

Located deep within the path of totality, John Day played host to thousands of eclipse watchers who made the trip to witness the once-in-a-lifetime event. A large crowd gathered over the weekend at the city's airport industrial park, where campers reserved their spots months in advance to experience the eclipse in its full glory.

According to travelers, it was well worth the trip.

Mike Ziemke, of Merrill, Wisconsin, drove two full days to John Day where he met his friend, Chuck Stewart, of Vancouver, Washington. The two astronomy buffs settled in



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Thousands of travelers gathered at the industrial park in John Day on Monday to view the eclipse.

Wednesday and spent every night stargazing through their telescopes and eagerly awaiting Monday's eclipse.

Ziemke, who watched the 1979 total solar eclipse from his home in Wisconsin, described the experience as life-changing.

"It's something that's just unbelievable," he said. "To think of all the people across the country coming together today, just to watch ... you've

got all walks of life."

Kevin Knowles, an astronomy teacher at Mount Si High School in Snoqualmie, Washington, wore his enthusiasm on his sleeve — literally — with not one, but two shirts adorned in planets and galaxies. He said he first heard about the eclipse in March while attending the National Science Teachers Association conference in Los Angeles and

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made his arrangements. "I would have loved to have this a few weeks later so I could have brought my whole class," Knowles said. "Definitely, this brings alive everything I teach."

For others, traveling to the path of totality was a last-minute decision. Patricia Johnson, of Sacramento, California, drove up to Oregon with her adult son, Edek Sher, who was home visiting from Rhode Island.

The two were not able to find eclipse glasses on such short notice anywhere in northern California. Fortunately, they were able to stop at the Powerhouse Science Center in Sacramento, where they learned how to make their own using paper and popsicle sticks. The center also provided the proper viewing lenses.

"We were embarrassed," Johnson

See **ECLIPSE/7A**

"It's like some special kind of gray darkness. At the same time, the sun gets this silvery kind of shine."

— **Bernd Schatzman**, flew to the U.S. from Germany

