

ACADEMIC HONORS

Mellein named to honor roll

OSHKOSH, Wis. — Jennifer Mellein, of Monmouth, was named to the honor roll at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh for the spring 2017 semester.

To qualify, a student must take at least 12 credits and have a grade-point average of at least 3.3.

Witwer-Dukes graduates from St. Olaf

NORTHFIELD, Minn. — Madeleine Witwer-Dukes, of Monmouth, graduated from St. Olaf's College on May 28. Witwer-Dukes studied psychology and French.

Costa receives certificate

FRONT ROYAL, VA — Lucas Costa, of Monmouth, a senior at Randolph-Macon Academy, has been honored with the AP Statistics Outstanding Performance certificate for the 2016-17 school year at Ralph-Macon Academy. Costa was a senior at the time of the award.

SCHOOL NOTES

Meyer retires from school board

DALLAS — Dallas school board member Lu Ann Meyer retired from the board after serving 12 years on Monday.

At the end of Monday's school board meeting, she thanked her fellow board members and the district.

"I want to thank my fellow board members for their commitment to this position. It comes with a multitude of responsibilities and challenges. All of you have been absolutely wonderful to work with," she said. "I'm especially thankful for the trust and collaboration that we have built in the district during the time I've served on this board. I don't think we have to look too far to see that we are miles ahead of other districts in how we deal with issues."



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

NASA scientist Lou Mayo gave a presentation on June 21 about the Great American Eclipse.

NASA scientist explains eclipse

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH — Why does a total solar eclipse happen? If the sun rises in the east, why will the West Coast see the Great American Eclipse first? How will animals be affected?

Those questions and more were answered during a Meet a Sun Scientist event on June 21 at Monmouth Library.

NASA astronomer Lou Mayo presented over livestream and answered questions about the eclipse. The presentation was part of the NASA @ My Library pro-

gram. Monmouth is one of three libraries in the U.S. to take part in the program.

Mayo's presentation covered a variety of topics from eye safety to why some parts of the country will only see a partial eclipse, to what parts of the country have the best chance for a clear sky on Aug. 21. Good news for Oregonians — generally if you leave the coasts out of it, the weather situation gets better as you go (from east to) west, Mayo said.

Just how does a solar eclipse happen?

"The moon moves directly in front of the disc of the sun," Mayo said. "The moon

is about 400 times smaller than the sun, but is also 400 times closer so it appears to be almost precisely the same size in the sky."

Once the question-and-answer period began, Mayo talked on a variety of subjects — including why the west will see the eclipse first, even though the sun rises in the east.

"The moon moves to the east and the earth is spinning to the east," Mayo said. "You get the west-to-east motion of the eclipse as a result."

One area NASA will be researching is how the eclipse will affect plants and animals.

"Animals will think it's night time so they may go to nest," Mayo said. "Cows will think it's time to turn around and go back to the barn. We have evidence that some plants will close up thinking it's night time. The temperature can drop by as much as 20 degrees."

Once the total eclipse hits, stars and planets will become visible. The total eclipse will last, on average, about 2 minutes and 40 seconds, Mayo said.

Perhaps Mayo's best advice? Be ready to experience something cool.

"This is a bucket-list kind of event," he said.

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