

ECLIPSE

Continued from Page A1

"They're trying to get a continuous stream of photographs," Smith said. "They were missing a section of Oregon, and I got a call asking if we'd be interested in participating."

In June, Smith was trained for the project by a scientist with a doctorate in astronomy.

On July 31, Smith and two of her sophomore students Gage Lambeth and Donovan Smith and former student Declan Jensen, a 2017 Grant Union graduate, met to practice setting up the telescope before the big day.

Jensen's friend Anthony Allen of Rocklin, California, also joined in the process.

The telescope and a laptop were set up on private property near John Day.

"The sun is hard to center in the telescope," Smith said, as they worked to fine tune the settings.

Once the image of the sun was focused, Smith sent the settings to scientists involved



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

Grant Union science teacher Sonna Smith, back right, works with, from left, Gage Lambeth, Donovan Smith, Anthony Allen and Declan Jensen, preparing to participate in a nationwide solar eclipse experiment near John Day.

in the project to double-check for accuracy.

Donovan said he hopes to gain "more know-how about astronomy and the eclipse" from the experience.

Lambeth said he was looking forward to having a close

look at a career he plans to pursue.

"It's going to give me an idea of what it will be like," he said, adding he'd like to be involved in astronomy in some way in the future.

Sonna said she chose some

younger students for the project so they can train other students to use the equipment.

Jensen said she hopes to learn how to properly use a telescope.

She attends Lane Community College and plans to

transfer to University of Oregon in Eugene to pursue a physics degree.

Scientist Tom Schad will also work with the group. Sonna said she looks forward to having his assistance with the project to make sure it goes smoothly.

David Anderson is another scientist with the project who will set up near Mt. Vernon.

Sonna said a bonus to participating in the program is the opportunity to keep the equipment, including the telescope, camera attachment and laptop.

"They're giving the school access to free software, in case we have students who want to do presentations about the eclipse or more research about the eclipse," she said.

Dr. Matt Penn, who is the principal investigator for the program through the National Science Foundation's National Solar Observatory, said he expects the nationwide experiment to provide an extraordinary dataset.

"Normally during a solar eclipse, we get about 2 min-

utes of data in that region closest to the photosphere (solar surface)," he said. "But Citizen CATE will allow us to get an hour and a half of data."

He said the 90 minutes of continuous, high-resolution and rapid-cadence images will detail the sun's inner corona, providing information about a region of the solar atmosphere that is typically challenging to image.

"Thankfully, there is nothing typical about this eclipse," he said.

Sonna said she was glad Allen, who has an interest in astronomy as well, joined their group.

Allen, a 2016 grad, said being involved in the total solar eclipse project is a good experience.

"It gives me a way to make it more memorable," he said. "Otherwise, I'd put on these (solar eclipse) glasses, look at it and say 'neat' and go back inside."

For more information about the upcoming eclipse and Citizen CATE, visit eclipse2017.nso.edu/online.

NASA scientists are studying eclipse in Unity

Experiments planned before, during, after

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

Unity's wide-open spaces are attracting NASA astronomers to the area for the eclipse.

Although the town population is just around 100, with an enrollment at Burnt

River School of 35, the school will host 40 astronomers from NASA and Virgin Galactic, a company that offers space adventures.

Burnt River's sole science teacher Tonia Humbert said she's looking forward to the experience.

"NASA has established our school as an educational outpost," she said. "They'll be performing different experiments with the students before, during and after the eclipse."

Although students started school this week, on Monday the school will be closed due to traffic and safety concerns. Students are invited to join the scientists and soak in the knowledge they'll share.

On Sunday night, a professional astronomer will host a stargazing event. There will also be astrophysics lectures.

The astronomers will talk about their official positions and give an eclipse folklore presentation, covering the history of humankind and how they've viewed these astronomical events, Humbert said.

They will also demonstrate how to make pinhole cardboard viewers.

She said eye safety is an issue.

"The glasses that are being marketed are designed for a full-size human face," Humbert said. "There is a lot of peripheral space that could cause children to injure their eyes. They advise they use a pinhole camera instead."

In addition to the presentations, a tethered hot air balloon will be in town on Sunday, although Humbert was unsure if balloon rides will be available to the general public.

Humbert said the presentations are by invitation only. Community members, both close and extended, have been invited to the event.

"This is an amazing opportunity. However, there are obvious safety and security concerns, not only involving the students but also the integrity of the experiments done by the scientists," Humbert said. "This is such a rare event. They can't put (their scientific work) in jeopardy."

She added the scientists will involve participants to a certain extent.

"It's just a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to get a personal look at professionals in this area," she said. "How often can you have a conversation with a NASA scientist? I'm beyond excited at the opportunity."

Navigating the eclipse

Road closures and parking restrictions in effect

By Rylan Boggs
Blue Mountain Eagle

One of the most important things people can do during the eclipse is to be patient, Grant County Emergency Management Coordinator Ted Williams said.

Longer commutes and congestion, especially on Highways 26 and 395, are to be expected.

Williams urged people to stay on main roads, despite potentially long waits.

He said parking will not be allowed on Main Street in John Day, and the county airport would only be open for emergency and fire personnel. The county is prepared for fuel shortages and has 2,000 gallons of fuel stockpiled for law enforcement and medical emergencies.

"This is going to be fluid right up until the time it happens," Williams said.

If an emergency occurs, volunteer first responders such as firefighters and search and rescue members respond to their bases in personal vehicles with hazard lights flashing. Visitors should yield the road to these first responders, despite the lack of sirens and typical emergency lights.

County roads 2, 57, 46A, 52, 43 and 20A will be closed to all but local traffic Aug. 17-23 during the eclipse by order of the Grant County Court.

These closures were brought forward by landowners to Grant County Roadmaster Alan Hickerson and then to the county court for approval.

A request from Grant County Undersheriff Zach Mobley to close County Road 77, which leads to the Canyon Mountain Trailhead, was also approved.

Hickerson said resources to enforce and patrol these roads would not be available during the eclipse, but the road department would be able to place concrete barriers if needed.

The People Mover, Grant County's bus system, will be running eight routes connecting John Day, Mt. Vernon, Prairie City, Canyon City and Dayville, according to Angie Jones, the transportation manager at the People Mover. For a complete schedule and fare costs, visit grantcountypeoplemover.com/solar-eclipse-2017.

John Day city employees will be directing traffic and ensuring things run smoothly during the eclipse, according to city manager Nick Green. Overflow parking will be available at the Industrial Park and the Oregon Pine property, if it is needed, Green said.

To assist with public safety for the eclipse, the Malheur National Forest has issued temporary road and area closure orders, effective through Aug. 25. The affected roads lead to eight fire lookout towers and one communication site.

The roads closed to motorized travel are Forest Service roads 2610 and 759 leading to Dixie Lookout, 71 leading to Black Butte Lookout, 537 leading to Indian Rock Lookout, 1370 leading to Table Rock Lookout, 607 leading to Fall Mountain Lookout, 820 leading to Dry Soda Lookout, 819 leading to Flagtail Lookout and 2150 leading to Aldrich Lookout.

Also in effect through Aug. 25 is a closure order that prohibits camping within 1,200 feet of lookout towers and guard stations located within the path of totality.

For a detailed list of affected roads and areas, along with copies of the closure orders, visit fs.usda.gov/Malheur or call the Malheur National Forest office, 541-575-3000.

Due to expected large crowds, the Oregon Department of Transportation urges people to treat the three-hour eclipse as a three-day event.

The department recommends carpooling, arriving early and staying late to avoid traffic jams.

The shoulder is for emergency stopping, not parking or eclipse viewing, and blocking the shoulder could keep emergency vehicles from reaching victims, according to ODOT.

Eclipse viewers can get a birds-eye view of traffic speeds anywhere in the state by visiting tripcheck.com.

Log Cabin ESPRESSO

Open Mon - Fri 6:30-5 • Sat 8-2
Closed Sun
Drive up window at John Day Polaris
821 W Hwy., 26 • 541-575-5778

ROCKY MTN DISPENSARY
Oregon Medical Marijuana Patients (OMMP) ONLY.

- Flower • Extract • Topicals • Edibles

"Do not operate a vehicle or machinery under the influence of marijuana. Keep Marijuana out of the reach of children."

27877 Apple Road John Day, OR 97845
541-575-4200 • Open 7 days a week Mon-Sat 10-8 & Sun 12-6.

Grubsteak Mining Co.
RESTAURANT & LOUNGE

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
8/17-8/21 open for Breakfast
6am to 11am

Great Prime Rib, Steaks & Burgers

Lottery Lounge opens @ 11am
149 E Main St., John Day • 541-575-1970

ED'S FAST BREAK
W. Hwy. 26, John Day • 541-575-2585

NOW with a Deli Counter and Coopers Express Chicken

Fuels • Lubes • Propane • Service • Shell Station

AFTER HOURS GAS NOW AVAILABLE!
with credit card only

ED'S FAST BREAK
At the Y in Canyon City • 541-575-1942

The Dark Horse Group Plus The Boutique

16 Wonderful Booths:

- Uniques
- Collectables & Antiques
- Linens-Glassware
- Silverware
- DVDs & Videos
- Fabric/Crafting/Notions
- Furniture
- Jewelry
- Pictures & Prints
- Books & Novels

Open Mon-Sat 10-4 • Closed Sun & Wed
600 S Canyon Blvd. • 541-575-2404