

THE Asteroid



Newsletter for the Astronomical Society of Nevada

Total Eclipse Edition 2017

Historian notes

The ASN has been involved in several Total Eclipses over the years. With two more Total Eclipses coming up in the United States in 2024 and 2045, I thought it was important to capture our experience across the West in 2017.

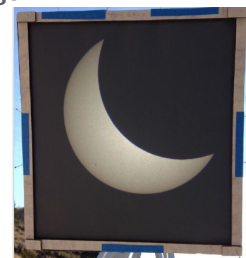
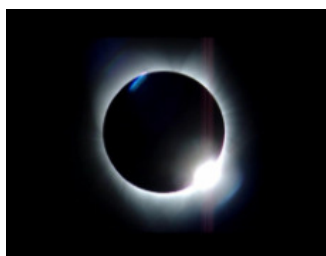
A great deal of planning went into this event and we all owe a great deal of thanks to Jim Fahey and his wife for setting up the rooms in Idaho Falls nearly 4 years early. This saved us a lot of money and gave our group a place to meet.

From what I can tell, everyone had clear skies and fantastic views of this incredible eclipse. It was only a few hours after that I already started hearing people planning for the next one.

Here are a few photos and some stories about peoples experiences.



ASN President Dennis Jamison and his family
Near Antelope Oregon



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On line resources
Web Site www.astronomynv.org
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"To encourage, foster, conduct and support programs on astronomy and related sciences for the education and enlightenment of the general public and the membership."

Supporting programs in Astronomy and related sciences in Northern Nevada since 1934

Dennis Jameson
Near Antelope, OR

I went to Washington Family Ranch (WFR), OR. A 490 mile drive from Reno, with the last 15 mi on dirt roads. It's about 35 mi NNW from OSP (straight line). Remote, no cellular coverage. We were 12 miles North of the eclipse centerline. The duration of totality there was just under 2 min. The nearest town is Antelope, OR.

Traffic was hyped before the eclipse, especially at the town of Madras. So I left Reno Friday afternoon and drove to Klamath Falls to shorten the trip on Saturday. We arrived at WFR 10 am Saturday. There were no problems with gas and we had great accommodations too.

I scouted numerous spots near WFR, picked Mays Reservoir, 6 mi South of WFR. On eclipse day, we had to turn around on the way to Mays to avoid smoke/ thin clouds low in the south. Ended up viewing from only 1.4 mi south of WFR. The turnaround cost some setup time. In the last few minutes of setup we had to move to avoid power lines at the improvised location.

But the view was great. My homemade solar scope worked great and gave a large image of the partial phases. Used my C5 at 50x to view totality and video the last 3 min of partial, plus first 30 sec of total. The C5 gave a fantastic view. Lots of color and detail at moon's limb. Also viewed with 7x50 binoculars, great view, and saw Regulus too. As was the naked eye - saw Venus too. Largest corona I've seen compared to 1979 and 1991. I saw only one prominence, visible in binos and C5 but didn't notice it with naked eye. The corona was stunning. Diamond rings were stunning. I didn't see Bailey's Beads. And it was over way too soon. It seemed like 1 minute, not 2.



Jim Fahey
Idaho Falls, ID

The Fahey family, Jim, Jennifer, and Patricia, left Sparks at 3:30 pm after school let out. We drove to Wells Nevada and spent the night there. We were up at 7 and on the road by 8:30 and started the final trek to Idaho Falls. Fearing gloom and doom we made our final gas stop about 10 miles out of town. We arrived at the Fairbridge about 3:00 pm and checked in. The pool was great. The Bees Restaurant had filling food.

Slowly the others arrived and most got a meal and to bed. The final personnel arrived on Saturday. Sunday, Andy and family plus Jennifer and Patricia went to the Zoo. Jim took the PST to the river bank in the afternoon for public viewing of the sun. Brad and others went on a scouting trip for places to view.

4PM was an ASN meeting of who was going where and why. Jay's group went to a teacher's house. Brad report said the BYU look good but a Wildlife Park was great! He had several join him in the wildlife park to be closer to nature for this natural event. Andy, Keith, Steve, Richard, Mike, Tony and Jim stayed at the Fairbridge back yard for many reasons. So far the gloom and doom of short supplies was not present. Traffic was light. The backyard was filling up but not crowded.

First contact came and the eclipse began. The crescent slowing changing size. The smaller it got the wind picked up. A coolness started to be noticed. We looked the approach of the shadow but trees were in the way. Then a flash of darkness! The diamond ring blinked out. The corona appeared. I never thought I would ever see such a sight. You see photographs, but here was darkness, Venus was bright, and a red sunset 360 degrees around you impacting your mind. One minute fifty seconds seemed like 10 seconds. Over and done.

Several stayed for the sun spitting out of the moon but the Fahey's had a 12 hour drive back to Sparks. The car gassed and ready to go, so we tried to leave Idaho falls. Not so fast my friends! We all arrived at different times Saturday and Sunday, but everyone left at the same time. Like leaving a football game but instead of 60,000 leaving, 250,000 were leaving. 2 hours later we were only 40 miles away and still in bumper to bumper traffic. Then there was the road construction on I84 and I80 that could not handle the load of traffic. We left Idaho Falls at 11:30 and arrived in Sparks at 12:30 AM. Safe and sound we woke up at 5:30 for another day of teaching and being a student. I went back to bed. Retirement has its benefits. My biggest memory is the darkness, wind, and coolness that no photograph can give you.

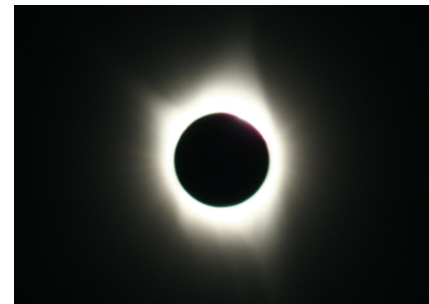
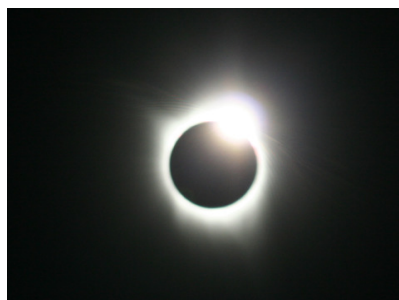
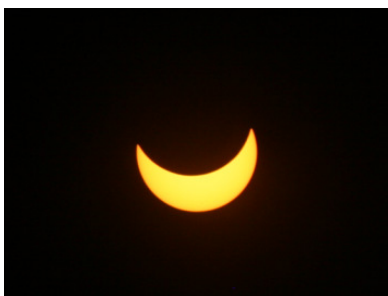


photo by Keith B Van Gilder

**More Photos of ASN members
by Jim**



**Warren Simison
John Day, OR**

I watched the 2017 eclipse on a remote ridge north of John Day, OR. The ridge was devoid of trees so we had low E.W & South horizons. The transition at second contact was overwhelming, everything at once; the black hole, the corona exploding, Bailey's beads, solar flares, Venus, Jupiter, stars, unbelievable.

Here is a link to a GoPro of the eclipsers reactions.

<https://youtu.be/hZq1Ox7qMmQ>



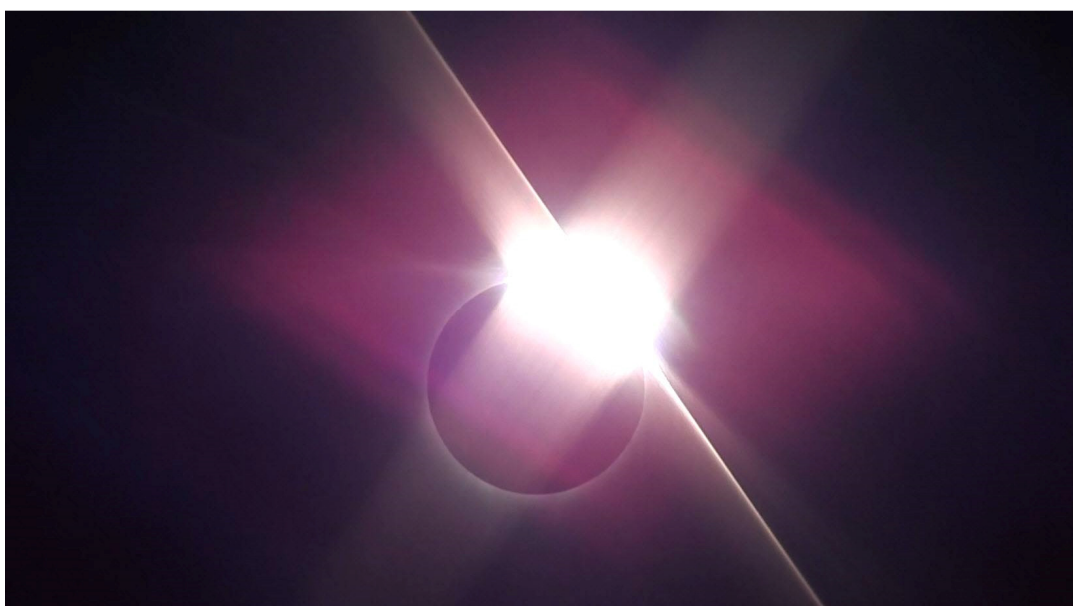
**Photos by Andreas Dierenga
Idaho Falls, ID**





Adam Brannon
Madras, OR

I posted my photo album of the eclipse on the ASN Facebook page, taken in Madras OR. What an unbelievable experience!!! There is also a 4 minute video clip from just before the eclipse to just after. You can hear the rush of close to 100,000 people cheering.



**Photos by Keith B Van Gilder
Idaho Falls, ID**



**Jay Lawson
Mud Lake, ID**

I had previously seen total eclipses in 1979 and 1991, and I had been planning for this one for many years. I convinced a group of coworkers that help me with star parties in the summer for state parks to come with me. We took advantage of the work that the Fahey family did 4 years ago on getting hotel rooms reserved and we went to Idaho Falls. Knowing the nature of bad weather killing your eclipse plans, I wanted to be on the center line away from crowds. In February of 2017, I contacted the high school science teacher in Terreton ID which is west of Rexburg. We had a great conversation over the months and I found his house was only 1000 feet off the center line. In the last days and hours before totality, it was obvious that his house would have clear weather.

Our hosts were extremely pleasant and giving. We met them the night before, set up our scopes and did star party and presentation on the eclipse for them, their friends and neighbors. We got up the next morning and finished our setup plans and started watching the eclipse. Our morning and weather could not have been more perfect.

There was a sharp drop in temperature as totality came closer, sending everyone scrambling for jackets. I had brought 5 cameras, one for wide field time lapse, a video camera, two dslrs with timers and a main camera mounted to my telescope on an equatorial mount. The main camera was computer controlled to take a variety of exposures during totality. All of this was supposed to be automatic and hands free to allow me to watch the eclipse without fussing with cameras. I had technical problems about 5 minutes before totality and my computer and camera stopped talking. I was down to about 1 minute before totality before I fixed that problem, which means I mis-operated three other cameras, even forgetting to take lens caps off two of them. So I wound up with photos from two cameras of five.

But none of that mattered because I was able to watch the entire eclipse with my eyes and looking through my 20 x 100 binoculars. The view was spectacular and no words can fully describe what we saw. There were lots of ooohs and aaahhs and other outbursts. As quickly as it started, it was over. Those who had never seen one before were inspired and convinced that it was all worth it.

