

The Bandera PROPHEET

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X marks Bandera

County planners begin preparation for 2023 and 2024 solar eclipses

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The Bandera Prophet

In two years and five months, the sun and moon will align, creating an annular eclipse. Not quite six months after that, a total solar eclipse will carve a path across 13 U.S. states - and Bandera is the bullseye.

Anticipating an onslaught of skygazers, county officials are preparing now.

“We are aware that overnight accommodations are already receiving requests. It means we need to begin to plan for these events so that not only our visitors but our citizens have a stellar once in a lifetime experience,” Bandera County Convention and Visitors Bureau Executive Director Patricia Moore said.

The CVB will host an Eclipse Kickoff Meeting on Tuesday, May 4 at Mansfield Park's Rec Center, at 6 p.m. The community is invited to attend. Dr. Angela Speck, UTSA Chair of Astronomy and Physics, and 2017 Chair and 2024 Co-Chair of the National Eclipse Task Force, is the featured speaker.

The annular eclipse - when the sun and moon are exactly in line with the Earth, and the sun surrounds the moon creating a “ring of fire” (annulus) - occurs Oct. 14, 2023. It also takes place at about the same time as both the Pipe Creek and Medina pumpkin patches.

On April 8, 2024, the total solar eclipse will take place, one week after Easter Sunday.

The centerline of the eclipse will enter Texas as it crosses the Rio Grande River at the Mexico/U.S. border at about 12:10 p.m. Totality has been calculated to begin in Bandera at 1:31 p.m., with a duration of four minutes and 3.8 seconds - the longest in the country.

San Antonio sits on the eastern edge of the path of totality with about half of the city inside the path and half outside. At SeaWorld San Antonio, the totality will last about two minutes and 11 seconds.

“This is most southern route in the northern hemisphere to see the eclipse,” Speck said.

The last solar eclipse took place Aug. 21, 2017. This year, an annular solar eclipse will take place June 10.