



Daily Nebraskan photo

The total solar eclipse of Feb. 26 as seen in Minot, N.D. Four UNL graduate students went to North Dakota to photograph the event.

UNL astronomers follow the sun

By Val Swinton

For some people, a four-day trip to watch a two-minute phenomenon may not seem worth it, but two UNL graduate students who made such a trip last week attribute it to "scientific curiosity."

Gordon Niva and Terry Teays, graduate students in astronomy, traveled to Minot, N.D., last week to observe a full solar eclipse along with two other graduate students.

The pair said they did not make the trip for a school-related purpose, but merely to observe.

Niva said that watching the eclipse with a large crowd in the parking lot of a Holiday Inn, he experienced the feeling "you got by watching the first moon shot. Even television commentators handled it in a similar fashion."

Although eclipses are an annual event, last week's will be the last one visible in the continental United States until the year 2017.

Sun's corona

According to the two graduate students, scientists find eclipses of the sun useful for several reasons. Of particular interest is the gaseous atmosphere, or the corona of the sun. Normally, it's not visible because the day sky is brighter.

Scientists are curious to learn why the temperature of the corona is about one million degrees, while the temperature on the surface of the sun is only about 6,000 degrees.

According to Niva and Teays, scientists also would like to learn more about the relationship between the shape of the corona and the sun's magnetic field. During periods of maximum sunspot activity, the corona tends to be more circular or symmetrical around the sun, such as is the case

now. With lesser sunspot activity, the corona tends to be more asymmetrical in shape.

Shadow bands

Niva and Teays also said they looked for shadow bands which are attributed to solar eclipses. Shadow bands are strips of light and dark which move across the surface of the earth as the eclipse progresses, and are a phenomenon that scientists cannot explain. However, the two said they did not see any shadow bands in South Dakota.

Niva said once the eclipse was full, it did not get completely dark, but resembled twilight, or the sky looked as it would during the approach of a storm. He said there still was the presence of shadows, even though the sun was obscured.

The two said interest in the eclipse was not limited just to astronomers. They shared the parking lot in North Dakota with a couple of biologists, a food store manager from Minnesota and two amateurs from M.I.T. who needed a trailer to haul their camera equipment.

Red Cross is counting on you.

Fair pairs school, job-hunter

During the Teacher's College annual interview fair, students concerned about the job market can learn what may be in their future.

The fair, in its fourth year, will take place in the Nebraska Union Ballroom, March 8 and 9.

About 140 school administrators from across Nebraska will participate in the fair. Three types of interviews are available to seniors and interested underclassmen: an interview for which no appointment is necessary; an interview which requires previous appointment; and an informal group informational session, which is often used by school systems receiving numerous applications.

Registration will run from 8 to 9 a.m., March 8 with interviews from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

On March 9, registration will be between 8 and 8:30 a.m., with interviews from 8:30 a.m. until noon. This session will be followed by a luncheon sponsored by the Educational Administration Department.

According to Lee DeJonge, director of teacher placement, the program has been successful in the past.

It allows students to become familiar with Nebraska's school systems and provides initiation into the job-hunting process, he said.

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