

# ECLIPSE OVER TEXAS

By Art Storbo, May 2024



This story builds on the experience my wife, Sharon, and I had with the 2017 total solar eclipse in Madras, OR, previously told in a CH2M newsletter/archive. As supporters of Lowell Observatory (LO), we committed to helping the LO team share the eclipse over Texas with the public. We drove to Waco, TX, 1,900 miles from Bellevue, WA, because

checking delicate, expensive telescope gear as airline baggage or carry-on was unwise. Making matters worse, we had a half-mile walk from parking to Baylor University stadium; and we didn't want to lug our 3-1/2-foot-long Orion 120-mm refractor with heavy tripod and battery drive that far (it stayed in the car).



Mike, head of LO Advisory Board



Sharon helping the public see and understand eclipse through our hydrogen alpha scope

So, we brought only a small hydrogen alpha telescope and filtered binoculars to share with the general public; but these complemented larger camera-mounted equipment brought by other LO people. The previous day's weather forecast was grim – warning of a possible tornado with rain/hail. But eclipse day dawned only with clouds, then it improved even more.

Before and after the main event, I took time to become acquainted with other (not LO) people who had far more sophisticated equipment and talent than we had. That paid off nicely. One was an electronics engineer whose specialty is equipping space vehicles with communication antennas; he provided us with this eclipse photo. Another was a PhD camera researcher, located 50 feet from us. While these people captured better photos than we could, we had much fun interacting with the general public who looked through our collective equipment.

For a nearly in-person experience, see this 10-minute recording <<https://youtu.be/v4BDcih9jSc>> by the camera researcher. Our team setup was

in the lower right of the South View, where you see Sharon and me moving about. Note the clouds' fortuitous breakup, the changes in light as the eclipse progressed, and the excitement of the crowd.

Solar eclipses, though infrequent, have been recorded in human history for thousands of years.



Most stunning eclipse photo