

COWBOY CAPITAL NEWSLETTER

City of Bandera, TEXAS
511 Main St. – Bandera, TX 78003

www.banderatx.gov

Police or Fire Emergency – 911

Police (Non-Emergency) – 830-460-7172

Water Utility or Public Works Emergency After Hours – 830-328-9946

Code Enforcement – 830-460-3593 x103

*****Animal Control – 830-460-3593 x103

City Hall -or - Water Billing (Non-Emergency) 830-796-3765

To receive automated emergency or informative Text Alerts, click the [Text my Gov icon](#) button on the City Webpage.

MAR 2024

(Issue 1)

RARE SOLAR ECLIPSE

April 8th, 2024



By Rebeca Gibson – Mayor

Citizens of Bandera

Be **PREPARED** for the upcoming RARE event happening in OUR CITY April 8th, 2024. There will be a total Solar Eclipse at 1:33:53 pm lasting several minutes.

There may be an increased number of people in our city and surrounding area to view this event. The added people and visitors will make day-to-day travel very challenging.

Below is a list of seven helpful tips to help you prepare for this event.

#1 Fill your **gas tanks** up 100% 4-5 days BEFORE April 8th.

#2 Shop for **grocery essentials** 4-5 days BEFORE April 8th.

#3 Talk to your pharmacy to **fill needed prescriptions** that may be due to refill on the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and ask for them to be refilled early due to the travel challenges.

#4 Stock up on **drinking water** bottles and gallon containers.

#5 Inform friends and family, that **cell service**, during the weekend before and on Monday APRIL 8th may be interrupted because of lines being overused by more people in the city and surrounding area.

#6 Try **not to schedule doctor** or lab appointments for Friday April 5th or Monday the 8th.

#7 You may want to have **extra cash available for purchases, as credit cards may be difficult to use.**

ONLY WATCH WITH CERTIFIED “ECLIPSE VIEWING GLASSES”

By Patricia Moore
Executive Director – Visitors' Center

What's the big deal about 4 plus minutes of total darkness in the middle of the day on April 8, 2024?

On April 8, 2024, Bandera will experience a TOTAL SOLAR eclipse. It is at least 300 years before another total solar eclipse will occur in our area. It truly is a once in a lifetime event in our own backyard.

OK, but what makes Bandera so special?

The path of totality does cross many other Texas towns and states. Based on historical climatological data Bandera's long-range forecast Bandera has a greater percentage of clear skies on April 8 than many others.

“The annular eclipse in October 2023 was just so-so and No Big Deal. Why should I believe that the TOTAL eclipse will be any different?”

The annular eclipse did provide Bandera an opportunity to experience a “dress rehearsal or teaser.” It provided an opportunity for City and County officials to solidify plans for what is to come. When an eclipse authority was asked if it was worth traveling to an annular eclipse, he replied: “Yes, if it is within an easy driving distance, but experiencing a total eclipse is the Holy Grail!”

There are true “eclipse chasers” world-wide that will travel 1,000's miles just to experience a total eclipse, no matter how many minutes of totality are visible. Bandera has been on these folks' radar for at least 3 years. Several of our dude ranches, accommodations, and RV parks have been booked for well over a year. Currently, there is no hotel style accommodations and very few short-term rentals or RV sites available in the Bandera area. In fact, the eclipse forecasters have estimated an influx of 400,000 visitors to the Kerrville area.

So just who are these eclipse chasers?

I would like to say that we will see four different types of eclipse chasers:

First, we will have “*eclipse geeks*”, my term for those folks that know the science of the eclipse inside and out. They are folks that either are professors of astronomy and work for NASA or similar type of professional (and yes, we will have some here). They will come with their telescopes and all types of eclipse viewing gear. These are the ones that have preplanned and will be ready to chase the sun if need be on the day of the eclipse to avoid cloud cover. If you are lucky enough to meet one, they are eager to share information.

Second, we will have *Eclipse Chasers*. These are folks that have experienced an eclipse and are eager to experience one again. They are most likely amateur astronomers. They have preplanned and will also be prepared with telescopes and special gear. They have had the 2024 Great North American Eclipse on their radar for years and planned accordingly.

Third, we will have *Bucket List visitors*. These are the folks that are eager to experience a total eclipse, the “Holy Grail”. They have made plans now that one is in North America to view. Some may have an interest in astronomy and cannot pass up the opportunity to witness a total eclipse experience. These visitors will have preplanned.

And fourth, we will see the *OMG (Oh, My Gosh) Visitor*. These are the folks that live nearby and that have an awareness of the eclipse through social media and all types of media and realize at the last minute that where they are will not be in the path of totality. They realize that it is just a short drive to get in the line of totality (only 100 miles wide). Or we will have folks that knowingly have booked reservations in San Antonio and see that Bandera is less than an hour outside the downtown San Antonio. Their plan is to get up early on the day of the eclipse and based on normal driving time reach Bandera and find a parking space to view the eclipse.

Remember all types are seeking the “Holy Grail” experience.

Ok, so the total solar eclipse is a Big Deal. When will we start seeing these folks and how long will they be here?

My predictions are that we will start seeing the Eclipse Geeks, Eclipse Chasers, and even some Bucket List visitors as early as Wednesday (4/3) with a gradual increase through Friday (4/5) with the major influx of visitors arriving on Saturday and Sunday (4/6 & 7). The eclipse geeks, chasers and bucket list folks will want to be in place and ready for eclipse Monday (4/8). History has shown that most will start to leave as soon as the eclipse is over. All areas in the path of totality in 2017 witnessed extremely slow traffic after the eclipse. All types of rental properties in Bandera are encouraging visitors to stay Monday night and leave on Tuesday (4/9). Ground Zero Music Fest is hosting a major act on Monday evening for the same reason.

Where are all these folks going to park?

The eclipse geeks, eclipse chasers, and bucket list visitors will be in place on Monday morning (eclipse day). They will not be moving around unless Bandera is experiencing extreme cloud cover and then they will try to escape the cloud cover for the best possible view of the eclipse. There are designated places for the OMG visitors. The Bandera Natural History Museum is offering eclipse viewing for a fee. Dedicated parking will be available in City Park for a charge of \$50/car or \$10/pedestrian. I am aware of several others that are anticipating opening their parking lots to visitors for a fee.

What do I need to do get ready since you say that the eclipse will impact everyone?

First, and foremost, **protect your eyes during the eclipse**. Visit [NASA's website](#) for more information on eye safety. The Bandera Visitors Center has approved solar glasses available at a very reasonable cost.

Second, buy what you think you will use (groceries, gasoline, drugs, etc.) between April 5-9 by Wednesday, April 3. This

will allow our restaurants, convenience stores, and other businesses to restock before the weekend. Be prepared to experience some inconveniences. What they may be is unknown.

And third, most importantly that Bandera is accustomed to hosting large events, such as Mardi Gras, bike rallies, and rodeos. Our visitors recognize our *Friendliness and Welcoming Spirit*.

So saddle up, Pack Your Patience, and settle in for a 4 minute ride of lifetime. **Realize we have never had a total solar eclipse before in our backyard. Pack Your Patience. Be Welcoming.**

MAJOR CITY ITEMS & EVENTS **MAR 2024**

City Council Meetings – 2nd & 4th Tuesday **City Hall @ 6:00 PM**

MEETINGS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

You are encouraged to attend and monitor our Regular or Special Agendas, which are posted on our webpage at www.banderatx.gov

CITY CALENDAR

- March 09** – Texas Hill Country Musicfest
March 12 – City Council Meeting – 6:00 PM
March 21 – Thunder in the Hill Country
Bike Week thru March 24
March 26 – City Council Meeting – 6:00 PM
March 29 – City Hall Closed – Good Friday
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MARSHAL’S OFFICE **“NEW” TEXT COMMUNICATION** **TOOL**

By Nancy De Foster, Marshal

The City of Bandera is excited to announce the launch of TextMyGov, a new text messaging service designed to keep residents and visitors informed with timely and relevant information directly affecting the community. This service is provided at no charge to users.

This new texting service allows the city to send text notifications to residents about important updates and local events. For those who want to receive city-wide notifications, they can easily opt-in to stay notified about city functions such as **Utility Services, Upcoming Events, Public Safety Alerts, and General Announcements.**

Signing up is easy. Simply text “**BANDERA**” to the number **91896**. After sending the initial keyword, you will be asked to complete the opt-in process by responding with “**YES**”. Additionally, there are widgets on the Home page of the city website and on both the Marshal’s Page and the EDC page where you can learn more about the program.

Also, some event specific text notification groups are available. Text the following keywords to the number **91896** to opt-in.

Text “**COWBOY CAPITAL**” to **91896** for local event notifications only.

Text “**ECLIPSE**” to **91896** for event notifications before, during, and after the eclipse.

This new communication tool underscores our dedication to transparency and community engagement. We look forward to connecting with our residents and visitors and enhancing our ability to communicate effectively.

Police or Fire Emergency – 911
Police Non-Emergency – 830-460-7172



CITY PARK ECLIPSE PARKING

By Allyson Wright, Park Superintendent

On April 8th the City Park at 1102 Maple St in Bandera will be open for eclipse viewers. Come set up your telescopes and bring your family to view the eclipse from a natural safe environment. Each parking spot is 17' x 21' and there will be a \$50 per car fee. Event t-shirts with the logo above will be on sale for \$25. Eclipse glasses will be on sale too. The park opens at 8AM.
