

Eclipse viewers invited to BC's Daglen Observatory

(KAIR)--Atchison's Benedictine College is offering a chance for the public to view, up close, the April 8, afternoon solar eclipse through use of it's observatory.

According to a release from the college, the Daglen Observatory is located on a hill at the corner of 3rd Steet and N Street, and will be open for public viewing. The hours on Monday afternoon will be 12:30 until 3:15, with multiple telescopes fitted with solar filters available, weather permitting. Free eclipse glasses will also be available while supplies last.

The release explains that in Atchison, the solar eclipse is projected to achieve 87% totality. The eclipse should begin at 12:38 p.m., reach maximum coverage at 1:54 p.m., and conclude at 3:10 p.m.

The Daglen Observatory, built in 2017, is part of the Vatican Observatory Consortium and has an automatic roll-off roof, four large 14-inch telescopes, plus a control room where images from the telescopes can be viewed on monitors, allowing "visitors plenty of opportunity to view the eclipse."

The roll-off design allows for the placement of multiple telescopes, rather than the single telescope found in a traditional domed observatory. In addition to the rolling roof, the large telescopes in the observation area are mounted on piers that are isolated from the foundation to eliminate vibration. The observation area is maintained at the same ambient temperature as the outside air to prevent fogging of the telescope lenses.

The observatory is managed by the Benedictine College Department of Physics & Astronomy and department faculty and students operate the computer-controlled telescopes from the comfort of the adjacent control room.

Dr. Ryan Maderak is the Associate Professor for the college's Department of Physics & Astronomy. He will be the featured guest, the day of the eclipse, on 93.7 FM's "Co-Host Monday with Neil Wieland." Dr. Maderak will give his thoughts, predictions, and advice, hours prior to the eclipse, around 7:30 Monday morning, allowing you the chance to make your last minute preparations for the afternoon viewing.