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Karen Zeitlin,  
ISACS

Dear Karen,

I'm sure you remember me as the astronomer who popularized "clickers" and spoke at previous ISACS meetings. I thought I would alert you to a big event that can provide an opportunity for all ISACS schools throughout the mid- and Western US. They could have fun, benefit their communities, get excellent free publicity for the school, and earn quite a bit of money at the same time!

Late Sunday afternoon May 20, 2012, all the middle and western US will see 80 to 90 per cent of the sun covered by the moon in an eclipse, and tens of millions of people will want to watch. I am working with NASA and also on my own to prepare the country for the upcoming eclipse. Two Public Service Videos on how to watch the sun safely are here: [http://casa.colorado.edu/~dduncan/wp/?page\\_id=261](http://casa.colorado.edu/~dduncan/wp/?page_id=261)

To watch safely you need to protect your eyes, and the best inexpensive way to do that is with cardboard and Mylar eclipse viewers which are 100% safe for looking at the sun. *Every eclipse there's a shortage.* But at every eclipse THERE IS LOTS OF FREE PUBLICITY on TV and in newspapers. It is a great public service and a moneymaker whenever a school or club helps people watch the eclipse safely. Here's how to do that:



- School decides where to hold an event: A museum parking lot, a city park, or a school field can work well. The only location requirement is that you be able to see the sun late on Sunday afternoon, May 20, 2012, so you need a clear view to the west. Decide how many people you want. In Boulder CO we are preparing to handle 10,000 people! Because of the large expected crowds we are planning 3 sites.
- Decide how many eclipse glasses to order. Sell these all April and May leading up to the eclipse on May 20. Place stories in local newspapers (you can get plenty of free advertising) to alert people to the upcoming eclipse and say where glasses and eclipse-viewing are available. I'm preparing a template story for local papers and a sales poster (Big Eclipse is coming – Prepare to watch safely!). Both will be on my website:

<http://casa.colorado.edu/~dduncan> . Download and easily adapt them to local circumstances by filling in your location and event times.

- The Public Service videos I filmed are HD quality and they can be used by local TV. Call up local TV a week or two before the eclipse. Get them to run the “How to safely watch the Sun” video followed by telling people that the school has the glasses and plans an event. You can get thousands of people to come from all the combined newspaper, web, and TV publicity.
- The price of eclipse glasses is 45 cents in quantities of 1,000; 35 cents in quantities of 10,000, and less in larger quantities. The retail is typically \$2 (\$1.99) or “3 pairs for \$5” before an eclipse and \$3 on eclipse day. The potential profit is thousands of dollars. Any message can be printed on the glasses – they make wonderful advertising because people keep them as souvenirs.
- This is an easy and fun event to have. No expertise needed. Watch my videos – you just put on the glasses and look at the moon taking a bigger and bigger “bite” out of the sun.

Teachers or heads are welcome to email me ([dduncan@colorado.edu](mailto:dduncan@colorado.edu) ) with any questions and I would appreciate an email if a school plans an event. It takes the factory (which is in California) a month to print custom messages on glasses or viewers. Then they need to be shipped. So NOW is the time to make decisions!

For the last good eclipse on Christmas Day 2000 I worked with the Chicago Sun Times to put 600,000 viewers in the Sunday paper. I am in touch with 40 newspapers in the largest cities in the western US, if that is a help. No paper will put the viewers in without an advertiser. But all papers will carry stories about an eclipse event in the city, for free.

A remarkable extra bonus is that on June 5 Venus will pass in front of the sun. This won’t happen again for a century and it’s a big deal with major NASA and internet coverage planned:

(<http://sunearthday.nasa.gov/2012/index.php> ) Many people will keep the viewers from May until June 5 and probably save them as souvenirs. East coast schools? The eclipse of 2017 will reach the whole US.



Albuquerque and Reno will see a bulls-eye (those who have safe eclipse viewers)



← Most cities will see this at maximum.

The whole exciting eclipse, if you took pictures every 15 minutes →



Sincerely,

Dr. Doug Duncan