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potentially getting stuck on the road, it's recommended that people get where they're going early and plan on staying there.

An absolute must for eclipse-watchers is proper eye protection, or eclipse glasses,

which can be purchased from the chamber through the day of the eclipse for \$2 a pair.

To avoid retinal burns and to safely view the eclipse during its partial phases, people will need to don their eclipse-viewing glasses practically

every time they look at the eclipse between when its partial phases begin at 1:05 p.m., and when the eclipse experience ends completely at 4 p.m.

Only during the roughly two minutes of "totality," occurring around 2:35 p.m. and ending around 2:37 p.m., can solar spectators safely remove their protective eyewear to view

the sun's corona shimmering around the outer edges of the moon.

It is during totality that the day sky becomes darkest, and a 360-degree sunrise/sunset effect can be seen all along the horizon.

As soon as the sun peeks back out on the other side of the moon, it's time to put the protective glasses back on, because "totality" will have come to an end and the partial phases of the eclipse will continue for about an hour and a half until it's all over.

The chamber has been thinking about the eclipse for the last year and a half, though plans really got underway earlier this year in March.

That's when the chamber rolled out its "Blairsville Eclipse Experience," presented by North Georgia Technical College Blairsville Campus.

The chamber has been a primary source for eclipse-viewing protective glasses, which double as keepsakes featuring the "Blairsville Eclipse Experience" branding, as do T-shirts available at the chamber to commemorate the historic event.

Initially, the chamber ordered some 11,500 pairs of eclipse glasses, and sold completely out by the last Friday in July.

Since then, the chamber has acquired another 7,200 pairs, so residents and visitors can still get glasses for the event.

Many local businesses will be getting in on the eclipse action, such as Chick-fil-A Blairsville, which will cater two of the chamber sponsored viewing parties and provide food to Vogel State Park that day.

The Eat Mor Chikin restaurant will be all hands on deck the day of the eclipse, and Chick-fil-A Blairsville owner/operator Daniel Liberatore expects to prepare thousands of sandwiches throughout the eclipse weekend and on that Monday, on par with Grand Opening sales.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience that people will be traveling from all over the world to see, and I don't think we'll see anything of this magnitude again in our lifetime," said Liberatore.

Like many local businesses, Copeland's Restaurant at Merchants Walk will be holding an eclipse viewing party in its parking area.

"People want to be outside and enjoy the eclipse," said Copeland's owner Ahleah Eberhardt. "Doing something different allows people to come in and enjoy the eclipse, and it helps the businesses around us. It's a good thing."

There are many more viewing party opportunities throughout Union County, and a comprehensive list with details is available at the chamber website at www.visitblairsvillega.com.

The following locations will hold eclipse day activities, and be sure to check the chamber website for additional locations:

Crossing Creeks Eclipse Party from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. at 136 Mountain Creek Rd. in Blairsville; Eclipse Viewing at Union County Community Center from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Solar Eclipse Block Party and Farm to Table Luncheon at The Sawmill Place from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.;

Viewing Party at

Mountain Crossings from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Walasi-Yi; Eclipse Party at Nani's Cuban Restaurant from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Eclipse Party at Hightower Creek Vineyards from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m.;

Sip, Sit and Watch the Eclipse at Odom Springs Vineyards from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Eclipse Shindig at Rustic Mountain Decor & Pam's Back to Nature Health & Wellness from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Eclipse Celebration at Paradise Hills Winery Resort from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m.;

Viewing at Copperhead Lodge from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Eclipse Party at Armadillo Grill from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Eclipse by Horseback at Trackrock Stables from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m.

The "Get Off The Grid Fest" will take place on Aug. 18, 19 and 20 at the Union County Saddle Club Arena, and "aims to celebrate, educate and collaborate with folks, homesteaders, renewable energy enthusiasts, performers, local and national organizations and vendors by providing a forum where people share tools, ideas, songs and stories about getting off the grid."

Walnut Hollow Ranch will also host a "Great Eclipse Weekend," to run from Aug. 18 through the day of the eclipse.

To follow up on best viewing safety practices during the eclipse, check out <https://eclipse2017.nasa.gov/safety>.

For more on solar phenomena during a total solar eclipse, check out the American Astronomical Society at <https://eclipse.aas.org/eclipse-america/eclipse-experience>.

BRMEMC...from Page 1A

associated with the 2017 Directors election is a result of questions about the proper qualifications required for a member to be eligible to serve as a director.

While the bylaws are quite clear in most requirements, they are void of any clear definition of "member in good standing," and the board is taking steps to clarify that requirement for the membership's consideration in

2018 at the Annual Meeting.

"The Board of Directors doesn't vote on who is on the ballot, that's a decision by the Credentials Committee," said the EMC Board Secretary Roy Perren.

The Credentials Committee received direction by internal and external legal counsel to judge the nomination process by payment history, thus the "member in good standing" confusion regarding

candidates.

According to Perren, the EMC board intends to offer amendments to the bylaws that more clearly define candidate qualifications in order to eliminate any confusion in future elections.

However, the earliest opportunity to do that would be the 2018 Annual Meeting, due to specific notification requirements for amending corporate bylaws.

"We wouldn't be able to get it ready for this year's Annual Meeting," Perren said.

Phillips...from Page 1A

award, well, it really hasn't soaked in real good yet. It took me by surprise,

"I'll tell you, I've been doing this for five years now, I've got to meet a lot of people that just love the show," he said. "It's been fun. We try to be fun, but clean, sort of like the late great Rhubarb Jones was."

In addition to Phillips, "Morning Coffee" hostess Lori Duke Jones and station owner Jeff Batten took home awards. Jones' award was for her work on the "John Wayne of the Day" feature; and Batten won for his creation of "best station produced promo."

"It's very gratifying to see the daily work done at WJRB receive the state's highest honor," said Batten, station owner. "We're humbled to have been recognized."

Meanwhile, Phillips remembers how he first started working for the radio station.

"I was promoting some music we (Midnight Express) were doing, and went on the radio with Tim Rose. Tim was wanting to go back to Atlanta and he recommended me for his spot," Phillips said. "That Sunday, Jeff Batten called me and asked me if I wanted to take over the Morning Show, and I told him I didn't know

anything about being on the radio. I went up there, sat in for two or three days, and five years later, here I am.

"I've been on the air going on five years now," he said. "My whole thing in the morning is that I want to be entertaining, I want it to be fun, and I want people to smile just

a little bit in the morning.

"There is so much going on in this world, people are dealing with so much grief, I just want Morning Dish to be a fun show," Phillips said. "We're fair, we're balanced, and we make fun of ourselves more than we do anyone else. I love it."

Woody Gap Band of Steel plays Hiawassee Square

A unique and special treat awaits you this Saturday, August 19 on the Hiawassee Town Square! From 6:30-8 p.m. the sound of steel drums will reverberate the evening breezes, as the Woody Gap School Band of Steel performs its magic! Doug Roberts, the band director actually had the honor this Summer... to meet the inventor of the steel drum. Doug plans to inform the audience about the history of the steel drum and to "show off" his talented students who demonstrate their abilities on this unique instrument.

Come join the fun and show your support for these hard-working young people. Bring your lawn chair or blanket, your family and friends, and the family pet as well. Since these concerts are fully supported by audience donations... we appreciate your generosity. Looking forward to seeing you on the Square!