

## How Do You Catch a Total Solar Eclipse?

By Rani Chohan

Catching a Total Solar Eclipse is extremely challenging. First, you have to know where it will happen. Then you need electricity and a satellite dish to transmit the picture. You also need telescopes or special cameras to view the sun because most cameras are not designed to view the sun. Hotel accommodations and easy access to transportation are a plus. But even with all those things in place, NASA TV only had about a 50 percent chance of catching the eclipse...because weather can always foul things up. March 29, 2006, NASA TV caught two total solar eclipses.

The eclipse began in Brazil and extended across the Atlantic Ocean, Northern Africa, and Central Asia where it ended at sunset in Northern Mongolia. A partial eclipse path, within the much broader path of the moon's penumbral shadow, included the northern two thirds of Africa, Europe, and Central Asia.

NASA scientists and TV personnel positioned themselves in Libya and Turkey to catch this rare solar event and transmit it to the world.

NASA and the San Francisco Exploratorium set up inside an ancient Roman Coliseum in Side, Turkey. Side was relatively easy to get to because its close to an airport and there was pretty good accommodations.

The Exploratorium used three telescopes to view the eclipse and to send a live feed back to Goddard. The Exploratorium also transmitted a live educational broadcast. Side's community was extremely supportive of the event. Side's mayor participated in the educational webcast.

The team flew from the U.S. to Tripoli (12 hour flight). After a couple of days of meetings and presentations in the city, they took a 2-hour jet ride to an airstrip in the middle of the Sahara desert (Waw al Kabir). From there, they boarded a helicopter and flew one-and-a-half hours to a camp called Eclipse City deeper inside the desert (Waw an Namos). The NASA team spent two exciting nights in the camp. "They (Libyan Government) went out of their way to make sure we were comfortable," said Dwayne Brown, senior Public Affairs Officer, NASA Headquarters

Meanwhile, back at Goddard, engineers reconfigured Goddard TV to bring in the feeds, record programs and transmit back out to the media, museums and other audiences eager to watch a total eclipse. At the same time, Goddard scientists gave live interviews to morning news programs around the country.

"The engineering for this event was tricky. Goddard TV reconfigured their systems to handle the requirements for this event," said Patrick Kennedy, Goddard TV Production Manager.

For the last three years, Building 28 housed Goddard TV in a temporary facility in the basement. In order to make changes in satellite feed, engineers had to connect and reconnect dozens of cables. Currently, Goddard is building a new master control that should be ready by the next space shuttle launch.

Also, last year NASA TV split their signal analog channel into three channels. There is a public channel, media services channel and education channel. This digital environment allows NASA TV to transmit three different programs at the same time - the education webcast, the telescope feed from Turkey and Libya, and to do live interviews with clients across the country.

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Photo credit: Courtesy of NASA TV

Caption: James French, freelance camera operator or Lybia TV, sets up the shot the day before the eclipse.

## The Quality of Worklife Committee: Helping GSFC Employees Balance Work and Family

By Alana Little

Today our lives are filled with more challenges than ever before and sometimes we may wonder how we can handle it all. The Goddard Quality of Worklife Committee, a center-wide committee composed of representatives from each of the directorates and championed by the Associate Center Director, is here to serve as a team to facilitate the improvement of the quality of work life for GSFC employees and to develop initiatives to provide a balance between work and personal time.

It is the goal of the committee to work with partner organizations such as the Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM), the Goddard Employee Welfare Association (GEWA), the Management Operations Directorate (Code 200) and Goddard Advisory Committees to design activities and to start new studies and initiatives to improve quality of work-life.

In response to employees expressed interest in an on-site infant day care, one such study was initiated by Administrative Services Inc. (ASI), at the request of the Quality of Worklife Committee. The study began on April 29, 2005 and ended July 15, 2005. The main question to be addressed by the study was "is it feasible to expand the current array of child care services at Goddard to include infant care?" Over 90 percent of GSFC employees who participated in the survey wanted an infant care center located at Goddard. Respondents were willing to pay between \$200-\$250 per week for a full-day infant care center. Fifty percent of younger workers indicated that an on-grounds infant care center would positively influence their decision to stay at Goddard. All thought that an infant center would make Goddard more attractive in recruiting and retaining the best technical staff.

In the end, budgetary constraints, and other considerations eliminated the prospect of an infant care center at Goddard, however the Quality of Work Life Committee is still working hard to give employees with infants more options to help them take care of their families and one of those options is utilizing the Worklife 4 You Program.

Worklife 4 You is a comprehensive resource and referral program administered from the Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM), Code 110. The program is geared towards helping employees deal with major life events such as having a baby, going to college, caring for an aging loved one, or planning for retirement. For example, if you are looking for quality child care, you can call the toll-free Worklife 4 You number and that will get you in touch with a specialist that will help you locate resources by customizing a search based on your needs and location. They will research all of your options based on the information you give them and send you a detailed report of nannies, and child care centers in your area. You can even specify the price range you are willing to pay for child care services.

While the Worklife 4 You program does not endorse any particular service, it can save you valuable time by compiling a detailed listing of the resources in your area so that you can get down to the business of researching what service would be right for you.

Goddard understands that trying to manage work and family in this dynamic work environment can be a challenge and collectively, management and employee groups are doing all they can to provide employees with the tools and resources they need to take care of themselves and their families while being continuing to be productive employees.

For more information about Worklife 4 You Program please visit: <http://www.Worklife4You.com> or call 800-222-0364 or 888-262-7848 (TTY), or Ms. Khrista White at 301-286-9059.

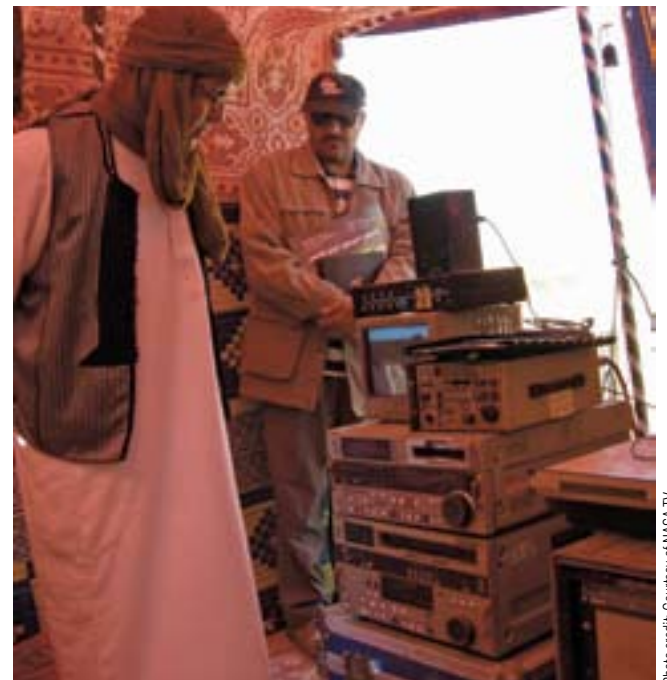
For more information about the Quality of Worklife Committee please visit: <http://qwl.gsfc.nasa.gov> or contact Ms. Tomi Cox at 301-286-3246. ■

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News outlets, like CNN, WJZ-Baltimore, or WJLA- Washington D.C. used NASA's media channel all through the morning to show their audiences the eclipse.

The shadow of a total solar eclipse passed over Libya at about 5:15 am ET. About 45 minutes later, NASA's audience heard cheers roared from Turkey while watching another total eclipse. ■



Caption: Libya TV in the Sahara

Photo credit: Courtesy of NASA TV