

# Roth: The great American solar eclipse

By [Jim Roth](#), Director and Chair of the Firm's Clean Energy Practice Group. This column was [originally published in The Journal Record](#) on August 21, 2017.

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## The great American solar eclipse

As we prepare for the solar eclipse on Monday, here are some facts and ideas I found to be worthwhile.

First, a solar eclipse is when the moon completely obscures the bright light of the sun, revealing its fainter corona. And a fainter corona is not a light beer, just FYI.

While solar eclipses occur once or twice a year somewhere on

the planet, what is rare and exciting is “totality.” The diameter of the sun is about 400 times the size of the moon. And on average the sun is about 400 times farther away. As a result of this coincidence, we get spectacular, and very coincidental solar eclipses.

Since the sun is a perpetual series of thermonuclear explosions, definitely heed the warnings not to look directly at it. Hence the reason for UV-blocking solar glasses or if you have them, welding goggles. Although it will be darker before, during and immediately after the eclipse, it is still not safe to look at the sun directly or with a telescope.

There are safe glasses available in stores or online, but be careful because there are reports of some inferior or fake glasses being sold places too. Amazon discovered that many being sold on its site were not certified. As such, Amazon sent warning emails and offered refunds to purchasers with no merchandise return necessary. Be sure yours are certified by NASA and the American Astronomical Society.

There is so much information about the eclipse. Forbes’ 5 Things Not to Do During Totality included a reminder to be in the moment and enjoy not just the eclipse, but the rest of the sky, the birds, the darkness, and so on.

While we are enjoying the view, wildlife is known to be confused by the darkness eclipses create – some nocturnal fauna may even emerge mistaking it for nighttime.

Royal Caribbean ran with the comic coincidence idea by booking Bonnie Tyler to sing her famous 1983 song Total Eclipse of the Heart on its Total Eclipse Cruise during the eclipse. The song has been cut down precisely not to exceed the length of the eclipse. Wow, good job Carnival. I bet the song is busy on iTunes too.

Those of us forced to miss Ms. Tyler’s performance and who are not trekking north on Monday can relish this cosmic

coincidence at the Myriad Gardens in Oklahoma City – [oklahomacitybotanicalgardens.com](http://oklahomacitybotanicalgardens.com).

Also, if you are curious to learn more, there are many other places to explore.

But please don't miss this extraordinary opportunity to see a total eclipse of the sun cross the continental United States.

*Jim Roth, a former Oklahoma corporation commissioner, is an attorney with [Phillips Murrah P.C.](#) in Oklahoma City, where his practice focuses on clean, green energy for Oklahoma.*