

STAR GAZERS
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“The Long-Awaited Moon-Joke Episode”

DEAN: Hey there Star Gazers, I’m Dean Regas, astronomer with the Cincinnati Observatory

JAMES: And I’m James Albury, Director of the Kika Silva Pla Planetarium in Gainesville, Florida. We’re here to help you find your way around the sky...

DEAN: And this week, to share some space jokes - specifically about the Moon, since you’ll be able to see it after dark each night this week.

JAMES: Dean’s been wanting to do this forever, so let’s just humor him.

DEAN: We have some gems like, “What holds up the Moon?”

JAMES: What?

DEAN: “Moon-beams,” of course... I’ve got a million of them.

JAMES: Well, more like 5 or 6 of them. And as we wax on about the Moon and show you what’s up in the sky, we know that your interest will not wane.

DEAN: Let’s show you!

(STOP DROP)

JAMES: How does the Moon cut his hair?

DEAN: I know. E-clips-it!

JAMES: One of the worst jokes ever, but that makes me think about eclipses, and although we had four lunar eclipses in the last two years, we won’t be having another one until January 31, 2018.

DEAN: I hate waiting that long for an eclipse so luckily there will be a solar eclipse before then. Mark your calendars for August 21, 2017. That’s when the new moon will slide in front of the Sun and block part of it out.

JAMES: This eclipse will be easy to see across the entire lower 48 states. And if you happen to be in the right place at the right time, on a narrow path between Oregon and

South Carolina, you can see a total solar eclipse. That's when the new moon blocks out the entire Sun.

DEAN: Imagine looking up and the Sun is gone. Replaced by a perfect black hole. It's a little scary if you're not ready for it, but it is the most amazing sight to experience in astronomy. Do not miss this one.

(STOP)

JAMES: Hey Dean, why couldn't the astronauts stay overnight on the Moon?

DEAN: Why?

JAMES: Because it was full...

DEAN: Groan.

JAMES: Groan? Really? Anyway, we will have our next full Moon on February 21. You can see it rising in the east just as the Sun sets in the west that day.

DEAN: Okay James, how do you know when the Moon's going broke?

JAMES: How?

DEAN: It's down to its last quarter. When the Moon appears half-way lit up we actually call that a quarter moon. It sounds confusing since how can a half moon be a quarter? But the name really refers to its motion around the Earth.

JAMES: On the night of February 14 you can see the right half of the Moon lit up. We call that first quarter since it has traveled one-quarter of the way around the Earth, from its new moon phase.

DEAN: On the morning of Leap Day, February 29, you'll see the left half of the Moon illuminated. We call that third quarter or last quarter and it'll be near the planet Mars. Yep, we went a long way for that joke...

(STOP) (In Space)

JAMES: So Dean, what did you think of the restaurant on the Moon?

DEAN: Meh, the food was great but it has no atmosphere...

JAMES: It's true. Unlike the Earth, the Moon has no significant atmosphere. So when the Apollo astronauts visited the Moon they had to wear spacesuits like these. Hey there's Buzz Aldrin. Hi Buzz!

DEAN: He can't hear you. There's no air out there. However, Buzz and 11 other astronauts walked on the surface of the Moon between 1969 and 1972. Buzz Aldrin described the Moon as, "Magnificent Desolation," and it certainly is desolate. Everywhere you look are dark colored rocks and more dark colored rocks. I know the Moon seems bright, but most of the moon rocks are the color of asphalt.

JAMES: On the last three Apollo missions, astronauts brought up Moon rovers to drive across the lunar surface. The rovers were battery-powered and could reach a top speed of 8 miles per hour. You can't drive that slow on Earth or else...

DEAN: Or else what?

JAMES: Or else you'll have to "Apollo-gize."

(STOP) (Close up ending)

JAMES: So every night this week, check out the Moon after dark.

DEAN: Get a group together and Moon-gaze with friends and family. And if you want to organize the best star party ever, we have some words of advice.

JAMES: You better plan-et!

DEAN: Definitely don't Moon it.

BOTH: Keep looking up!