

## **CASUAL SPACE PODCAST**

PRESS RELEASE

October 3, 2023

### **Casual Space Special Live Podcast Event Shares Moon Insights, Raises Funds for STORIES of Space Project**

*First Ever Live Audience Recording Features Apollo Author Nancy Atkinson, Voice of Chicago Wayne Messmer, College of DuPage Professor Joe DalSanto, and Space Podcast Host Beth Mund*

**ST CHARLES, IL- Oct. 3, 2023**, Tickets are on sale now for the first ever live audience recording of the Casual Space podcast, a fundraising event to benefit the nonprofit STORIES of Space project. Space enthusiasts and space experts will share a fun and casual conversation about humans returning to the moon in 2024. Special guests will be author Nancy Atkinson, voice of Chicago Wayne Messmer, and College of DuPage Earth science and astronomy professor Joe DalSanto. The Casual Space live audience recording will be from 5-7 p.m. Sunday, November 12 at the Moonlight Theater in St. Charles, Illinois. Tickets can be purchased through the **[Moonlight Theater website](#)**.

The weekly **Casual Space** podcast makes space accessible for the general public and provides inside information for serious space enthusiasts. Hosted by Beth Mund, a keynote speaker, analog astronaut, and former Public Affairs Officer for NASA Johnson Space Center, **Casual Space** mixes entertainment and education, and introduces audiences to space-related careers beyond traditional STEM careers. With over 200+ episodes, Beth has invited three podcast guests to help celebrate with a podcast recording with an interactive program and in front of a live audience!

Three special guests will join Beth on stage, discussing why we're racing to return to the Moon:

- **Nancy Atkinson**, author of "Eight Years to the Moon: The History of the Apollo Missions," shares behind the scenes stories from NASA Apollo-

era missions. Nancy is a science journalist with Universe Today, and writes for The Planetary Society and Ad Astra, the magazine of the National Space Society.

- **Wayne Messmer**, national anthem singer for the Chicago Cubs, voice of the Chicago Wolves hockey team, and Chicago's "Original Voice of the National Anthem" and is the featured voice behind the weekly Casual Space podcast introduction and closing signoff. A keynote speaker and entrepreneur, Wayne is a Chicago area legend, on and off the field.

- **Joe DalSanto**, associate professor of Earth science and astronomy at the College of DuPage, who teaches rigorous courses on planetary astronomy, stars, and galaxies. He has been presenting to local astronomy groups for decades and is an avid space lecturer.

Ticket sales benefit the **STORIES of Space project**, a unique opportunity for people to share their story in space. By sharing written stories in orbit, the **STORIES of Space project** asks the question, "Can a story change the way we explore space?" More than 300 human written stories are currently orbiting on the International Space Station as part of a Northrop Grumman Cygnus spacecraft payload launched August 1, 2023 on an Antares rocket. The stories will remain in orbit through February 2024, providing humans back on Earth the knowledge that part of themselves – their stories – are a part of space exploration.

Submissions are now open for the next STORIES of Space mission that is scheduled to fly in 2024. With a goal of collecting 3,000 human stories, the 2024 STORIES of Space payload will give even more people a free opportunity to help advance space science. Submissions are now being accepted at [www.storiesofspace.com](http://www.storiesofspace.com).

Corporate sponsorships are also available to support the non-profit STORIES of Space project. Helping to raise visibility about space exploration while also offsetting the cost of the physical materials and human power needed to launch stories, corporate sponsorships range from \$500 to \$5,000 and custom sponsorships are available.

## **About STORIES of Space**

The STORIES of Space Project (Story SD Card Testing and On-Board Research on the International Space Station Experiment and Survey) sends the written word to space, re-igniting scientific literacy and conducting a scientific experiment collecting data to determine the ideal data storage hardware for future commercial space applications. Currently more than 300 human written stories launched in August 2023 to the International Space Station as part of a Northrop Grumman Cygnus spacecraft payload launched on an Antares rocket. The first launch will be in orbit through February 2024. Completing science experiments and connecting people to space through the STORIES Project helps change the way we explore space – one story at a time.

## **About Beth Mund**

Beth Mund is an analog astronaut, former NASA communications officer, keynote speaker, STORIES of Space Executive Director, and CEO of Stellar Communications. At NASA, she served at Johnson Space Center as a public affairs officer and International Space Station communications officer. She has expanded research as analog astronaut, serving on a Mars simulation at the Hawaii HI-SEAS research facility and a lunar simulation at the Lunares Research Station in Poland. Beth is the host of the weekly **Casual Space podcast**, sharing hidden details space exploration while inspiring the next generation of difference makers. She currently serves on the Space Camp Alumni Board and the Space Drinks Association board of directors. She is a founding board member of the Women's Leadership Alliance at her alma mater, Loras College, where she was the 2023 commencement speaker. For more information, visit [www.bethmund.com](http://www.bethmund.com).

## **About the Casual Space Podcast**

The Casual Space podcast features a wide variety of guests from astronauts to artists, scientists to CEOs. These industry experts and explorers share behind the scenes stories from decades of space exploration and research. Casual Space has been repeatedly named to top space podcast lists, including the Feedspot list of Best Space Podcasts You Must Follow in 2023. Analog astronaut, keynote speaker, and former NASA communication officer Beth Mund hosts the weekly podcast, creating

engaging space conversations that are full of insights and laughter. Listen and enjoy all episodes of the Casual Space Podcast with Beth Mund at [www.bethmund.com](http://www.bethmund.com) or from all major podcast outlets.

In addition to astronauts, scientists, and authors, Casual Space guests include commercial space industry leaders and unique NASA professionals: the designer of mission patches, the official photographer, a flight surgeon. Notable past guests include entertainer and Planetary Society President Bill Nye (The Science Guy), Dr. Sian Proctor, the first African American woman to pilot a space shuttle, and Janet Ivey, host of the PBS educational series Janet's Planet. Every week Casual Space features a currently available "space job" –a locksmith at Johnson Space Center, a welder at SpaceX, a social media coordinator at the NASA Jet Propulsion Lab – showing careers in space are accessible to people with diverse backgrounds.