

# O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

CHRISTOPHER RUSH  
Publisher

KATHRYN B. BROWN  
Owner

ANDREW CUTLER  
Editor

WYATT HAUPT JR.  
News Editor

JADE McDOWELL  
Hermiston Editor

Founded October 16, 1875

## OUR VIEW

# Legacy of the moon landing still benefits agriculture

**F**ifty years ago the entire world turned its eyes to the heavens as astronauts from the United States landed on the moon.

Those alive at the time remember the story. Younger readers may need a brief tutorial.

The space program was as much a political operation as it was a scientific pursuit. In the midst of the Cold War, the Soviets launched the first satellite in 1957 and the Space Race was off and running.

The military applications of rocket technology were obvious and mostly went unstated. To the public, the Space Race was a competition between capitalism and communism for ideological bragging rights.

In 1962, President Kennedy committed the United States to sending an American to the moon and back before the end of the decade. On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin landed on the Sea of Tranquility as Michael Collins orbited the moon. NASA astronauts made five additional landings, the last in December of 1972.

Since then NASA has concentrated on unmanned exploratory missions and manned earth orbital flights.

The innovation that led to the successful exploration of the moon, and those that have followed in the post-lu-

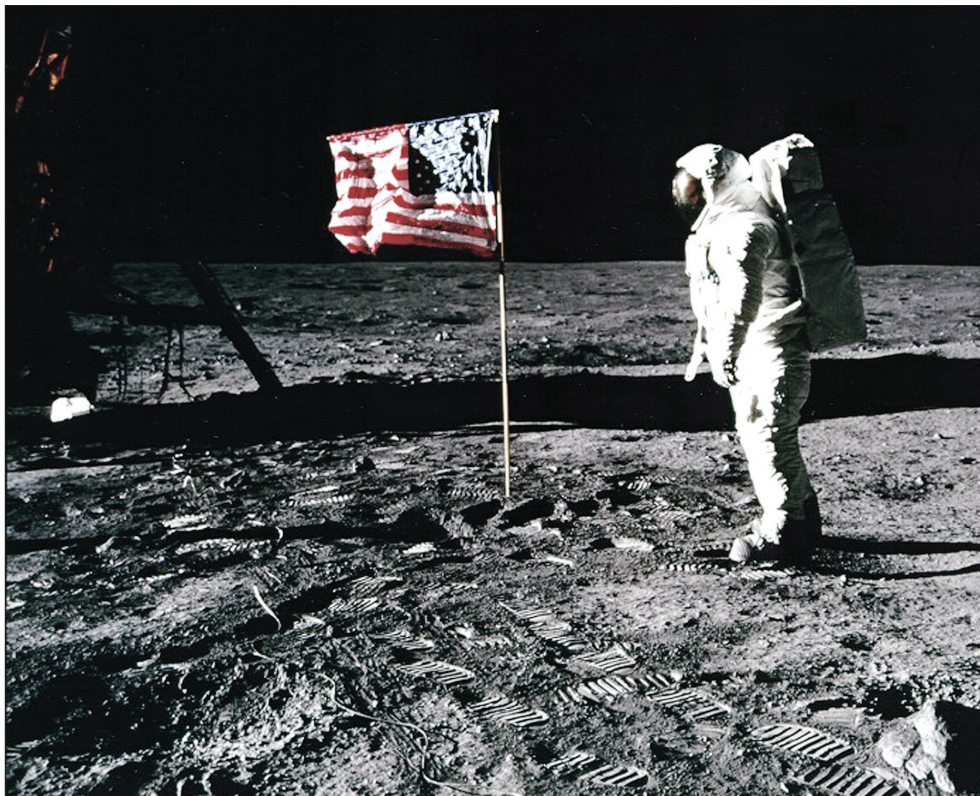


Photo courtesy of NASA

**Man landing on the moon created many benefits for people on earth.**

nar space program, have been of great value to earth-bound agriculture.

NASA has documented several examples over the years. Here are just a few:

- Wireless telemetry — the collection of measurements and other data at one location and transmitting it to another location — was not born in the space program, but it was perfected for

manned and unmanned space flight.

Experiments left on the moon by the Apollo astronauts relayed data to earth for years afterwards. Sensors in farm fields use telemetry to relay a variety of data regarding a variety of crop conditions directly to a farmer's cell phone. It also makes it possible for farmers to monitor and control irrigation equipment without enter-

ing the field.

- Global Positioning Systems make it possible to pinpoint the location of an earthbound receiver by triangulating the signals of multiple orbiting satellites. GPS makes possible precision agriculture and self-guiding tractors and combines.

- Satellite imagery makes it possible to monitor crop conditions and forecast yields. Through remote sensing satellites help keep track of the snowpack and aid in water resource management.

- Fertilizer developed for use onboard space stations has found its way to fields on earth.

At some point in the 1970s it became fashionable, given the growing social problems of the times, to question the expense of the space program.

But the technology produced as a result of the U.S. space program has changed, for the better, virtually every industry and the lives of every person alive today in ways that could not have been imagined in 1957. Certainly that is true for agriculture and farmers.

The moon landing was a singular achievement in human history. But the practical applications of the technology that made it possible, and that have been developed as a result, are the enduring legacy of our quest for the moon.

## OTHER VIEWS



# Legislature fails to deliver fire help

Medford Mail Tribune

**T**he 2019 legislative session will be remembered more for what it didn't accomplish than for what it did, thanks in large measure to the two walk-outs staged by Senate Republicans to block legislation they didn't like. That makes it all the more frustrating that a relatively tiny request by Southern Oregon lawmakers to address the issue of wildfires fell through the cracks of the dysfunctional session, missing an opportunity to tackle the problem right away.

As a result, this region must wait through another fire season and maybe longer before anything close to real action can take place.

Rep. Pam Marsh, D-Ashland, who sits on Gov. Kate Brown's Council on Wildfire Response, spearheaded a proposal to allocate \$6.8 million to thin forests around cities in Jackson County. Despite bipartisan support from Rep. Kim Wallan, R-Medford, the proposal did not pass.

We were critical of the governor's decision to appoint yet another committee to address the very immediate threat of wildfires and the smoke they bring to our region. We remain disappointed that more is not being done this year, not next year or the

one after that — although Marsh's presence on that council was a bright spot, and she did her best to convince up-state legislators of the urgent need for more funding.

But Wallan said lawmakers from the northern portions of the state didn't seem to understand the need for more resources to fight fires and to help prevent future conflagrations. Let us hope we don't have to suffer through another smoke-filled summer to get their attention.

The Governor's Council is expected to produce recommendations this fall — far too late to have any effect on this summer's fire season. It's possible that a 12.73% increase in the Oregon Department of Forestry's budget could provide some additional money for fire suppression, but only after the governor's council makes recommendations — "later this year," according to an ODF spokeswoman.

Meanwhile, southern Oregonians hold their collective breath and feel grateful for somewhat cooler-than-normal temperatures so far this season. If that holds, and lightning stays away, we could get through the summer unscathed. But that would be sheer luck, not the result of leadership from the governor or assistance from the Legislature.

# It's a computer bag, not a man purse

**D**espite the accusations, I deny that I carry a man purse.

According to the *New York Post*, the man purse, or "murse," is the "new must-have accessory taking over designers' spring 2020 men's runways."

Murse designs include "cross-body satchels, fanny packs, top-handle totes and compact clutches" — whatever the heck "clutches" are.

Like so many other things in our divided culture, the murse's growing popularity causes conflict that has only grown since 2015, when the Huffington Post asked its Facebook followers to sound off.

"Nope...just nope," wrote one female reader.

Another woman wrote: "Does this mean I wouldn't have to carry my husband's stuff in my bag? Then, yes."

One obviously hip, new-age fellow wrote: "I love my murse. It is the best way to carry my book, notebook, e-reader, pens, medication, ID and cash and have it all conveniently at hand when I need it."

I hate to admit it, but I see both sides of this issue.

On one hand, it bewilders me that hip, urban males choose to adorn themselves with fashions — purses, fingernail polish, even eye liner, which some call "guy liner" — long associated with females.

It puzzles me that fashion is being used to whitewash the differences between men and women and between masculinity and femininity. I understand that fashions come and go, but I prefer fashions that highlight and celebrate the sexes' unique attributes.

This is partly because of the era in which I was raised. Like other masculine men, my father carried a fat wallet in a back pocket, his keys in his left front pocket, and lots of change in his right pocket — which he jangled with his hand as he shot the bull with other men.

To be sure, I've made fun of hip, modern fellows who need a man purse to carry their sunglasses, notebooks, body spray, hair goop, diary and whatever other items they tote these days.

One fellow I mocked helped introduce a "manlier looking man purse" a decade ago because he was tired of other men ribbing him for carrying a more feminine-looking handbag. I'm lucky he didn't smack me with his murse.

I made fun of another fellow whose chiropractor told him to get a man purse because keeping his thick wallet in his back pocket was misaligning his spine. How can we defeat tough-guy terrorists, I wondered, if our guys are getting injured by their wallets?

But on the other hand, I no longer carry a wallet, keys or change in any of my pockets.

I keep these items in an Italian-made leather computer bag that goes pretty much everywhere I go.

I also keep pens, my iPhone, my computer, a calculator, a hair brush and a handful of other unmanly doodads in there — not unlike the hip, purse-carrying fellows I've mocked.

But let's get this straight: I carry a computer bag, not a lousy murse!

Which brings me to a troubling accusation I encountered one morning at a local coffee shop, where a group of gray-haired retirees gather most mornings.

My Italian-made leather computer bag was hanging from my shoulder when an employee of the coffee shop told me, "Those old guys are making fun of your purse!"

How dare those unfashionable codgers mock me for keeping up with the times.

Tom Purcell is a Pittsburgh Tribune-Review humor columnist and is nationally syndicated exclusively by Cagle Cartoons newspaper syndicate.



TOM PURCELL  
COMMENT