

What's a Moon Tree?



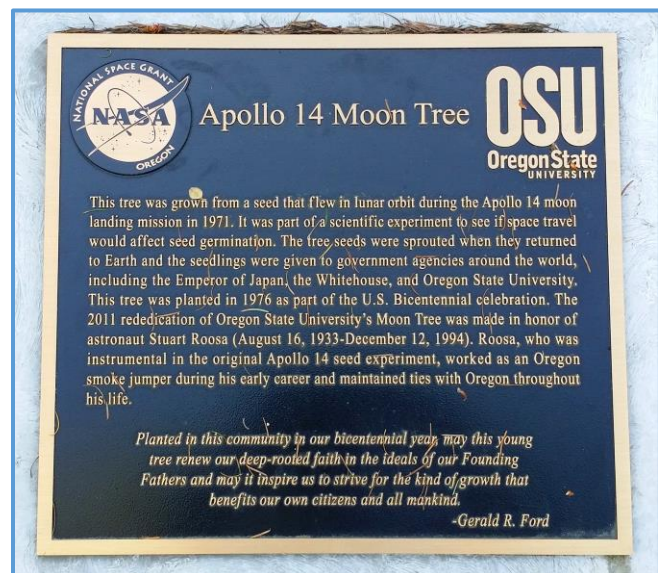
Mother Nature Network reports that moon trees were grown from seeds astronaut Stuart Roosa carried in his personal kit on the Apollo 14 mission in early February 1971.

About 500 loblolly pine, redwood, sweet gum, sycamore and Douglas fir tree seeds went up with him and orbited the moon 34 times. (Roosa stayed on board while astronauts Alan Shepard and Edgar Mitchell made the third moon landing.)

Roosa had been a smoke jumper (a forest fire responder) for the U.S. Forest Service prior to becoming an astronaut, and he brought the seeds not only to honor the service, but also to run a simple test: Would the seeds that had gone to the moon sprout as easily as Earth-only seeds?

About 450 of the seeds sprouted in similar numbers and as typically as their Earth-only control seeds. After a few years of care at NASA, the now-baby trees were planted in locations across the United States, many as part of the 1976 bicentennial celebrations.

Where are the trees? According to NASA, a loblolly pine was planted at the White House, and trees were planted in Brazil, Switzerland and presented to the emperor of Japan, among others. Trees have also been planted in Washington Square in Philadelphia, at Valley Forge, in the International Forest of Friendship and at various universities and NASA centers.



Roosa died in 1994, and a moon sycamore grows at his grave in Arlington National Cemetery.

As it turns out, a moon tree is no different from its earthly counterpart. Merely visiting the moon didn't change the nature of the seeds. All that changed was the world's estimation; it made them famous.

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One has to wonder why anyone ever thought that simply orbiting the moon 34 times would somehow change the nature of a seed. Likewise, one must wonder why it is that so many seem to believe that simply attending a church every week will somehow change the nature of a person.

The truth is, people who go to church are subject to the same temptations as people who don't attend. And many of them fail, just like their non-church-attending counterparts. Human nature doesn't change just because we've spent time in close proximity to a church. However, faith in God's promise produces the presence of God's Holy Spirit, resulting in a new capacity to desire the things of God.



Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new (2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter