



Times News

The Magic Valley Newspaper Dedicated to Serving and Promoting the Growth of Nine Irrigated Idaho Counties

TWIN FALLS, IDAHO, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1966

Luna 9 May Be Sitting On Gold Mine

MENLO PARK, Calif. (AP)—Russia's moon-landed Luna 9 spacecraft may be sitting on a gold mine.

The sharply defined surface pictures transmitted by Luna 9 show a glassy volcanic lava bed like many found in California, lunar geologist Harold Masursky said Saturday.

A study of the pictures seems to prove beyond doubt that volcanoes have exploded over vast areas of the moon and may still be active in some sectors, Masursky said.

Masursky works with the astrogeology branch of the U.S. Geological Survey. His group is helping on advance planning for the American effort to land astronauts on the moon.

He said the lava flow type indicated in the pictures often is associated with veins of gold and other metals on earth.

The veins result when boiling metal is thrust into lava fissures from the earth's hot, pressurized interior.

Masursky suggested the same thing may have happened on the moon.

He said it's possible that some day men may be mining gold on the moon.

Masursky classified the material identifiable in Luna 9's closeup pictures as scoriaceous lava debris.

He described it as a crunchy, glassy stuff that quickly would cut an ordinary pair of leather shoes to ribbons.

The Luna 9 pictures completely squash the theory that the lunar surface is deeply covered with soft dust churned up by impacting meteorites, the geologist contended.