

Bang!

Zoom. To the moon.

That was the hollow threat Ralph Kramden, the lovable, bumbling bus driver played by Jackie Gleason in *The Honeymooners*, used to issue to his wife Alice, played by Audrey Meadows, every time she burned him with a witty zinger. Of course, he never laid a hand on his beloved Alice. Most episodes ended with him taking her in his arms and declaring, “baby, you’re the greatest.” Alice never made it to the moon. It would be more than a decade after the show ended before America finally put a man on the moon in 1969. Now, we’re going back.

As I write this, the Orion space craft is more than a quarter million miles from Earth, circling the moon at 1,748 mph. The ship set a record for the farthest distance from Earth for a space craft designed to carry people. It blasted off atop the Space Launch System — the most powerful rocket ever built — from Kennedy Space Center on Nov. 15. It will



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return to Earth with a splash down in the Pacific Ocean on Dec. 11. It's part of NASA's Artemis I mission, which is one in a series of missions designed to return people to the surface of the moon.

Artemis is part of a larger moon to Mars plan. It is designed to test deep-space technology and help in setting up a permanent base on the moon. This base will provide support for future manned missions to Mars.

You can follow Artemis and learn about the technology in several sections that are part of NASA's website. Most of the coverage can be accessed via nasa.gov/artemis-1. This section serves as a gateway to more information on other pages on the site. The main page features text links down the left side and a grid of photo links filling most of the rest of the page.

The text links break down the mission into its separate parts. Each one brings you to more articles, photos, videos and graphics. There's a section on Gateway, which will be an outpost orbiting the moon that will facilitate access to the lunar surface and serve as a rest stop for flights to Mars. Other sections detail the SLS rocket ship and the Orion crew capsule.

There's a section

dealing with the technology needed for people to live and work on the moon. There are sections on preparing astronauts for space travel, Mars, commercial payloads and more.

The photo links lead to even more coverage. There are videos of press conferences, profiles of staff, maps of the mission, still and video images from the space craft as it approaches the moon and looks back at Earth, and other facets of the mission.

A section labeled About the Mission contains links to some interesting, informative and interactive pages. The first link is called Mission website and press kit. It takes you to a page with amazing visuals. The page is topped with an animation of the mission from launch to lunar orbit. You see the SLS hurtling skyward atop the flaming thrust from the rocket engines. Then you watch as the stages of the ship separate and continue onward as the earth spins below. Finally, the Orion speeds into lunar orbit. As you scroll down the page a series of impressive images and information slide by. One highlight is an interactive illustration of the entire space craft that allows you to click on the different sections to see what they do.

Another link in the About the Mission section is labeled Track Orion in space. This takes you to an interactive page that lets you see where Orion is

currently located. There's an animation of the craft out in space. At the bottom of the page are indicators showing the elapsed time of the mission, the ship's current velocity and the distances from the Earth and moon. You can select a point of view from three options: Earth, the moon or the craft. You can rotate your view and zoom in and out. You also can choose from five onboard cameras. Depending on your viewpoint, you can see the ship's position relative to the Earth, the moon or where it is on its orbital path.

Befitting an organization such as NASA, the site has some high-tech content. The pages are organized, have intuitive navigation and are filled with stunning visuals. Maybe someday we will all be able to go to the moon. For now, this is as close as you can get.

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