

# science news®

A Science Service Publication  
Vol. 102/Sept. 23, 1972/No. 13  
Incorporating Science News Letter

## OF THE WEEK

a new era in physics	196
astronomers hail cygnus x-3	197
education-success myth	198
environmental legislation	198
nicotine and immunity	199

## NOTES

physical sciences	200
behavioral sciences	201
space sciences	201

## ARTICLES

drugs from the sea	204
--------------------	-----

## DEPARTMENTS

letters	195
stars for october	206
new products	194

Cover: The drugs-from-the-sea rush of five years ago has diminished to a ripple, yet marine biologists are still convinced that the ocean has great pharmaceutical potential. See p. 204. (Photo, of sponge that contains antibiotic activity, courtesy Osborn Laboratories of Marine Sciences)

<b>Publisher</b>	E. G. Sherburne Jr.
<b>Editor</b>	Kendrick Frazier
<b>Aerospace</b>	Everly Driscoll
<b>Behavioral Sciences</b>	Robert J. Trotter
<b>Earth Sciences</b>	Louise A. Purrett
<b>Environment</b>	Richard H. Gilluly
<b>Medical Sciences</b>	Joan Arehart-Treichel
<b>Physical Sciences</b>	Dietrick E. Thomsen
<b>Copy Editor</b>	Nadine Clement
<b>Production</b>	E. Cherry Doyle
<b>Assistant to the Editor</b>	Esther Gilgoff
<b>Books</b>	Margit Friedrich
<b>Circulation Manager</b>	Lawrence Cope
<b>Advertising</b>	Scherago Associates, Inc.
	11 W. 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10036
	Fred W. Dieffenbach Sales Director

Copyright © 1972 by Science Service, Inc., 1719 N. St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Reproduction of any portion of SCIENCE NEWS is strictly prohibited.

Subscription Department  
231 West Center Street  
Marion, Ohio 43302

Subscription rate: 1 yr., \$10; 2 yrs., \$18; 3 yrs., \$25. (Add \$2 a year for Canada and Mexico, \$3 for all other countries.) Change of address: Four to six weeks' notice is required. Please state exactly how magazine is to be addressed. Include zip code.

Printed in U.S.A. Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C. Established as Science News Letter® in mimeograph form March 13, 1922. Title registered as trademark U.S. and Canadian Patent Offices.

Published every Saturday by SCIENCE SERVICE, Inc., 1719 N. St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. (202-785-2255). Cable: SCIENSERV.

september 23, 1972

# to the editor

## Leave Alaskan oil there

Twisting what Rosamond's letter quotes a Houston oilman as saying about the Alaska pipeline (SN: 9/2/72, p. 146), I would put it: "Every pipeline built is added severity to the world's future petroleum crisis." The petroleum crisis I envision isn't the same as the energy crisis at all. It is easier to find substitutes for oil as an energy source than as a raw material for chemicals. If we inhabitants of spaceship earth are now so near the end of our reserves of oil that we think we have to bring it from Alaska, it's high time we quit squandering the last of it by burning it up. Let's just leave that Alaskan oil where it is. Our successors will need it for chemicals much more than we need it for the energy required to produce the superfluity of goods and services for which it takes advertising costing literally billions of dollars a year to stimulate the demand.

Richard L. Burling  
Department of Physics  
Central State University  
Wilberforce, Ohio

Regarding previous letters on the Alaska pipeline: The head of California Institute of Technology's Environmental Laboratory, Lester Lees, recently made some interesting predictions concerning United States' fuel and energy shortage situation. As reported by Petroleum Information's publication: "He predicted as 'musts' for the future . . . smaller cars, costlier fuels, development of solar power . . . an embargo on gas hookups for homes, a reduction in the rate of commercial construction and the building of whole new cities designed to conserve energy. He forecasts cities designed mainly to save energy within 25 to 30 years in which residents will live close enough to work to ride bicycles. Cars in use would be small, lights would be fluorescent and minibuses would abound."

Until we get our energy system overhauled, and the quicker we start running to keep up with energy needs, the fewer blackouts and embargoes will be required. We need all the energy in usable form that we can get as soon as we can get it.

Merrill T. Endicott  
Crude Oil Department  
Gulf Oil Co.—U.S.  
Houston, Tex.

## Beyond the buffalo

I should like to thank you on behalf of the scientific community for informing us of the potential wrong that could possibly occur due to ignorance. The buffalo are not the only animals that carry *Brucella abortus* (SN: 9/2/72, p. 158); it can also be found in goats, sheep, horses, mules, deer, dogs, rabbits, chickens—in addition to cattle and swine, the main reservoir of the bacterium, according to the Center for Disease Control. According to a 1969 report of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, many producers of swine do not consider the disease a problem and therefore lack enthusiasm for eradication, and many states and swine herdsmen have not made active commitments to the eradication of brucellosis in swine. Source: JOURNAL INFECTIOUS DISEASES, vol. 125, p. 289-94.

Robert C. Belile  
Sulphur, La.

## Excellent reporting

Your article on the work of Fieve and Fleiss of the New York State Psychiatric Institute and Mendlewicz of the University of Brussels on transmission of manic-depressive illness (SN: 8/26/72, p. 134) is concise and accurate, far more so than similar articles appearing in news magazines and newspapers recently. It correctly credits the researchers and the institutions involved, which the other articles did not. Congratulations on your excellent reporting.

Gordon L. Barclay, Ed.D.  
State of New York  
Department of Mental Hygiene  
Albany, N.Y.

## A ploy on metrication

It goes without saying that a certain amount of human inertia must be overcome in order to implement the metric system on a national scale. But what troubles me most are the dubious virtues of making its acceptance arbitrary (SN: 8/26/72, p. 132). This strikes me as the ploy of a gutless Congress trying to sneak the matter unnoticed in the back door so as to avoid the jeers of industry and the general public. I wonder if the option will still exist after the elections?

Fred R. Monaco  
Dillon, Colo.

Address communications to Editor,  
Science News, 1719 N Street, N.W.  
Washington, D. C. 20036

## SCIENCE SERVICE

Institution for the Popularization of Science founded 1921; a nonprofit corporation

**Board of Trustees**—Nominated by the AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE: Bowen C. Dees, The Franklin Institute; Athelstan Spilhaus, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars; Deborah Partridge Wolfe, Queens College. Nominated by the NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES: Gerald F. Tape, Associated Universities; Allen V. Astin, National Bureau of Standards; Frederick Seitz, Rockefeller University. Nominated by the NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL: Gerald Holton, Harvard University; Jacob Rabinow, National Bureau of Standards; Glenn T. Seaborg (President), University of California at Berkeley. Nominated by the JOURNALISTIC PROFESSION: Norman Cousins, "World"; Julius Duscha, Washington Journalism Center; O. W. Riegel (Secretary), Washington and Lee University. Nominated by the E. W. SCRIPPS TRUST: Milton Harris (Treasurer), Washington, D.C.; Edward W. Scripps II (Vice President and Chairman of the Executive Committee), Edward W. Scripps Trust; John Troan, Pittsburgh Press.

Director: E. G. Sherburne Jr.; Assistant Director: Dorothy Schriver; Business Manager: Donald R. Harless; Staff: Youth Division: Max C. McLean; Things of Science: Ruby Yoshioka.

195