

# • New Ideas and Gadgets •

For sources of more information on new things described, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, 1719 N St., N.W., Washington 6, D. C., and ask for Gadget Bulletin 1117. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

🌀 **UNDERWATER ADHESIVE** for vinyl or plastisol bonds under water makes it possible to patch vinyl swimming pools without emptying the pool. A permanent bond is formed by merely applying the adhesive to the patch which is pressed into place. It can also be used to adhere plastisol to metal, wood and other materials.

• Science News Letter, 80:328 November 11, 1961

🌀 **COMBINATION CLEANSER-APPLICATOR** that helps take the drudgery out of cleaning consists of a refillable transparent plastic handle to which is attached either a sponge with an abrasive surface or a bowl brush. A special cleaning liquid in the handle is fed through a valve by a flip of the unit.

• Science News Letter, 80:328 November 11, 1961

🌀 **AUTOMATIC LIGHT SWITCH** is a compact electronic device that turns electric lights on automatically at nightfall and off at daybreak. Useful to chicken breeders, or in the home, office or store, the small unit plugs into any regular wall outlet of 110-125 volts AC.

• Science News Letter, 80:328 November 11, 1961

🌀 **BABY SAFETY HARNESS**, shown in the photograph, permits a child to make a complete 360-degree turn without entanglement. The harness, consisting of shoulder straps and a non-toxic flexible plastic hoop,



is secured to bed or carriage by two cotton washable straps attached to metallic slides movable within a channel on the outside of the hoop. A sleeping child can be turned over without removing the harness.

• Science News Letter, 80:328 November 11, 1961

🌀 **STEREO TAPE RECORDER** that combines sound with sound is an invaluable aid in the study of language, music and

drama. A basic track can be recorded and the second track used by the learner for checking purposes. It will reproduce favorite selections from any FM radio or multiplex stereo casts with stereo high fidelity playback, thus saving on disc costs. The recorder plays continuously for up to two hours.

• Science News Letter, 80:328 November 11, 1961

🌀 **CHAIN TEMPLATE** for draftsmen and engineers is of clear plastic with several chain sizes. Easy to use, the pocket-size template will save hours of painstaking work and simplify accurate chain drawing.

• Science News Letter, 80:328 November 11, 1961

🌀 **PHOTOGRAPHIC FLOOD LIGHT** is a lightweight portable unit with a 20,000 candlepower beam produced by a self-cleaning halogen lamp in a 2¾-inch reflector. Battery-powered and rechargeable with an ordinary household electric circuit, the light can be operated for 32 minutes continuously before the battery power-pack needs replacing or recharging.

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🌀 **SINGLE ICE CUBE TRAY** contains ten separate, unbreakable, plastic freezing cups that hold single cubes of ice. Designed to prevent sticking, each cube can be released from a cup by the warmth of the hand.

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## Nature Ramblings



## Do You Know?

► **TECHNICALLY SPEAKING**, the pumpkin is a fruit. Deep yellow and nearly round, it is both versatile and valuable. It is versatile because it served as a coach for Cinderella, and as a cache for stolen Government papers a number of years ago. And for many an October, its hollowed-out shell has served as a lantern to be lighted on All Hallows Eve, or Halloween—the evening before All Saints' Day.

The pumpkin is valuable because it is rich in carbohydrates and minerals, especially phosphorus, calcium and iron. And its flat, white seeds are a fine wildlife food for a number of birds.

Although plenty of pumpkins are in market early for the jack-o'-lantern trade, most are harvested between Halloween and Thanksgiving. The greater part of the harvest is for canning because this fruit is a "long-keeping" one. Each pumpkin supplies a lot of meat for canning because the average weight of each is 10 to 20 pounds. Extra-large ones often weigh as much as 75 pounds.

The pumpkin is thought to be native to Chile, although it may have been brought

### Pumpkin



to that country from Asia in prehistoric times. Various forms of this fruit, including the common field pumpkin (*Cucurbita pepo*), were being raised by the Indians at the time of the colonization of North America.

In pie form, the pumpkin is closely associated with Thanksgiving. Some historians state there is no evidence to prove this fruit was served in any form at the first Thanksgiving dinner in 1621. But a source such as the second edition of The Columbia Encyclopedia states, "It was among the fruits of the first Thanksgiving celebration of the Pilgrims."

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Over one-fourth of all industry in Canada is controlled in the United States.

Alpha radiation known to exist in outer space could affect man's brain and is a potential hazard in manned space flight.

Particles of refractory compounds such as carbides are formed into almost perfect spheres by placing them in a plasma jet where they melt and solidify while still in motion.

Color in dreams is reported more frequently by children than by adults.

A new type of toothbrush that vacuum cleans the teeth has been devised for use in hospitals on patients unable to brush their teeth by themselves.

The common onion had its origin in south central Asia.

Glass has been used by man for over 5,000 years.

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