

# science news®

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**COVER:** Mature peregrine falcon, a species destroyed in the eastern United States and now endangered elsewhere because of improper use of pesticides. At Cornell University, a team of ornithologists led by Thomas J. Cade hopes to breed enough of the birds to reestablish the decimated population. See p. 158. (Photo: John H. Douglas)

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# to the editor

## Name game

Regarding the "Off the Beat" column, "The Name's the Game" (SN: 8/11/73, p. 95), how did you miss the fortuitous name of Billy P. Glass, researcher of tektites, those "walnut-sized glassy particles" described on pages 92 and 93?

Also, I recall, when I attended the University of Illinois in Urbana, a widely advertised local optometrist named Dr. Seymour Landa.

I find SCIENCE NEWS a comprehensive, informative source. Please continue the good work.

Carol M. Rubin  
TRW, Inc.  
Redondo Beach, Calif.

In the same issue you have an article about a Dr. Billy P. Glass who studies tektites, which are made of silicate glass.

Robert Burnham  
Toronto, Ontario

You left out the obvious—that Billy P. Glass studies tektites.

Cindy White  
Richmond Heights, Mo.

(Leaving Glass' name out of the column was our own game—to see if readers would notice. Many did.—Ed.)

I enjoyed "It's All in the Name." I have a contribution. Joseph Badger, D.V.M., a veterinarian in Bedminster, N.J.

Beverly C. Tiger  
Gladstone, N.J.

Here's one for your "It's All in the Name" department: At the University of California, Berkeley, D. L. Wood teaches a course entitled, "The biological deterioration of wood."

Daniel P. Hirsch  
Berkeley, Calif.

Relative to your "It's All in the Name," George W. Toothman, D.D.S., was once an assistant professor of orthodontics here and is now a dentist in Monongahela, Pa.

As to your UFO detector, I composed the following years ago.

If you are a coffee drinker,  
I give you this for your awe, sir  
Don't put sugar in that drink!  
You may get a fly in saucer!

Gerald J. Cox, Ph.D.  
Professor Emeritus of Biochemistry  
and Dental Research  
School of Dental Medicine  
University of Pittsburgh  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

## Coffee, tea and heart attacks

Re your article entitled "Heavy coffee drinkers get more heart attacks" (SN: 7/28/73, p. 55), it neglected to state whether the patients who suffered acute heart attacks drank their coffee straight or with cream and sugar. Which to me would seem to make a difference.

I'm certain that certain citizens of Vilcabamba would dispute the findings as they are heavy coffee drinkers and attain a ripe old age.

Craig Caughlan  
San Francisco, Calif.

(As the article pointed out, the study found no correlation between addition of sugar to coffee and heart attacks. "The data permitted a direct exclusion" of the possibility that "sugar as an additive to coffee is conducive to myocardial infarction [heart attacks]," report Jick and his colleagues in their paper. "Secondarily this casts some doubt on an explanation in terms of milk as well, since the uses of these two additives are probably correlated." Moreover, they point out, milk is also used with tea, and the use of tea showed no association with acute heart attacks.—Ed)

## Eminently humane

I was pleased to read that the American Psychiatric Association is beginning to accept behavior therapy and principles (SN: 8/18-25/73, p. 106).

When I first read in SCIENCE NEWS about Dr. Skinner's *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, I did not rush out to buy or borrow the book, because I was certain I would find it upsetting. But I did make a mental note to get a copy and read it at some future date, feeling that I could ill afford to ignore indefinitely ideas that were apparently very controversial.

When I finally got around to reading the paperback edition, I found it unsatisfying, rather than upsetting; and subsequently purchased and read Skinner's *Science and Human Behavior*, seeking and finding clarification therein. Nothing in either book struck me as being intolerably threatening to humanity. On the contrary, it seemed to me that his opinions, based on his studies, showed Skinner to be eminently sensible and humane. If he also seemed, at times, to feel persecuted by the friends and allies of freedom, I guess he had (and has) reason.

I do wish people would take the time to find out for themselves what someone like Skinner has written, instead of borrowing their opinions from others.

Idelle Weierbach  
Coatesville, Pa.

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