

THIS WEEK

Nobel Prizes awarded

Chemistry	244
Medicine	244
Physics	245

Controversial human gene-splice 245
HHS rules on unethical research 245
NASA administrator resigns 245
Mixed reviews for cancer marker 246
HDL's as cancer risk factors 246
Looking for neutrinos: Anomalous cascades 246
Microelectronics: The risky revolution 246
Russian cosmonauts return 247
Preventing still-puzzling toxic shock 247

RESEARCH NOTES

Biomedicine	248
Earth Sciences	248
Chemistry	249
Technology	249

ARTICLES

Indoor reef	250
-------------	-----

DEPARTMENTS

Letters	243
Off the Beat	253
Books	254

COVER: Butterfly fish and more than 200 species of plants and animals are at home in the new living coral reef exhibit at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. The reef community is on display to the public and is in use by museum scientists to explore the physical and ecological interrelationships of the reef's many members. See p. 250. (Photo: Chip Clark, Smithsonian).

Publisher	E. G. Sherburne Jr.
Editor	Robert J. Trotter
Senior Editor and Physical Sciences	Dietrick E. Thomsen
Behavioral Sciences	Joel Greenberg
Biomedicine	Joan Arehart-Treichel
Chemistry	Linda Garmon
Earth Sciences	Susan West
Life Sciences	Julie Ann Miller
Policy/Technology	Janet Raloff
Space Sciences	Jonathan Eberhart
Contributing Editors	Lynn Arthur Steen Kendrick Frazier John H. Douglas Michael A. Guillen
Science Writer Intern	Joanne Silberner
Assistant Editor	Judy Klein
Art Director	Dale Appleman
Assistant to the Editor	Betsy Gordon
Books	Jane M. Livermore
Business Manager	Donald Harless
Advertising	Scherago Associates 1515 Broadway New York, N.Y. 10036 Fred W. Dieffenbach, Sales Director

Copyright © 1980 by Science Service, Inc., 1719 N St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Reproduction of any portion of SCIENCE NEWS without written permission of the publisher is prohibited.

Editorial and Business Offices
1719 N Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Subscription Department
231 West Center Street
Marion, Ohio 43302

Subscription rate: 1 yr., \$19.50; 2 yrs., \$34.00; 3 yrs., \$47.50 (Add \$3 a year for Canada and Mexico, \$4 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. For new subscriptions only call: (1) 800-247-2160.

Printed in U.S.A. Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C. 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)

LETTERS

Sociobiological implications of sex

I was a little surprised that no mention was made of the obvious "sociobiological" implications of Dr. Smolensky's discovery of a possible peak in human and primate sexual activity during late summer (SN: 9/6/80, p. 150). One must assume that sexual activity during late summer would result in babies in late spring, which would be the preferred time for primitive man to bear children.

Demetrios Matsakis
Washington, D.C.

Unorthodox water treatment

The article "A magnetic 'believe it or not'" (SN: 9/6/80, p. 155) reminds me that about 30 years ago the San Bruno City Engineer asked me what to make of a proposal he had received for softening the city water supply by means of magnetic rings around the water pipes at the city's pumping station. The proposal was supported by steamship companies who reported success in treating boiler feedwater.

I told the engineer that if he could give me some typical before-and-after analyses of the water for which such claims were made I would be able to offer an opinion. He said that the beneficial results were stated to be "felt," not demonstrable. At that time we dropped further consideration of the topic and San Bruno's hard water problems were treated by more orthodox methods.

David E. Paterson
San Bruno, Calif.

Toxic shock and hygiene

As a user of one of the four products most mentioned, I have been following reports of "Toxic Shock Syndrome" (SN: 9/27/80, p. 198) associated with tampon use with some interest. I note, from personal experience, that the products most implicated do seem to be the most efficient ones, and since no contamination has been found in them so far, I wonder if their efficiency might not be the problem? Since they work better, one doesn't change them as often as in the past, perhaps holding the offending agent of infection in proximity to the cervix much longer than in the past. After all, this is a nice warm, moist area in which to incubate, and the tampon traps the flow, so that it can't "sweep" out the vagina, as designed.

Also, in our culture, we are taught to wash our hands after using the bathroom, but not before. Has anyone tried to study the details of the personal hygiene habits of the victims to see if they were in the habit of adjusting the tampon with their bare hands?

S.E. Hammond
Lake Grove, Ore.

Ozone past and present

I was amazed to read the article on ozone (SN: 8/30/80, p. 134).

As a child and through my teens, I suffered terribly from hay fever and asthma. My primary treatment was to stand over an "ozone machine" and inhale the ozone, which was then considered better than pure air. It did, in fact, quickly free the congestion in my lungs and air passages and if I remained in the room with the machine, I felt absolutely great.

To read now that it is a pollutant, is somewhat astonishing, when the benefits—to me, at least—were so obvious; I would have virtually suffocated without it. I have often since wondered where I could again acquire an ozone machine for some of those occasional "bad" hay fever days that still occur but maybe I should be glad I haven't found one, to "pollute" my lungs. On the other hand, maybe everyone ought to have one to treat, or prevent, lung cancer.

R. C. Bixler
Canton, Ohio

(Years ago ozone was believed to be good for health, especially for respiratory problems. [There is even a section of New York City called Ozone Park, presumably to persuade people that there was a lot of ozone in the air there.] Possibly they thought getting three oxygen atoms instead of only two was a bargain. Today it is recognized that the chemical behavior of the three-oxygen molecule renders it "irritating to mucous membranes and toxic to human beings and lower animals" [Arthur W. Francis in *The McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology*]. Maybe the machine produced something in addition to ozone.—Ed.)

Institution for the public understanding of science founded 1921; a nonprofit corporation.

SCIENCE SERVICE

Board of Trustees—President, Glenn T. Seaborg, University of California, Berkeley, CA; Vice President, Gerald F. Tape, Associated Universities, Washington, DC; Treasurer, Milton Harris, Washington, DC; Secretary, Julius Duscha, Washington Journalism Center, Washington, DC; Allen V. Astin, Bethesda, MD; Joseph W. Berg Jr., National Research Council, Washington, DC; Edward Bliss Jr., Newburyport, MA; Bowen C. Dees, The Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, PA; David A. Goslin, National Research Council, Washington, DC; Elizabeth Neufeld, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD; O. W. Riegel, Glasgow, VA; Edward W. Scripps II, Edward W. Scripps Trust, Carson City, NV; John Troan, Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, PA; Deborah P. Wolfe, Queens College of City University of New York, Flushing, L.I., NY

Director: E. G. Sherburne Jr.; Assistant Director: Dorothy Schriver; Business Manager: Donald R. Harless.

