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COVER: In Mayan, "Ixtoc" means "exploder." In scientific and political circles, the name of the exploratory oil well that blew out in June of 1979 has come to mean "spill of opportunity." See page 267. (Photo by courtesy of R&D Mexico).

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SCIENCE ON THE AIR

SCIENCE NEWS prints the latest written word of scientific developments and noteworthy news. We've set this space aside to inform our readers of programs of scientific interest that are scheduled on television and radio. Check your local listings for exact times.

Television

• (PBS) "NOVA": Nov. 4 "The Big IF" is an in-depth look at interferon's putative ability as a cancer cure. The program features interviews with doctors who have used interferon on their patients and with patients here and abroad who claim to have been cured. Included also are rare electron micrographs of a gene being spliced into a plasmid; Nov. 11 "Voyager: Jupiter and Beyond" will precede by one night Voyager 1's fly-by with Saturn. The program will document Voyager's progress to date and look to the future; Nov. 18

• (PBS) "The Body in Question": Nov. 4 "The Heart of the Matter" is a discussion of the history of ideas on how the heart works. Included is a visit to the anatomy theatre in Padua where Harvey studied; Nov. 11 "Shaping the Future" is a review of what happens from the moment of conception until a fertilized egg becomes a full-grown adult; Nov. 18 "Sleight of Hand" looks at "miracle" cures, both past and present; Nov. 25 "Native Medicine" contrasts the practice of modern European medicine with the system of the central African Azande tribe, who regard malice as the prime cause of illness.

• (PBS) "Cosmos": Nov. 2 "Travelers' Tales" includes an imaginary spaceship cruise among the planets and shows NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory as it appeared in July 1979 when Voyager 2 data came in, bringing new knowledge about Jupiter; Nov. 9 "The Backbone of Night" asks the question "What are the stars and how far away are they"; Nov. 16 "Travels in Space and Time" explains the concept of a light-year, along with the relativistic limitations of interstellar travel, Doppler shifting and plans for interstellar space-ships; Nov. 23 "The Lives of the Stars" is a discussion of molecules, atoms and subatomic particles, leading to an examination of stellar interiors; Nov. 30 "The Edge of Forever" examines different concepts of how the universe originated.

• (PBS) "Here's to Your Health": Nov. 1 "The Drug Industry" is a discussion of the safety of the mind-boggling array of drugs available by prescription and over-the-counter; Nov. 8 "Acne" is an exploration of medical progress in the area; Nov. 15 "Narcolepsy" is a repeat look at this mysterious "sleeping sickness" as told by its victims and by the medical researchers seeking a cure; Nov. 22 "Pain Management" is a relatively new field that has developed effective techniques for alleviating the chronic pain that frequently accompanies disease; Nov. 29 "Burns" is a repeat look at common misconceptions about burns and burn treatment.

• (PBS) "Survival": Nov. 12 "Caribou: The Incredible Journey" is a documentary examining the arduous 2,000-mile trek taken yearly by the approximately 125,000 caribou of the Yukon Territory to an area along the border of Canada and Alaska; Nov. 19 "Mysterious Castles of Clay" is an award-winning look at the African termite; Nov. 25 "Leopard of the Wild" includes views of the rarely documented wilderness life of leopards in the true story of an orphaned leopard.



Photcollage of Jupiter and its moons.

"The Wizard Who Spat on the Floor" is a look at the quintessential American hero — Thomas Edison. Included is rare archival film footage of Edison explaining various inventions of his and of interviews with Edison's family, employees and critics; Nov. 25 "The Water Crisis" examines the problems various locations are confronting with their water supplies in an effort to determine if we are heading toward a water crisis.

• (PBS) "Connections": Nov. 1 "The Wheel of Fortune" shows how the modern production line can be linked with the invention of the clock; Nov. 8 "Thunder in the Sky" is a look at how changes over time have effected changes in energy sources; Nov. 15 "The Long Chain" is an examination of materials — both those discovered by accident and those discovered as the result of research — that have altered the course of history. The chain runs the gamut from the production of pitch in the 1600s to the development of nylon; Nov. 22 "Eat, Drink and Be Merry" links the 1476 invasion of Switzerland by Charles the Bold to the development of modern-day rocketry; Nov. 29 "Countdown" reconstructs the birth of television and examines its current role in our lives.