

# SCIENCE NEWS®

The Weekly Newsmagazine of Science

A Science Service Publication  
Volume 140, No. 1, July 6, 1991

E. G. Sherburne Jr.	Publisher
Patrick Young	Editor
Laurie Jackson	Managing Editor
Vaughan	Editor
Janice Rickerich	Production/Design Director
Janet Raloff	Senior Editor Environment/Policy
Bruce Bower	Behavioral Sciences
Elizabeth Pennisi	Chemistry/ Materials Science
Richard Monastersky	Earth Sciences
Ron Cowen	General Science/ Space Sciences
Carol Ezzell,	Life Sciences/ Biomedicine
Kathy A. Fackelmann	
Ivars Peterson	Mathematics/Physics
Larry Norland	Editorial Assistant
John Travis,	Science Writer
Tim Walker	Interns
Liz Marshall	Books/Resource Manager
Donald R. Harless	Advertising/Business Manager

SCIENCE NEWS (ISSN 0036-8423) is published weekly on Saturday, except the last week in December, for \$39.50 for 1 year or \$68.00 for 2 years (foreign postage \$6.00 additional per year) by Science Service, Inc., 1719 N Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing office. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to SCIENCE NEWS, 231 West Center Street, Marion, OH 43305. Change of address: Four to six weeks' notice is required — old and new addresses, including zip codes, must be provided.

Copyright © 1991 by Science Service, Inc. Title registered as trademark U.S. and Canadian Patent Offices. Printed in U.S.A.

Editorial and Business Offices:  
1719 N St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036  
(202-785-2255)

Republication of any portion of SCIENCE NEWS without written permission of the publisher is prohibited.

Subscription Department:  
231 West Center Street, Marion, OH 43305  
For new subscriptions and address changes only, call 1-800-247-2160.  
For customer service, call 1-800-347-6969.

## This Week

- 4 Helping Diabetics Shed Pins and Needles
- 4 Chemists devise new route to AIDS drugs
- 5 Launch delays jeopardize weather forecasts
- 5 Routine screen hints at fetal death risk
- 6 Landsat flies in politically charged skies
- 6 Dad's farming may hike baby's liver risk
- 7 Phone glitches and other computer faults
- 7 Volcano could cool climate, reduce ozone

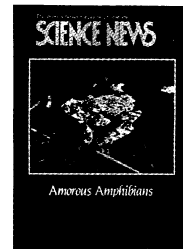
## Research Notes

- 11 Biomedicine
- 15 Chemistry
- 15 Health Physics

## Articles

- 8 Uncle Sam's Energy Strategy
- 12 Your Pond or Mine?

Cover: As gray tree frogs (*Hyla chrysoscelis*) prepare to mate, they embrace in a clasp called amplexus. But when it comes to agreeing on an appropriate place for actual mating and egg laying, the two sexes just can't seem to get it together. New field research suggests that conflicting environmental criteria may be keeping the frogs apart. (Photo: John E. Fauth/Denison University)



## Departments

- 2 Books
- 3 Letters

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

Board of Trustees — *Chairman*, Glenn T. Seaborg; *Vice Chairman*, Gerald F. Tape; *Treasurer*, Willis Harlow Shapley; Joseph W. Berg Jr.; Robert W. Fri; David A. Goslin; J. David Hann; Milton Harris; Leon M. Lederman; Shirley M. Malcom; Elena O. Nightingale; Ben Patrusky; H. Guyford Stever; Sanford J. Ungar; Deborah P. Wolfe.

Honorary Trustees — Edward Bliss Jr.; Bowen C. Dees; O. W. Riegel; John Troan.

President: E. G. Sherburne Jr.; Business Manager: Donald R. Harless.

## Letters

### Those cryptic canines

The quantity of dog skeletons found near Ashkelon in southern Israel ("Digging into a doggone puzzle," SN: 3/23/91, p.190) is intriguing for students of the Bible. This is precisely the area said to be frequented by Samson.

According to the story in Judges 15, Samson burned the Philistine fields. In order to do this he "went and caught three hundred foxes." (The *shual* is a fox or jackal.) Even for a man of great strength, catching 300 foxes seems hardly possible. But what if there was a kennel of canines nearby?

Rev. Donald Rose  
Bryn Athyn, Pa.

I wonder if the dogs unearthed in Israel could have been used for food. Although this may appear distasteful to most Westerners, it is

common practice in many cultures. The lack of bone injuries, such as damaged skulls, could be accounted for by the way the dogs were put away. In some parts of Spain, for instance, small pigs are slaughtered by piercing their hearts with a long stiletto.

Brian Hesse's advice, "combine several cultures and mix thoroughly," just might add up to a recipe for "dog food."

Jorge E. Zegarra  
Caracas, Venezuela

### A matter of emphasis

Call me a positivistic puritan if you must, but the Steinberg-Dornbusch report on student employment ("Perils of part-time work for teens," SN: 3/30/91, p.205) seems to illustrate an objectionable aspect of much psychological research.

The study established only a correlation between teenage employment and low grades, drug use and delinquency. Yet as described, it

also trumpeted a Perils-of-Burger-King message, while relegating to an oh-by-the-way status the possibility that troubled youths gravitate to the labor market. Besides being unscientific, this kind of presentation seems designed to attract research funding by provoking media sensationalism and public anxiety.

It would be well to recall the example of Dr. Fredric Wertham, the infamous psychiatrist who exploited postwar anxieties about delinquency and youth culture by "proving" that comic books were dangerous.

Ronald P.S. Mahler  
St. Paul, Minn.

## CORRECTION

Arachidonic acid is a polyunsaturated fatty acid, not a protein as described in "Stopping cancer cells in their tracks" (SN: 6/1/91, p.347).

JULY 6, 1991

3