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Letters

'Libations' sends readers reeling

The letter from reader Jeff Mueller that includes the stereo image of the moon (SN: 2/25/95, p.115) states that slight differences in the images result from "libations." While this would certainly cause lunar wobble, it is generally a short-term effect, not to be confused with the subtle, long-term effect caused by "librations."

Richard M. Koolish
Arlington, Mass.

Several readers caught this typographical error — including Jeff Mueller, who wishes to assure everyone that he "was not overindulging in libations when [he] wrote the letter."

— The editors

First sightings of faint star

"Hubble telescope eyes a Milky Way squirt" (SN: 1/7/95, p.5) indicates that the brown dwarf candidate Gliese 623 has not and can-

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Cover: Hawaii's Kilauea volcano, one of the most active in the world, is tearing apart at the seams. Pieces of the mountain are sliding toward the ocean at a geologically rapid rate, triggering destructive earthquakes and potentially giant landslides. (Photo: R. Monastersky)

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Science Service, which publishes SCIENCE NEWS, is a nonprofit corporation founded in 1921. It gratefully accepts tax-deductible contributions and bequests to assist its efforts to increase the public understanding of science, with special emphasis on young people. More recently, it has included in its mission increasing scientific literacy among members of underrepresented groups. Through its Youth Programs it administers the International Science and Engineering Fair, the Science Talent Search for the Westinghouse Science Scholarships, and publishes and distributes the *Directory of Student Science Training Programs for Precollege Students*.

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not be observed from ground-based telescopes. In fact, my research group has imaged it more than 12 times since 1987.

What should be emphasized is that the combination of future Hubble observations and existing ground-based measurements can resolve the brown dwarf question.

Don McCarthy
Steward Observatory
University of Arizona
Tucson, Ariz.

The Hubble picture of Gliese 623b was the first image in visible light, not the first image of any kind.
— R. Cowen

Deploring decision to dump data

"University probe faults cloning research" (SN: 12/17/94, p.406) indicates that the investigators who engaged in research prior to Institutional Review Board approval were being censored by the university. In particular, they were ordered to discard the data obtained in the experiment.

I agree that inappropriate actions should be censured in order to discourage further impropriety. I do not agree, however, with the decision to discard the data. Data obtained through improper means are not necessarily invalidated. Granted, unethical behavior sets back the processes and perceptions of science and its practitioners. However, I think that discarding the data would be a great setback not only to science, but to the beneficiaries of scientific endeavor — humanity.

Michael Baldwin
Laramie, Wyo.

Compounding the errors?

"Chaotic chaos in linked electrical circuits" (SN: 1/14/95, p.21) awakens my interest in the possible effects on laboratory experiments when gamma rays, cosmic rays, neutrinos, and changes in Earth's geomagnetic field are not shielded.

Bernard Fremman
Prairie Village, Kan.

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