

Science Club News

(Continued from p. 218)

clubs are indebted to helpful adults in some degree, and most reciprocate in some way through community service projects of their own. The Phi-Bi-Chem Science Club of Thomas Dale H.S. in Chester, Va., for example, distributed Christmas baskets to the poor.

Dentsville Science Club of Dentsville H.S., Columbia, S.C. 29206, is newly organized. To date they have had field trips, demonstrations, and visiting scientists. They would like to communicate with other science clubs to exchange ideas.

With so many science club members entering projects in science fairs, it is likely that many of the International Science Fair finalists will be members of science clubs. Science clubs within range of Dallas, Texas, might like to begin planning now for a club trip to visit the ISF.

The International Science Fair will be held in the Dallas Memorial Auditorium, and the exhibits will be open to the public on Thursday and Friday, May 12 and 13, from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. both days.

Finalists will be with their exhibits from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and again from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. on both days.

Those science clubs finding such a visit possible can be assured of a most worthwhile experience.

Would your science club like to share ideas and activities that would be of interest and assistance to other clubs? Send a report to Science Clubs of America, 1719 N St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

• Science News, 89:218 April 2, 1966

ARCHAEOLOGY

Village 9,500 Years Old Unearthed in Syria

➤ ANOTHER ancient village site has added support to the growing evidence that early man built permanent settlements before he learned to grow crops and raise domestic animals.

Huts of a village estimated to be about 9,500 years old were unearthed at Tell Mureybat, a large mound on the Euphrates River, 200 miles from Damascus, Syria. They were constructed on a stone foundation with clay floors and walls built over a frame of wood and reeds, reported Dr. Maurits van Loon, of the University of Chicago.

Archaeologists also excavated curved-walled houses built with uneven pavements that were sunk at the center to form hearths and bordered by stones set on edge in hard red clay. Straight-walled houses were found with limestone floors covered with clay.

The best preserved house was 12 feet square and included four small square rooms each five feet by five. The rooms had no doorways, and the people must

have entered through the roof, Dr. van Loon said.

Scientists have long debated whether early man began to build permanent settlements before or after he learned to domesticate animals and grow crops. Prior to the agricultural and animal husbandry revolutions in the evolution of man, tribes roamed about, constantly following herds of wild beasts and gathering wild berries and fruits from the vegetation they found along the way.

Now archaeological evidence from the Mureybat site indicates that the inhabitants lived entirely on hunting and on harvesting of wild crops, Dr. van Loon said. Bones found around the site were identified as those of wild cattle, onagers, gazelles, boars, pigs, wolves and hares. More than 15,000 chipped stone tools were found, including heavy and light scrapers, picks, sledges, graters and arrowheads.

The archaeological project was supported by the National Science Foundation.

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Nature Note

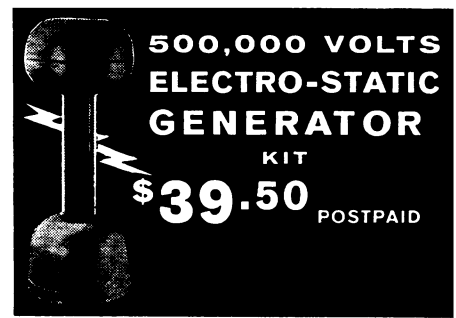
Springtails

➤ SOME OF THE most primitive of all insects, the springtails are so named because under each one's short abdomen is a tiny mechanism that acts like a strong spring to catapult the tiny creature about two inches through the air. The insects themselves are only about one-fifth of an inch long.

These odd, primitive little creatures, belonging to the Collembola order in the animal kingdom, are wingless. Some have only traces of eyes, and others have no eyes at all. With a fused thorax, or chest-like part, and a reduced abdomen, they look like funny hump-backed creatures from some other world. This is what the first insects on earth may have looked like 200 million years ago.

Living in moist or wet places throughout the world, the springtails can become a nuisance to man around maple sap buckets, mushroom beds or young growing seedlings. Some species engage in activity in spherical colonies an inch or two in diameter. Others can be found in freshwater pools or in tide-water pools along the northern seacoasts. One unusual species lives in enormous numbers on the surface of the snow in cold desolate places such as the Arctic and the Antarctic. They thrive in these icy lands presumably on microscopic algae and diatoms, although scientists are still studying the habits of these ice-bound insects. Other species are found beneath the stones of penguin rookeries, and some have even been found inside the shells of barnacles.

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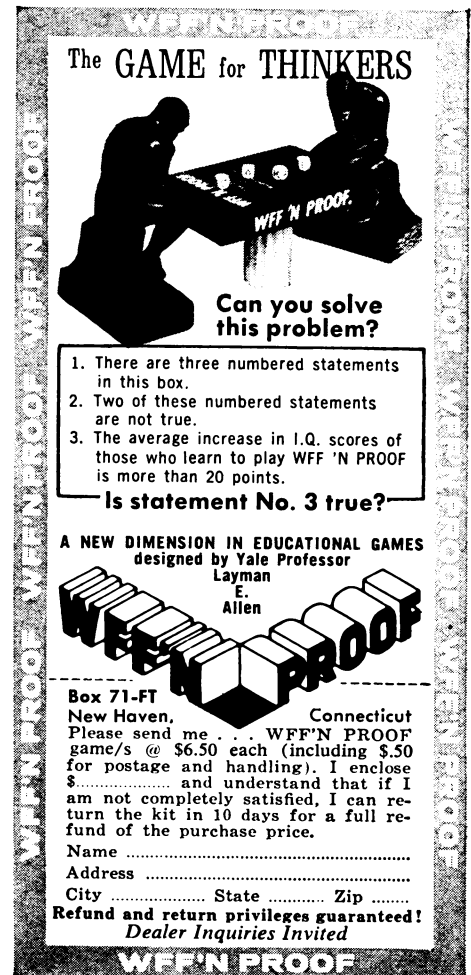
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