

Science Club News



Joint Board on Science Education

► THE JOINT BOARD on Science Education was established in 1955 by the Washington Academy of Sciences and the District of Columbia Council of Engineering and Architectural Societies.

It has the function of coordinating the educational activities of the various technical societies comprising the parent organizations and may initiate and sponsor programs that are not feasible for a less representative group. It is incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia as a non-profit scientific and educational association.

The Joint Board is comprised of 18 members, nine being appointed by each organization. Its activities include the school contacts program, career counseling, sponsoring science fairs, and a program in which scientists and engineers visit schools to lecture on their fields of interest and to replace teachers, permitting them to attend technical meetings or similar activities.

With respect to the science fairs, the Joint Board joins with other groups in financially sponsoring participation in the International Science Fair and defrays many of the expenses of the local fairs, including printing and awards. The Science Fair Committee coordinates such functions as safety, judging, counseling and various operational details to promote uniformity in the five regional science fairs in the District of Columbia and suburban Maryland and Virginia.

The Secondary School Contacts Committee assists in the promotion of science interest by providing a contact member for each secondary school in the National Capital area. The area is divided into eight districts, each headed by a chairman. Each division chairman has the responsibility of recruiting contact members from among the professional scientists, engineers and mathematicians of the area, assigning one to each secondary school.

The contact member serves without remuneration for his time or expenses

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of travel or telephone calls. His reward consists of the knowledge of a job well done or the expressed gratitude of the school he serves.

At the beginning of the school year the contact member proposes to the principal that a convenient time be designated for a meeting with the science teachers and school guidance counselors to discuss the services he may be able to provide. He may obtain speakers for career day or science club meetings, consultants for science project workshops, judges for school science fairs or scientists to give career counseling.

What local activities in your area would be of interest to others? Send a report to Science Clubs of America, 1719 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

• Science News, 89:453 June 4, 1966

VETERINARY MEDICINE

Vitamin A Improves Cows' Fertility

► INJECTIONS of vitamin A have consistently improved fertility of cows and weight gain of calves, according to Dr. T. W. Perry, professor of animal nutrition in the department of animal sciences, Purdue University.

Though the cow's liver is an efficient storehouse for vitamin A, Dr. Perry said, even cows fed on lush grass during summer months tend to use up such stores during the winter. Pregnant beef cows are apt to be vitamin A-deficient when fed typical beef cow rations, he indicated.

In one field trial involving 400 head of cows, Dr. Perry found that calves given injections of vitamin A averaged 484 pounds at the end of the experiment, compared with 472 for untreated calves.

When vitamin A was injected into yearling heifers rather than newborn calves during another study, the calves ultimately produced were 20 pounds heavier than calves produced by untreated heifers.

Dr. Perry's report on recent experiments was made in the current issue of The Merck Agricultural Memo, which is distributed to the feed and animal health industries as a service by Merck & Co., Inc.

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SURGERY

Forty Soldiers Survive Missiles in the Heart

► FORTY SOLDIERS who received foreign bodies in the heart in World War II are reported surviving, many of them working full time, with small missiles still not removed.

The policy generally followed by the U.S. forces during World War II was to remove from the heart objects that were spotted when the chest was first opened, but to make no attempt to remove them later from the soldiers who had survived the immediate dangers of their implantation.

The size and shape of the missiles varied from small shell fragments a few millimeters in diameter to .30-caliber machine-gun bullets. The majority were located in the walls of the two ventricles—19 in the left and 14 in the right. A .30-caliber bullet was removed six months after it had lodged in the back wall of one man's left ventricle, where it was firmly fixed.

The study, reported in the New England Journal of Medicine, 274:1039, 1966, was organized by the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council at the request of the Veterans Administration, the Department of Defense and the U.S. Public Health Service.

Five of the veterans are totally incapacitated by a severe anxiety neurosis directly related to the presence of the foreign body in the heart. The majority of the men are just careful.

In the future it seems desirable to remove the larger missiles and to assure the patient that henceforth his heart will be sound and its function unimpaired, the researchers concluded.

Dr. Edward F. Bland of Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital, with Dr. Gilbert W. Beebe, statistician, National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council, reported the study.

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