

# New Machines and Gadgets

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⚙️ **CRISPER BOX** electrically keeps crackers, cookies, nuts and potato chips crisp. Made of chromeplated steel, aluminum and plastic, the box is 11 inches high, 11 inches wide and about 19 inches long. Very little electric current is required.

• Science News Letter, 78:286 October 29, 1960

⚙️ **TELEPHONE CHIME** turns a telephone's harsh ring into a more pleasing sound. At the beginning of the ringing cycle the instrument emits a single bell tone followed by a chime at the end, repeated at three-second intervals until the call is answered.

• Science News Letter, 78:286 October 29, 1960

⚙️ **BIKE BRAKE-TRANSMISSION UNIT** with two-speed gearshift eliminates handlebar controls, cable controls or caliper-type brakes. To shift gears, the cyclist merely back-pedals about two inches. When the brake is applied the unit automatically uses the extra braking of the low gear. The entire mechanism is contained in a hub that may be installed as simply as a regular brake.

• Science News Letter, 78:286 October 29, 1960

⚙️ **STAINLESS STEEL PANELS**, shown in the photograph, are a combination of the ultra-thin steel bonded to various backup



materials. Easily cut with a special hand-saw, the panels can be used in anything from a skyscraper to a homemade shower stall.

• Science News Letter, 78:286 October 29, 1960

⚙️ **MINIATURE ELECTRIC WATER PUMP** may be used to create miniature

waterfalls, fountains in tiny gardens or in realistic HO gage railroad backdrops. With two D-batteries in series, the unit will pump to 24 inches high. It is less than three inches tall.

• Science News Letter, 78:286 October 29, 1960

⚙️ **MULTI-PURPOSE SPATULA** has a sharp edge for use as a knife, holes that permit use as a strainer, and a prong for use as a fork for turning bacon and other foods. The stainless steel spatula also doubles as a beater. Its laminated wood handle is grease- and burn-proof.

• Science News Letter, 78:286 October 29, 1960

⚙️ **TINY RADIO** is so small it clips over and is supported by the wearer's ear. Made with an unbreakable plastic case in red, blue or tan, the complete receiver weighs less than an ounce. It operates up to 100 hours on two "penlite" batteries.

• Science News Letter, 78:286 October 29, 1960

⚙️ **INFRARED VIEWER**, a portable unit that weighs two and a half pounds with batteries, is designed to make the usually invisible infrared light useful for police work, medical research and as a photographic dark room light. The gun-like unit is completely self-contained, including optics.

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## Nature Ramblings



➤ WHEN PUMPKINS become Hallowe'en jack-o-lanterns, the most popular melon is the Connecticut field pumpkin, also known as the common cornfield, or pie, pumpkin. This is the largest variety of *Cucurbita pepo*, the true pumpkins, and weighs from five to 30 pounds.

The small sugar, winter luxury and golden oblong varieties are small pumpkins of differing characters and are generally considered of better quality than field varieties.

One type, the table queen, is sometimes called the Des Moines or acorn squash, but is really a pumpkin. Although the flesh is yellow, the skin is a dark, glossy green.

There is little doubt that pumpkins originated on this continent, but they are not known anywhere in the wild state. Like the corn they grow with, the Indians had them in cultivation but knew nothing of their source when the white man first arrived.

Unlike corn, however, pumpkins have relatives all over the world, and the modern varieties have become much mixed with

### Pumpkin



foreign stocks from Asia and Africa, which give us our amazing assortment of squashes, melons and gourds.

Whatever the source or type, if someone tries to tell you his bushel-sized specimen got that way by being fed milk from a bowl, chances are he is trying to put one over on you. Agricultural experts debunk these stories as myths. The best way to produce a big melon, they say, is to give it excellent growing conditions and remove all the other fruits from the vine.

—GLORIA BALL

• Science News Letter, 78:286 October 29, 1960

## Do You Know

Red is the most widely used of organic color pigments in the United States.

Malnutrition and alcoholism are two of the main causes of liver disease, probably the most common serious chronic illness in the world today.

The enrollment in U.S. medical schools has increased by only 275 a year in the past five years.

Persons who are hard of hearing or deaf may will their inner ear structures to a Temporal Bone Bank for scientific research.

The world's largest laboratory solely for research into the cause and prevention of deafness will be built at the University of Michigan.

Nearly half of poisonings in the United States occur in children under the age of five, with the two-year-old the highest risk.

• Science News Letter, 78:286 October 29, 1960