

• New Ideas and Gadgets •

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☼ **MULTI-USE BLANKET** suitable as a camping blanket, ground cloth, hunting blind, cockpit sunshade or radar reflector, is made of pliable aluminized plastic-base material. Windproof, waterproof and washable, it warms by reflecting 80% of the natural body heat. Available in red, blue or silver, the 56x84-inch blanket folds into a compact, pocket-size 8x5½x2½-inch package, and weighs only 11 ounces.

• Science News Letter, 89:112 February 12, 1966

☼ **BOAT MOTOR FLUSHER** allows dry-land testing and flushing of motors. The device is snapped over the water intake of the outboard motor and connected to a garden hose to allow fresh water to circulate through the cooling system, thus eliminating the need to disconnect controls and remove motors. The flusher also makes it possible to test run the engine at home before making the trip to lake or river.

• Science News Letter, 89:112 February 12, 1966

☼ **FLUORESCENT LAMP** useful for flooding wide areas such as campsites, patios, tents and trailers, operates on either AC or heavy duty high voltage dry cell batteries. Capable of delivering up to 100 hours of service, the portable light uses a 12-inch fluorescent tube and is bright enough to read, cook or work by. It is useful also in case of power failure.

• Science News Letter, 89:112 February 12, 1966



☼ **MILK CARRIER**, shown in photograph, that holds two half-gallon milk bottles is a handy aid for housewives. Made of durable plastic in a variety of colors, the carrier may be used for various large-size containers. A plastic loop that fits over the bottle top prevents tipping in the carrier which is available in a wide variety of colors. The handle unhooks easily for storage.

• Science News Letter, 89:112 February 12, 1966

☼ **INFANT GARMENT SEAT** in which the baby is placed slips over a pillow in the back. Designed for safely propping up and feeding a child on bed, sofa, chair, crib, stroller or auto, it eliminates the need for piling pillows or blankets around the baby to hold him in an upright position. Available in white, blue, pink or yellow, it is suitable for babies from six weeks to six months of age.

• Science News Letter, 89:112 February 12, 1966

☼ **PROTECTIVE OIL** penetrates solid wood up to ½ inch and veneers down to the glue line. The oil which preserves and hardens the wood by changing from a liquid to a solid within the wood, protects fine furniture and paneling while providing a hand-rubbed appearance. Suitable for home or industrial use, it makes a surface resistant to burns, scratches and stains and will not crack, peel or chip.

• Science News Letter, 89:112 February 12, 1966

☼ **SOCIAL SECURITY CARD-KIT** keeps a person's Social Security number handy at all times. The Social Security number and name of each person requesting the card are embossed in raised letters on heavy duty two-color plastic and a signature space is provided. A leaflet which contains pertinent information on Social Security is enclosed with the wallet-size card.

• Science News Letter, 89:112 February 12, 1966

• Doctors Are Reading •

Viral Hepatitis Danger to Medical Personnel

➤ **EIGHT CASES** of viral hepatitis over a period of 13 months among hospital personnel have been reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 195:361, 1966, thus calling attention to the occupational hazard of the disease.

Safe handling of contaminated equipment, including single-use needles, was stressed by Dr. Earl B. Byrne of Yale-New Haven Hospital, New Haven, Conn., where the eight recent cases of viral hepatitis occurred among employees. Other preventive measures should include education in basic aseptic technique, rather than administration of gamma globulin, Dr. Byrne said. Preventive use of gamma globulin would be prohibitively expensive if done on a large scale in a general hospital.

Driving Danger in Antihistamine Drug

A danger to drivers through loss of hand-eye coordination exists from an antihistamine given to overcome allergies, motion sickness and other conditions.

This drug, called Phenergan, is available by prescription in both the United States and England.

A study by four British doctors, reported in *Nature*, Jan. 29, 1966, describes central nervous depression and impaired hand-eye coordination in experiments with students from Northampton College, London.

A rotating drum covered with electrical insulation in which 400 holes had been punched was the experimental device. As the drum turned, the students, using a small steering wheel, tried to

guide an electrical contact from hole to hole. Each hole completed a circuit, and the score was registered on a digital computer.

Half the students were given 50 milligram doses of Phenergan; the other half were given placebos. The difference in coordination was conclusive and the danger, had the students actually been driving, could have been serious.

Further experiments are planned to investigate more fully the effect of smaller doses, the researchers said, in view of the ease with which antihistamines can be obtained by the general public, and of the possible hazards in driving and other complex tasks.

Drs. G. R. Molson and J. A. Mackey of the Department of Ophthalmic Optics, Northampton College, reported the investigation in collaboration with Dr. J. V. Smart of Smith, Kline and French Laboratories, Ltd., Welyn Garden City, Herts, England, and Dr. Paul Turner of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London.

Plague in Viet Nam

The Communicable Disease Center, Atlanta, Ga., U.S. Public Health Service, warns that bubonic plague continues to be a problem in Viet Nam. More than 300 cases were reported during 1965, the medical news section of *JAMA*, 195:32, 1966 said.

Travelers to Viet Nam were strongly advised to be immunized against plague. Using the vaccine licensed in the United States, the standard course is three injections, the first two 30 days apart and the third 4 to 12 weeks following the second dose, the CDC said. A booster dose at three-month intervals is advised when remaining in a known plague area.

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