Eureka! Cold fusion reheated

by Scott_LaFee

Twenty years to the day after electrochemists Stanley Pons and Martin Fleischmann breathlessly announced their discovery of "cold fusion," only to have the whole thing metaphorically blow up in their faces, another team of scientists says it has documented evidence of "low energy nuclear reactions," or LENR, that could, in time, mean a virtually free, endless supply of energy â€” the power of stars from a tabletop device.

Corn or maize was developed by indigenous peoples in the lowlands of southwestern Mexico about 8,700 years ago. Ninety percent of the world's population is predicted to have access to safe drinking water by 2015, while 33 percent will have inadequate sanitation. Dedicated to discovering what is killing honeybees, the Great Sunflower project records honeybee sightings across the country. The new team is headed by researchers from the U.S. Navy's Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center (SPAWAR) in San Diego.

Pamela Mosier-Boss, a SPAWAR analytical chemist, described the work at the American Chemical Society's spring meeting in Salt Lake City (which, incidentally, was the same gathering where Pons and Fleischmann made their announcement 20 years ago).

The SPAWAR scientists reported that an experimental cold-fusion device had produced a pattern of "triple tracks" caused by high-energy particles resulting from a nuclear reaction. "To our knowledge, this is the first scientific report of the production of highly energetic neutrons from an LENR device," Mosier-Boss said.

In other words, they had found evidence of the products of cold fusion.

Perhaps remembering Pons and Fleischmann, others in the field have not yet jumped aboard, lauding the work but suggesting the conclusions may be wrong.

"Their hypothesis as to a fusion mechanism I think is on thin ice," Steven Krivit, editor of New Energy Times, told New Scientist magazine. "You get into physics fantasies rather quickly, and this is an unfortunate distraction from their excellent empirical work."

Krivit said he was eager to see others replicate the research results, something that never happened with Pons and Fleischmann.

BRAIN SWEAT

Can you use sound logic to figure out why these words are in this order: gun, shoe, spree, door, hive, kicks, heaven, gate, line, den?

'TRUE FACTS'

Temple University researchers have found new physical evidence that indigenous peoples in the lowland areas of southwestern Mexico cultivated a wild grass 8,700 years ago, resulting in what we now know as domesticated maize or corn.

PRIME NUMBERS

90 â€” Percentage of the world's population projected to have safe drinking water by 2015

33 â€” Percentage that will still lack adequate sanitation in 2015

Source: 2009 United Nations World Water Development Report

ELECTRON INK

Great Sunflower Project

greatsunflower.org

Everybody knows honeybees are in trouble, with hives around the world experiencing massive death and collapse. Researchers are still trying to figure out why. Part of that effort is the Great Sunflower Project, a volunteer program to plot and record bee activity across North America.

Volunteers document bee sightings in their area, funneling the information to a central databank at San Francisco State University. Last year was the project's first year.

See the website for more information or call 415-405-2409. Participants get a free package of sunflower seeds â€” for planting and for the bees, of course.

BRAIN SWEAT ANSWER

A hint was in the word "sound." Each word in the sequence rhymes with a sequential number: one, two, three, etc.

POETRY FOR SCIENTISTS

The microbe is so very small

You cannot make him out at all.

But many sanguine people hope

To see him down a microscope.

His jointed tongue that lies beneath

A hundred curious rows of teeth;

His seven tufted tail with lots

Of lovely pink and purple spots

On each of which a pattern stands,

Composed of 40 separate bands;

His eyebrows of a tender green;

All these have never yet been seen.

But Scientists, who ought to know,

Assure us they must be so.

Oh! let us never, never doubt

What nobody is sure about!

â€” Hilaire Belloc, from the 1897 book, "More Beasts for Worse Children"

Copyright 2009 Creators Syndicate, Inc.