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GENTLE.NEWS

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"The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts."

— Marcus Aurelius

Kansas Teachers Sail the Seas for Science

Two teachers from Kansas had an amazing adventure this summer. They left their landlocked state and sailed on real ocean research ships. They worked side by side with professional scientists at sea.

Amelia Black teaches in Topeka. She traveled to the Gulf of Mexico to help study fish. Guy Sturdevant teaches in Wichita. He sailed all the way to Alaska's Bering Sea to study pollock. Pollock is a fish many people eat every day.

They were part of NOAA's Teacher at Sea Program. NOAA is the government agency that studies our oceans. This program has taken more than 900 teachers on research ships since 1990. Only a handful of those teachers came from Kansas.

Life on the ship was exciting but not easy. The teachers worked long 12-hour shifts each day. The ocean waves kept the ship moving constantly. They took photos and wrote about their experiences so students back home could follow along.

Both teachers wanted their students to know that the ocean belongs to everyone. Even children who live far from the sea can dream of ocean careers. Science, discovery, and adventure are open to all. What a wonderful lesson from the open water!

Source: NOAA Fisheries

NASA Tool Creates Stunning 3D Maps of Earth's Forests

Scientists at NASA have built a smart new tool that maps our planet in amazing detail. It is called CASALS, and it works from space to study forests and land below.

Regular space lasers measure Earth in thin lines. That leaves huge gaps where land never gets measured. CASALS solves this problem in a clever way. It sweeps side to side to cover far more ground.

The tool uses a special kind of laser light. It quickly shifts through 256 different wavelengths. This lets it scan wide areas without any moving parts. That makes it stronger and less likely to break.

CASALS creates full three-dimensional pictures of forests and terrain. Scientists can see treetops, the ground, and plants in between. NASA tested it over a swamp in Delaware and it worked beautifully. Trees showed up in green, ground in purple, and low plants in blue.

This new tool will help scientists learn more about our forests than ever before. Better maps mean better care for our planet. It is a wonderful step forward for Earth science.

Source: NASA

New Rules Help Keep Medicine Apps Safe and Helpful

Many people now use phone apps to help manage their medicines. These apps can remind you to take a pill or track your symptoms. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration wants to make sure these apps are safe and helpful.

The FDA has released new rules for companies that make medicine apps. The rules explain when an app needs to be approved by the FDA. They also explain when an app should be listed on a medicine's label.

Some apps are connected to a medical device. For example, an app might work with an inhaler. These apps must be listed on the medicine's official label.

Other apps work on their own. These include tools that track symptoms or remind you to take your medicine. These apps only need to be listed on the label if they are truly needed for the medicine to work safely.

An FDA doctor said these apps are playing a growing role in health care. The new rules help make sure the information in these apps is correct and based on science. This is good news for patients and their doctors.

Source: U.S. FDA

Tiny Trackers Follow Monarch Butterflies South

Every fall, millions of monarch butterflies make an amazing journey. They fly thousands of miles south to warmer places for winter. Scientists are working hard to learn more about this beautiful trip.

Researchers have attached tiny trackers to some of the butterflies. These trackers are very small and light. They weigh only six milligrams — less than a small paperclip. The tags run on solar power, just like a calculator. They send signals that smartphones can pick up nearby.

One butterfly named Mona started her journey in northwestern Minnesota. She flew in a straight line all the way to South Dakota. Then she turned south toward Texas. Scientists were able to follow her the whole way. This gave them wonderful new information about the route monarchs travel.

Another butterfly named Chew started in Utah in early September. He became the first tagged monarch ever tracked crossing into Mexico. He was spotted in October in the state of Nuevo León. This was a very exciting moment for the research team.

Teams from zoos, universities, and wildlife refuges all worked together on this project. They trained side by side to tag and track the butterflies carefully. Every new detection helps scientists understand and protect these beautiful orange wings for years to come.

Source: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

The Man Who Painted Every Bird in America

A long time ago, a man named John James Audubon had a wonderful dream. He wanted to paint every bird in North America. And he wanted each bird to be shown at its true, full size.

Audubon worked on his dream for many years. The result was a book called "The Birds of America." It was published between 1827 and 1838. It contained 435 beautiful paintings showing 489 different birds.

The book was enormous. It was printed on giant sheets of paper, each about 38 inches tall. The whole set of four books weighs 196 pounds! The biggest single book weighs 55 pounds all by itself.

Audubon painted his birds with great care and love. He showed them in lively, moving poses. Wings spread wide. Talons reach out. Necks twist and turn. His pictures feel full of life and energy.

One of his most famous paintings shows a flamingo. The bird's long neck bends into a graceful curve. It is both beautiful and surprising. Today, people still admire Audubon's work. The Library of Congress keeps his precious books safe for everyone to enjoy.

Source: Library of Congress

Activity Time - Word Search

Find the words below in the puzzle. Words go across or down only.

Words to Find:

PAINTING FLAMINGO LASER LIDAR

WINGS SWAMP BIRD

T	N	L	I	D	A	R	K	F	Y	G
R	G	T	T	E	U	P	U	J	I	F
E	Y	S	W	A	M	P	X	S	S	L
X	C	T	P	P	R	L	D	W	M	A
W	H	U	A	P	E	A	A	I	Z	M
T	H	M	I	Q	L	S	A	N	F	I
K	O	T	N	S	V	E	W	G	B	N
C	X	B	T	B	I	R	D	S	U	G
Q	W	D	I	T	O	L	D	Y	U	O
F	E	L	N	F	Z	V	B	D	H	D
F	I	Q	G	A	J	C	U	B	V	H