

Best of Last Week—Time travelers invited to Hawking memorial, hiding codes in text, benefits of low-energy diet

May 14 2018, by Bob Yirka

Someone using FontCode would supply a secret message and a carrier text document. FontCode converts the secret message to a bit string (ASCII or Unicode) and then into a sequence of integers. Each integer is assigned to a five-letter block in the regular text where the numbered locations of each letter sum to the integer. Credit: Changxi Zheng/Columbia Engineering

It was a good week for physics as a team of researchers from Germany and the U.S. suggested [light could make semiconductor computers a million times faster, or even go quantum](#) by making use of infrared laser pulses. And a team at Pennsylvania State University gave a presentation at this year's Meeting of the Acoustical Society of America on cloaking devices, declaring that they are [not just *Star Trek* anymore](#). They have been working with a metamaterial that bends sound waves around objects. Also, Stephen Hawking's children made news when they offered tickets that indicated that [time travelers are welcome at Hawking's memorial service](#) on June 15th. Applicants were asked to give their birth dates, which could include any day up to December 31, 2038.

It was also a good week for technology as an international team of researchers announced that they had [made strong, super-tough carbon sheets at low temperature](#) by sewing platelets together. Also, a team at Columbia Engineering announced that they had found [a new way to hide information in plain text](#)—called FontCode, it hides information in regular text by imperceptibly changing, or perturbing, the shapes of fonts.

In other news, a team at Duke University found evidence suggesting that [large predators that were once hunted to near-extinction are showing up in unexpected places](#). The animals include killer whales in rivers, alligators on beaches and mountain lions far from any mountains. And a pair of researchers, Daniel Kruger and Jessica Kruger, found evidence suggesting that [women perceive men who extrovertly display their wealth as unsuitable partners for long-term relationships](#). Also, a team of researchers from across the U.S. found evidence suggesting that [Earth's orbital changes have influenced climate and life forms for at least 215 million years](#). And an international team of astronomers looked into the question of [what will happen when the sun dies](#).

And finally, if you want to lose weight but find most diets leave you

feeling hungry, you might want to check out the results of a study led by a team at the University of Leeds—they found that [a low-energy diet leaves people feeling full and eating fewer calories.](#)

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