

Best of Last Week—Enough oxygen on Mars, parking cars with 12 neuron network, and drug cocktail that increases lifespan

October 29 2018, by Bob Yirka

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It was a great week for space news, as a team with members from the California Institute of Technology and Harvard University found evidence suggesting that [Mars could have enough molecular oxygen to](#)

[support life, and where to find it](#). Also, a student at the University of Manchester's School of Physics and Astronomy discovered [the slowest-ever pulsar star](#)—Chia Min Tan came across the 14-million-year-old star while working as part of an international group. And a team at the University of Michigan confirmed [a collision between two Milky Way satellite galaxies](#)—the Small Magellanic Cloud and the Large Magellanic Cloud. And a team at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics offered an update on the first interstellar body seen in our solar system—['Oumuamua one year later](#). Also, NASA unveiled a picture snapped during the MarCO mission, [the first image of Mars from a CubeSat](#)—proving the suitcase-sized spacecraft survived the journey to deep space as it nears the Red Planet. And an international team of researchers announced that they had [spotted signs of supermassive black hole mergers](#)—precursors to gigantic black holes.

In other news, a team of computer scientists at TU Wien demonstrated [an advance in artificial intelligence—parking a car with only 12 neurons](#). The inspiration came from biology, and showed that it is possible to achieve impressive results with very little effort. In related news, a team at the Research Center for IT Innovation of Academia Sinica, in Taiwan, announced that they had developed [a generative adversarial network with binary neurons](#). Called BinaryGAN, it can directly generate binary-valued predictions at test time. Also, a study led by a team at McGill University in Canada found that [certain blood pressure drugs can be linked to an increased risk of lung cancer](#). More specifically, they found that angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitor drugs used to lower pressure levels was associated with an increased risk of lung cancer.

And finally, if you are one of the many optimists around the world hoping to live longer than average, you might be interested in a study led by a team at Yale-NUS College. They discovered [a drug cocktail that increases lifespan](#)—at least in the microscopic worm *Caenorhabditis elegans*.

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