

Best of Last Week – First picture of black hole, new kind of airplane wing and alcohol brain damage after cessation

April 8 2019, by Bob Yirka



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It was a big week for space news, as multiple teams around the globe made headlines with the announcement that they were set to unveil [the first picture of a black hole](#) using data from eight radio telescopes to

create one very large telescope. And another international team announced that they had found [the likely source of methane on Mars](#)—an ice sheet of frozen methane beneath a rock formation, just east of Gale Crater—quashing speculation that it might have been produced by living organisms. Also, graduate student Emily Mason led a team that found [unexpected plasma rain on the sun that links two solar mysteries](#)—the source of the slow solar wind and anomalous heating of the corona.

It was also a good week for technology, as a team with members from MIT and NASA demonstrated [a new kind of airplane wing](#)—made of hundreds of tiny pieces, it can change its shape during flight. Also, a team at Pennsylvania State University has developed [a new family of glass that should be good for lenses](#) with a high refractive index. And a group at the U.S. Department of Energy's Ames Laboratory announced a technique to [capture live, atomic-level detail of nanoparticle formation](#) using aberration-corrected scanning transmission electron microscopy.

In other news, a team at the University of Central Florida reported that they have developed [a way to control the speed of light and even send it backward](#) using a spatial light modulator. Also, a team led by Emi Nishimura, with Tokyo Medical and Dental University, announced that they had [uncovered the protein that keeps skin youthful](#)—COL17A1. And a team led by Patrick Keeling of the University of British Columbia reported that they had [discovered the first organism with chlorophyll genes that doesn't photosynthesize](#)—a cohabitant of coral called corallicolid.

And finally, if you are one of the many millions of people around the world who drink alcohol and are considering quitting, you might want to take a look at work done by a combined team of researchers from the Institute of Neuroscience CSIC-UMH and the Central Institute of Mental Health of Mannheim. They found that [alcohol-induced brain damage continues after cessation](#)—for at least six weeks.

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