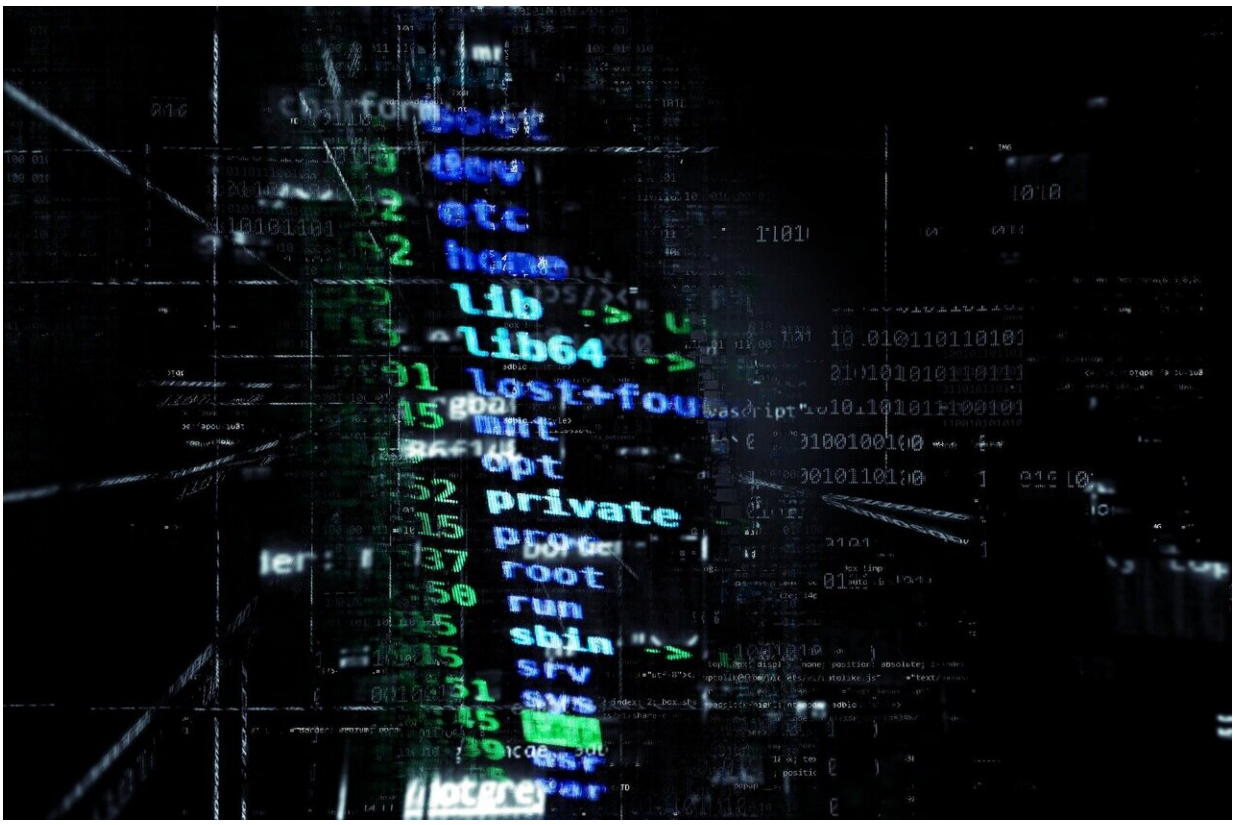
Best of Last Week: Micrometeoroid stardust, a Windows 10 worm, mask use could prevent second COVID-19 wave

June 15 2020, by Bob Yirka



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It was another good week for space science as an international team of researchers closed in on a 12-billion-year-old signal from the end of the

universe's 'dark age'—the time before there were stars in the universe. Also, a team at Washington University in St. Louis found that ancient micrometeoroids carried specks of stardust and water to asteroid 4 Vesta before the birth of the sun.

Meanwhile, a team at Duke University developed a way to use artificial intelligence to make blurry faces look more than 60 times sharper—and with up to 64 times the resolution. And the U.S. Department of Homeland Security warned users of a Windows 10 worm—they advised users to use a firewall to block server message block ports and to apply patches where necessary to prevent malicious cyber-attacks. Also, a team at NaMLab in Germany developed a reconfigurable ferroelectric field-effect transistor for frequency multiplication, allowing for FeFET-based radiofrequency circuits on a single chip. And a team at Konkuk University in South Korea created an insect-inspired robot that can fly for up to nine minutes—called KUBeetle-S, it is based on a species of horned beetle, one of the largest insects in the world.

In other news, a team of geophysicists at the University of Maryland announced that they had detected unexpected widespread structures near Earth's core. And a team at 23andME, a genetic testing service, reported that they had found that people with type O blood were less likely to get COVID-19 infections, though their work has not yet been peer reviewed. And a team with members from Stockholm University and Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust reported that human eggs prefer some men's sperm over others, and that different women's eggs attract different men's sperm.

And finally, if you are one of the billions around the world hoping to do your part to reduce the number of people dying from SARS-CoV-2 infections, you may want to check out a study conducted by a combined team of researchers from the universities of Cambridge and Greenwich—they found that widespread mask use could shrink the "R"

number and prevent a second COVID-19 wave.