

Best of Last Week—Neanderthals went extinct due to sex, using sunlight for WiFi, a vaccine for breast cancer

November 7 2022, by Bob Yirka



Neanderthals (left) and Homo sapiens (right) are the closest relatives of each other, and could interbreed. Credit: Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London, All Rights Reserved

It was a good week for biological research as a team at the University of Toronto found that some degree of antibiotic resistance can be [linked to household products](#)—they found that triclosan was the predominant

antibiotic in Ontario sewage samples. Also, a researcher at Curtin University [discovered a new species of bee](#) with a dog-like snout. Kit Prendergast has named her find *Leioproctus zephyr*, after her pet dog. And a pair of researchers, Chris Stringer and Lucile Crété, both with the Natural History Museum in London, announced evidence that Neanderthals [likely went extinct due to sex](#), rather than violence, via interbreeding with humans.

In technology news, a combined team of researchers from the University of Michigan, the University of Florida and the University of Electro-Communications in Japan found that [laser attacks on autonomous vehicles](#) could lead to accidents, including running over pedestrians. And a team at the University of Waterloo discovered [a security loophole in WiFi networks](#) that could allow attackers to see through walls. A combined team from Hanyang University and Duksung Women's University in South Korea, designed and built a system to communicate remotely by [user embodiment of a humanoid robot](#). And a team at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology found that sunlight streaming through a window [could be harnessed for wireless data transmission](#) to electronic devices as an alternative to traditional WiFi technology.

In other news, a team with members from several institutions in the U.S. and Canada found that [iron in the blood induced chronic heart failure](#) in half of the animal model heart attack survivors they studied—its presence often helped scar tissue to be replaced by fat instead of muscle. Also, a pair of researchers at Franklin and Marshall College conducted a study showing [how cosmetics can increase the attractiveness of men](#). Carlota Batres and Hannah Robinson found that it can have real-world implications, such as impacting juries. And finally, a team at the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle found that [a breast cancer vaccine](#) they developed safely generated anti-tumor immunity in a phase 1 clinical trial.

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