

Best of Last Week—New map of universe, smart home vulnerabilities and young people at risk of hearing loss

November 21 2022, by Bob Yirka

Credit: Visualization by B. MéNard & N. Shtarkman

It was a good week for space science as a team of astronomers at Johns Hopkins University created [a new map of the universe](#) that shows, for the first time, the span of the entire known cosmos. Also, NASA

announced that its [moon mission is "exceeding expectations."](#) After blasting off this past Wednesday, the rocket is now close to its rendezvous with the moon. And an international team of researchers [detected cesium in the atmosphere of a hot white dwarf](#), part of their work studying data from the Far Ultraviolet Spectroscopic Explorer telescope.

In technology news, a team of researchers at the University of California, Irvine, discovered [a way to use music to trigger a deadly pathogen release](#)—a finding that showed that people working in negative-pressure rooms could be easily put at risk by criminals using smartphones. Also, a team at the University of Copenhagen [solved an algorithmic riddle from the 1950s](#), and may have found a way to greatly improve the precision of self-driving cars and other mapping software. And a team at the University of Georgia found yet more evidence of [smart home hubs leaving users vulnerable to hackers](#). Also, a team of engineers at MIT [solved a mystery that could lead to smaller and lighter batteries](#)—it involves replacing the liquid electrolyte with layers of ceramic materials and also replacing one of the electrodes with a solid lithium metal.

In other news, a team at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis found that [lung infections caused by soil fungi are now a problem all across the U.S.](#), and its spread appears to be related to climate change. Also, scientists and government representatives around the world voted at this year's General Conference on Weights and Measures to add [two new measurements to the International System of Units: quettameters and ronnagrams](#). They characterized the weight of planet Earth at six ronnagrams. And finally, a team of researchers with members from Sweden, Mexico, Switzerland and the U.S. found evidence suggesting that [more than 1 billion young people are potentially at risk of hearing loss](#) due to use of headphones and earbuds and attendance at loud music venues.

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