

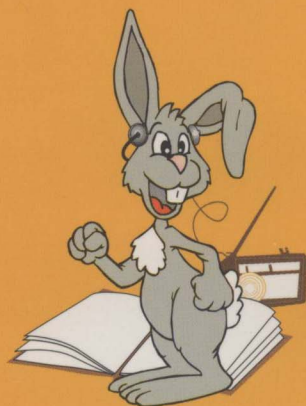
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美国之音

2005 上半年合集

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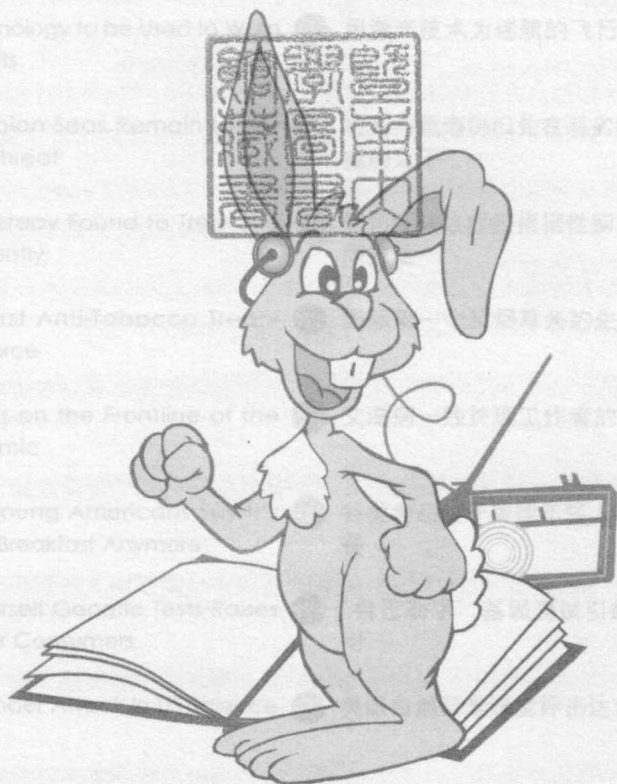
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2005 上半年合集 MP3 版



Environment and Technology 环境科学探索

(6_sci*.mp3)

1. Avian Flu Poses Ominous Threat to World, says US Health Official 406 美国卫生部称禽流感对世界造成威胁
2. Airport Security Screens Passengers Using New Technology 408 机场使用新技术进行乘客安检
3. American Medical Geographer Studies 'The Why of Where' 410 美国医学地理学家研究病患在某地发生的原因
4. Laser Technology to be Used to Warn Straying Pilots 413 用激光技术为迷航的飞行员示警
5. Aral, Caspian Seas Remain Under Ecological Threat 415 咸海与里海仍旧处在恶劣的生态环境威胁之下
6. Aspirin Therapy Found to Treat the Sexes Differently 419 阿司匹林治疗应根据性别差异采用不同方法
7. World's First Anti-Tobacco Treaty Goes into Force 422 国际第一个反烟草条约生效
8. Caregivers on the Frontline of the AIDS Pandemic 424 艾滋病一线护理工作者的故事
9. Cereal... Young Americans Say It's Not Just For Breakfast Anymore 427 谷类食品对于美国年轻人不再只是早餐
10. Do-It-Yourself Genetic Tests Raises Questions for Consumers 429 “自己动手”基因测试引起消费者疑问
11. Darwin Under Attack In US Science Classroom 432 美国自然科学课堂抨击达尔文进化论
12. Dengue Fever Epidemic Kills Nine in East Timor 435 东帝汶9人死于登革热

13. Dim and Mysterious, the Planet Pluto Has Scientists' Attention 437 黯淡神秘的冥王星引起科学家关注
14. Disaster Conference Risks Polarization Over Role of Climate Change 440 各国在灾难会议上因气候变化而承担的角色产生争执
15. Disease Threat Grows with Aceh Rains 442 暴雨引起疾病威胁
16. Technology Designed to Help Persons with Disabilities 444 为残疾人设计的科技产品
17. High Technology Helps Low Budget Filmmakers 447 用高科技拍出低预算电影
18. HIV Vaccine Research 449 艾滋病疫苗研究
19. Huygens Spacecraft Arrives at Saturn Moon 452 “慧更斯”号抵达土星卫星
20. UN Says Environment of Indian Ocean Islands Degraded 454 联合国称印度洋岛屿的环境恶化
21. Kyoto Protocol Takes Effect 456 《京都议定书》生效
22. Marburg Virus Outbreak Spreads to Angolan Capital 459 马尔堡病毒延伸至安哥拉首都
23. Cholera Outbreak Hits Senegal, Other Countries 461 霍乱在塞内加尔等国家爆发
24. Massage Helps Cancer Patients Cope 463 按摩帮助癌症病人对抗病魔
25. Meningitis Breaks Out in Northern Ivory Coast 466 象牙海岸北部爆发脑膜炎
26. UN Report Links Infectious Disease Outbreak in Congo to Environment 468 联合国报道称刚果流行病爆发与环境有关

27. Non-Government Groups Launch Safe Water Campaign 470 非政府组织发起保护洁净水活动
28. Red Cross Report: Unsafe Water Kills Millions 472 红十字协会称不洁净的水威胁数百万人的生命
29. Security Officials on Guard for Bio-Terrorism 474 安全官员警惕生物恐怖主义
30. Scientists Extract Soft Tissue from 68-Million-Year-Old Dinosaur Bone 476 科学家从 6 千 8 百万年之久的恐龙骨中提取软组织
31. Scientists Measure Ocean Health by Its Color 479 科学家根据海洋的颜色测量其健康度
32. Scientists Say Fast Food Heightens Risk of Diabetes 482 科学家称速食品使糖尿病机率增加
33. Scientists Seek Earthquake Warning Signs for Short-Term Alerts 484 科学家通过短期预警寻求地震警报信号
34. Twin US Robot Rovers Keep Rolling on Mars One Year after Landing 487 美一对太空机器漫游者登陆火星一年之后仍在工作
35. UN Approves Non-Binding Resolution on Cloning 491 联合国通过了禁止克隆的一项非强制性决议
36. US Astronomer Proposes 364-Day Calendar 494 美天文学家提出一年为 364 天的历法
37. US Government Asks Americans to Eat Less, Exercise More 496 美政府呼吁美国人少吃多运动
38. US Sets Mercury Pollution Limits from Power Plants 498 美规定对发电厂进行汞污染限制
39. Water Becoming More Precious Than Oil in Arab World 501 在阿拉伯水比油更珍贵

40.WHO: Pneumonic Plague Kills at Least 60 in DR Congo 505 世卫组织宣布在刚果民主共和国肺炎造成至少 60 人死亡

41.Therapists Use Music as Powerful Medicine 507 临床医学家用音乐作为重要药方

Disaster of Tsunami 海啸灾难纪实 (7_tsu+.mp3)

1.Asian Disaster Relief Efforts Encounter Unparalleled Logistical Difficulties 511 亚洲灾难援助遭遇空前的后勤困难

2.UN Official Praises Wealthy Nations for Disaster Funds 514 联合国官员表扬发达国家对灾难的援助

3.Biggest Relief Operation in History Hopes to Reach Last Survivors Around Indian Ocean 516 史上最强救援行动希望能帮助到印度洋地区最后一个生还者

4.Reaching Tsunami Victims with Life-saving Aid 519 救生援助到达海啸受灾区域

5.Debt Moratorium Proposed for Asian Countries Devastated by Tsunami 521 七国集团提议让海啸受灾国延期偿付债款

6.Aid Workers Race Against the Clock 523 援助工作争分夺秒

7.Bush Boosts Tsunami Aid to \$ 350 Million 525 布什将赈灾捐款提高到三亿五千万美金

8.Focus Turns to Housing Millions Left Homeless by Tsunami 527 工作重点转向为受灾民众提供住所

9.Many Tsunami Disaster Zones Wait for Relief Supplies 529 众多海啸灾区等待提供救济

10.Ships, Planes from Several Nations Deliver Aid to Tsunami Victims 531 各国船只，飞机向海啸灾民提供援助

- 11.Struggle Continues for Thais in Tsunami-Hit Regions 533 泰国遭海啸侵袭地区继续努力重建家园
- 12.WHO Says Disease is Biggest Threat for Tsunami Survivors 535 世卫组织称疾病是海啸幸存者最重大的威胁
- 13.Students in Sri Lanka Attempt Return to Normalcy 537 斯里兰卡学生尝试恢复照常上课
- 14.UN Raises Record Aid Amounts for Tsunami Victims 539 联合国增加对海啸受难者的援助
- 15.UNICEF Focuses Efforts on Tsunami Child Survivors 541 联合国儿童基金会致力于营救儿童生还者
- 16.Aid Reaching Tsunami Survivors in Indonesia 3 Weeks after Disaster, Bodies Still Being Found 543 救济物资送达印尼生还者，海啸后三周仍在不断发现尸体
- 17.Indonesia: No Deadline for Foreign Troops Helping Tsunami Victims to Leave 546 印尼：外国军队帮助海啸受难者脱离困境没有最终期限
- 18.Acehnese Try to Build a Life on Shattered Dreams 548 亚齐人民挣脱恶梦重建家园
- 19.Tsunami Responsible for Over One Million Lost Jobs 551 受海啸影响，超过一百万人失业
- 20.Main Aceh Hospital Struggling Along One Month After Tsunami 553 亚齐主要医院在海啸发生一个月以来竭力抢救生还者
- 21.Child Victims of Asia's Devastating Tsunami Cope with Trauma 557 亚洲海啸受难的儿童逐渐从痛苦中恢复
- 22.Tsunami Survivors Try to Start a Life in Home Town 560 海啸幸存者试着在家乡开始新生活
- 23.IOM: Tsunami Victims Vulnerable to Traffickers 561 国际移民组织表示海啸受难者最易成为人口贩子的目标

- 24.Celebrities Raise Funds for Tsunami Victims 名人 为海啸受难者捐款 563
- 25.Expert Details Value of Tsunami Warning System 专家细说海啸警报系统的重要性 566
- 26.In Natural Disasters the Poor Are Hardest Hit 穷人是受自然灾害最严重的群体 569
- 27.Rebuilding Hambantota After the Tsunami 海啸后汉班托塔的重建 572
- 28.Somalia Cleans Up after the Tsunami 索马里着手进行海啸后的清理工作 574
- 29.Sir Lankans Look to Rebuild after Deadly Tsunami 斯里兰卡人渴望在海啸后重建家园 577
- 30.Top UN Official Vows of Asian Tsunami, 'Never Again' 联合国高级官员立誓亚洲海啸不会再出现 579

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6

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Environment
and
Technology
环境科学探索



Avian Flu Poses Ominous Threat to World, says US Health Official

A top U.S. health official says the country is preparing for the possibility of a deadly global **pandemic** of **avian flu**. The head of America's disease-tracking agency, the Centers for Disease Control, says avian flu poses an **ominous** threat to the world.

As the season for avian flu begins in Asia, the message Centers for Disease Control chief Julie Gerberding has brought to Washington this week is that her agency is very concerned about the virus.

She told the American Association for the Advancement of Science convention on Monday that the ailment is the biggest disease threat to the world. She said a highly infectious strain is circulating in chickens and ducks in Asia and could mix with human strains. The virus can jump directly from birds to people or can be **transmitted** through pigs.

On Tuesday at the National Press Club in Washington, Dr. Gerberding told journalists that her agency is taking **precautionary** measures to prevent a new strain from spreading in Asia and abroad.

Dr. Gerberding: There are more pigs, people, and poultry in that environment than we have ever seen before. That is the formula for emergence of new flu strains. We already know this particular strain of virus can infect people, we already know that it can occasionally move from person

注释

pandemic [pæn'demik] adj. 大范围流行的

avian flu 禽流感

ominous ['ɒminəs] adj. 恶兆的, 不吉利的

transmit [trænz'mit] vt. 传播

precautionary [pri'kɔ:ʃənəri] adj. 预防的 precautionary measure 防范措施

to person, and we know how these viruses evolve. So it is a worrisome situation and we are taking many steps to be as prepared as we can and to prevent the transmission of a new virus strain in the global arena.

The avian flu has a high mortality rate. About 72 percent of those infected die from it. It emerged in Hong Kong in 1997 and there is no immunity to the virus.

Dr. Gerberding says her agency is working with the World Health Organization (WHO) and national health ministries in Asia to expand the ability to detect the emergence and spread of a new avian flu strain. She says the Centers for Disease Control is preparing to have a sufficient stockpile of antiviral drugs to ship to any region where the disease is found and has ordered two million doses of a vaccine that would protect Americans against known avian flu strains.

The U.S. health official says she does not mean to imply an avian flu pandemic is **imminent**. She says it takes time to evolve and circulate. Such a situation occurred in 1918, when flu also passed from birds to people. However, it eventually killed more than 25 million people worldwide.

Dr. Gerberding: When avian virus evolved to form the 1918 flu strain that caused the global pandemic, It didn't happen overnight. It happens in a series of progressive steps where you'll see local outbreaks and the virus gradually evolves to become more efficiently transmitted from person to person. That's why the efforts that we're making to scale up and speed up the laboratory detection capabilities around the globe are so critically important to our effort.

Dr. Gerberding says the world needs to be shaken out of its **complacency** concerning avian flu virus.

David McAlary, VOA news, Washington.

注释

imminent ['iminənt] adj. 即将来临的, 逼近的

complacency [kəm'pleisənsi] n. 安心

Airport Security Screens Passengers Using New Technology

Checking baggage for **explosives** hasn't been a problem. Airport security can put bags in x-ray machines, open them up to look inside, or use advanced technology that can detect traces of chemicals often used in explosives.

But checking people's bodies is not so easy. A TSA initiative that began last September to **rigorously frisk** more people led to dozens of sexual **harassment** complaints. So TSA turned to technology installing what looks like a longer, more complex walk-through metal detectors in nine airports around the country.

Jose Ralls is the TSA director from McCarran International Airport in Las Vegas.

Jose Ralls: The machine actually will talk to the individual, tell them to stand inside and wait, and as soon as they are cleared, it will tell them to proceed.

From a distance, Mr. Ralls watches one airport passenger go through the process.

Jose Ralls: Now he knows to go on through, and he just waits, and as soon as the air is analyzed he will be allowed to proceed forward.

The machine blasts air downward and across the whoever inside the portal. Mr. Ralls says that often startles people.

注释

explosive [iks'pləʊsɪv] n. 爆炸物, 炸药

rigorously ['rɪɡərəs] adv. 严格的, 严厉的

frisk [frɪsk] n. 搜身

harassment ['hærəsmənt] n. 折磨

Jose Ralls: That is why our people are out there, to explain to them the noise that they will be hearing.

The way it's supposed to work is that suspicious particles on clothing and exposed skin are blasted toward the floor — where, within seven seconds, the machine can detect 40 types of explosives. If any are found, security is alerted.

According to the **manufacturer**, Smith Detection, the portals also have less than 1% error rate. Company vice president Mark Lastra says this technology is commonly used elsewhere.

Smith Detection: Mostly in highly controlled facilities, such as nuclear power plants and government buildings with high security needs.

Along with increasing security, the TSA hopes to cut down on passenger wait times. It is collecting data from the airports in the test phase to see if the machines are faster and more efficient than human inspectors.

The Transportation Security Administration plans to deploy five more of these portals elsewhere in the nation by late spring. Eventually it would like the explosive detectors to be as common as metal detectors.

I am Ky Plaskon in Las Vegas.

注释

manufacturer [ˌmænjuˈfæktʃərə] n. 厂商, 制造者

American Medical Geographer Studies 'The Why of Where'

Mention the profession “geographer” and most people think of traditional roles of **mapmakers**...or of explorers studying exotic cultures. But the scope of geography has expanded, forming hybrids with some very different fields.

When Lee De Cola teaches a class, he often brings of a projector filled with the images of dozens of colorful maps, showing how **Lyme Disease**, **West Nile Virus**, or some other malady has spread across the United States. Mr. De Cola is one of just a few hundred medical geographers in America, so it is not surprising that he draws puzzled looks from those who ask about his work.

Lee De Cola: When I meet people on an airplane, they say, ‘Medical geography, that sounds interesting...what’s that all about?’ All I have to do is tell them, ‘Have you seen a map about AIDS recently?’ They say, ‘Sure.’ That’s medical geography: the Why of Where. Everything happens somewhere, so when we map it, it becomes much more **illuminating** to see a map of something, instead of talking about it in the **abstract**.

Although medical geography became an official specialty area just a few decades ago, its roots may actually be traced to ancient times. Mr. De Cola says it all started with the Greek doctor Hippocrates, known for

注释

mapmaker ['mæp,meikər] n. 地图制作者, 制图师

Lyme [laim] 莱姆关节炎

West Nile Virus 西尼罗河病毒

illuminating [i'ljʊ:mi,neitiŋ] adj. 启蒙的

abstract ['æbstrækt] n. 摘要, 抽象

his **Hippocratic Oath**, which emphasizes “above all, do no harm.”

Lee De Cola: Many of the **phenomena** we now call geography influenced people's health. The quality of the water, the **atmosphere**, what lifestyles people had, what they ate, what health they had was determined by geographic phenomena. Here was a scholar writing 2,000 years ago about the very same issues we're talking about today.

In the mid-19th century, British doctor John Snow used principles medical geography to locate the source of a **cholera epidemic** in London, as Mr. De Cola explains.

Lee De Cola: He showed a map of cases of cholera clustered around a pump that led him to suspect that it was the pump itself that was the source of polluted water that was giving people cases of cholera. That was medical geography. He actually created what we now would call a 'geographic information system.'

In the 1930s, a group of dental geographers in Colorado found the connection between children drinking naturally **fluoridated** water and having fewer **dental cavities**. Mr. De Cola says the crossover has spurred more cooperation between geographers and such health organizations as the Centers for Disease Control.

Lee De Cola: The **collaboration** is really growing and it's in its very early stages. I was down at CDC last year and realized that not only could we take information about diseases and make maps of it, but we can turn that process around and start asking spatial questions and even using

注释

Hippocratic Oath 希波克拉底誓言，即新开业医生所立之誓约

phenomena [fi'nɒmɪnə] n. 现象

atmosphere ['ætməsfiə] n. 大气，空气

cholera epidemic 霍乱流行

fluoridate ['flu:ərideɪt] v. 在饮水中加少量氟

dental cavity 蛀牙

collaboration [kə,læbə'reɪʃən] n. 协作，通敌

spatial information to help organize the information itself.

Thus, Lee De Cola and other medical geographers are combining a variety of social, economic and environmental data with the source and spread of disease.

Lee De Cola: You're collecting information on certain kinds of reports to doctors, **pharmaceutical** purchases, certain kinds of environmental measurements that are unusual. Putting all these things together, we [ask], 'Is there something unusual going on here? Is it an outbreak of a mosquito-borne disease? A bio-terrorism event? An oil spill here?' Or something like that.

In the future, Mr. De Cola says medical geography will continue as an important part of medical research — which, itself, will experience fast growth.

Lee De Cola: **Bio-medicine** is an exploding field. The American economy devoted over a **trillion** dollars to personal and public health expenditures. That number is increasing much more rapidly than the economy as a whole.

注释

pharmaceutical [ˌfɑːmə'sjuːtɪkəl] n. 药物

Bio-medicine 生物医学

trillion ['trɪljən] num. 万亿

Laser Technology to be Used to Warn Straying Pilots

In September 2004, a Delta pilot claimed a laser beam injured him as he was about to land his jet in **Salt Lake City**. Then similar incidents followed in New Jersey, Oregon and other states.

Since last November, more than a hundred such laser incidents have been reported by pilots. All of the flights landed safely, but federal officials worried the intense lights could distract, **disorient** or even temporarily blind a pilot, according to **ophthalmology** expert Bowles Hamill:

Bowles Hamill: The **retina** in the back of the eye can actually become burned, thermally burned from these lasers.

Now the Air Force is planning to use lasers to warn planes once they **strayed** the restricted air space over Washington D.C.

But Air Force official Ed Daniel assures the new laser is different than



注释

Salt Lake City 盐湖城

disorient [dis'ɔ:rient] vt. 使失去方向感，使迷惑

ophthalmology [ɔ'fθæl'mɒlədʒi] n. 眼科学

retina ['retinə] n. 视网膜

stray [streɪ] v. 迷路，偏离