

Would you believe?.....

If you're a smoker, there could be a cocoa bean or a marigold leaf in your future.

The big tobacco companies say they're not too worried, but it looks like non-tobacco cigarettes could be headed for a comeback.

A few years back, a Texas company tried to get a lettuce-leaf blend off the ground. No luck. Smokers couldn't take the taste, and the product bombed. But now a second generation of imitation smokes is poised for a big marketing push. The nicotine-free alternatives get some big breaks right from the start -- those heavy tobacco taxes don't apply, and neither do the advertising restrictions that now keep cigarette ads off TV and Radio. The only people might not get a break on the deal are smokers. A 1974 report published by the AMA suggests that non-tobacco tars could be just as bad for your lungs as conventional cigarettes. (News-crypt)

Business Week (Magazine) is warning its readers that over-the-counter cold remedies may actually do more harm than good. Those non-prescription drugs may help you stumble to work for a couple of days. But the magazine says that trying to carry a full load when you're sick, can make you sicker.

Decongestants can increase congestion. And cough medicine can do the same. Some decongestants irritate the linings of the nose and throat, making them more vulnerable to infection. And some decongestants make one restless and irritable, making rest and sleep more difficult.

Antihistamines can cause water retention -- yet another way to prolong infection. And if used too long, antihistamines can reduce the white-blood-cell count, greatly increasing one's susceptibility to colds, flu and other ills. (News-crypt)

For years now, it's been known that marijuana can be effective in treating certain diseases, such as Glaucoma. But it's been almost impossible to use marijuana as a medicine because it's illegal.

Recently, however, the Eli Lilly Pharmaceutical firm developed a chemical substitute for THC, the active ingredient in pot, called Nabilone (PRON: Nab-ih-lone). Although the synthetic pot is more expensive and difficult to make, it will probably be used to treat Glaucoma, because it's not illegal -- and supposedly does not cause patients to get high.

Now, however, High Times (Magazine) has learned that Nabilone does produce euphoria. The magazine spoke with Dr. Paul Stark, head of the Lilly cannabis research unit, who admitted that large doses of Nabilone have produced a high. He also said it caused low blood sugar in some subjects.

Consequently, High Times is calling Nabilone another "methadone-type sham." Although Nabilone has the same effect as natural weed, it's preferred because the synthetic drug creates higher profits for the drug companies and is more politically acceptable to the anti-marijuana lobby. (News-crypt)

We've all heard warnings about stress over the last few years. It can give you ulcers, weaken your heart, even put a damper on your love life. Now a University of Wisconsin researcher says it can also ruin your chance to live to a ripe old age.

Dr. Robert Samp's latest project started out as cancer research. Then Samp began to get interested in some of the people he was interviewing -- those lucky types who live into their 90's with hardly a health problem to speak of. Samp started to compare the happy oldsters in an effort to find their secret -- and decided it was all in their attitude. They all had an easy going, level-headed approach to life and tended to value families and friendships far more than career goals. Notably absent from the group were "hotshot business types."

Samp is already taking his own advice -- he's cut his own work week from six-and-a-half days to five. (News-crypt)

Looking to buy a stately old mansion? Well, we know where you can buy a famous one for only a hundred thousand bucks.

It's the "Amityville Horror House," located on Long Island. Last year, a best selling book (The Amityville Horror) told how the mansion was haunted by ghosts, devils and a demonic green slime. The current residents, Jim and Barbara Cromarty, insist that the house is not haunted. In fact, Jim says "the only spirits in (his) house are Johnny Walker Red."

But the Cromartys are fed up with the people who come to see the ghosts. They say as many as a thousand cars show up every weekend, and some of the visitors have been anything but polite. One even threw a dead cat on the lawn.

And now that a movie version of the "Amityville Horror" will soon be released, the Cromartys are afraid that the number of unwanted guests will increase. So they're selling the home for a hundred thousand.

They may come out ahead in the long run, though. The Cromartys only paid 55-thousand for the house and they're awaiting a decision on a million dollar plus lawsuit they've filed against the book's publisher. (News-crypt)

Have you ever been in a situation where you wanted to watch two television shows at once? Well, starting this year, you'll be able to do just that.

A Japanese firm is planning to market the first TV that broadcasts two channels on one screen. The dual TV set will be capable of superimposing a four-inch, black and white picture on the corner of a 17-inch color screen. The first sets will be available in March.

The same firm is also planning to introduce a microwave oven that cooks by computer. It comes with magnetized cards that can be programmed to cook a dish according to a specific recipe. (News-crypt)

The teen drinking problem is more widespread than you might think.

The Department of Health, Education and Welfare estimates that there are three and a half million teen-age alcoholics in America today. And two New York high school surveys show that more teens are drinking than ever before.

One informal high school survey found only two students out of 108 who said they didn't imbibe, and five said they drank "whenever (they) could." Another study conducted by students at King's Park high school found that 90 percent of the student body drank, while 60 percent averaged one or two cocktails a week.

But there's one bright note. One of the surveys found that "if parents set a good example . . . the child is likely to develop responsible alcohol consumption habits." (News-crypt)

A single, mutant gene now appears to play a significant role in causing the severe mental depression that can precede suicide. Severe depression is suffered by an estimated one percent of the population, or more than two million Americans.

Dr. David Comings of the City of Hope Medical Center analyzed brain tissues from 42 persons who took their own lives following severe depression. He found that 60 percent had a brain protein apparently caused by a mutant gene. Only about 30 percent of the general population carries that gene.

The discovery has no immediate application for diagnosis or treatment, since at present the protein can only be found through an autopsy. But there is hope that future developments will allow it to be detected in serum or spinal fluid, and then treated with drugs.

Addison Steele has just written a fascinating new book, called "How to Win the Rat Race Without Becoming a Rat."

It's chocked full of tips on how to survive in the world of business. And one of Addison's most startling tips is -- don't act like you're TOO intelligent.

Intelligence, according to Steele is not a quality that's regarded in business executives. Instead, they should have drive, ambition, energy, and self-confidence. But most importantly, Steele says executives should never have the kind of intelligence that asks such questions as, "Am I happy?" or "Does my job have meaning?" Of course, Steele admits that executives have to possess a certain amount of intelligence to conduct business. But he says if they become too smart, they'll probably drop out and raise vegetables in Vermont. (News-crypt)

CIA documents obtained in a Freedom of Information suit by a UFO group show that the Agency has been secretly studying unidentified flying objects since 1949-despite its continued statements to the contrary. William Spaulding, an aerospace engineer and head of the group, Ground Saucer Watch says after "reviewing the situation Ground Saucer Watch believes that UFO's do exist, they are real, the US government has been totally untruthful and the coverup is massive." The documents indicate that the CIA ostensibly wanted to avoid exciting the press and public's "probbaly alarmist tendency".

The documents indicate, however that the Air Force tried to intercept and even destroy UFO'S. One of the detailed CIA accounts tells how a US F-4 Phantom jet over Iran attempted to fire an AIM-9 missile at a small craft associated with a mother ship. The report states, "But at that instant his weapons-control panel went off and he lost all communications. Then the pilot saw the small craft rejoin the larger ship. The group is now awaiting a final court ruling which could provide access to 57 items of "hard evidence" such as film and residue from landings.

Why do you eat the foods you do? Because they taste good? An expert taste researcher says that many factors we're unaware of affect our taste in foods.

Howard Moskowitz, scientist and food designer says advertising is one of them. Moskowitz gave test panels that they believed were six different chocolates. Three bore brand names. The other three samples were the same, minus the labels.

When rated for taste, consistency, sweetness, quality and crunchiness, the labeled Nestle Chocolate earned 55 points out of a possible 141. The unlabeled Nestle earned just 31. Moskowitz said this and other studies show that "putting a label on a food can actually change the taste of the item." And he says "it tells companies like Nestle that their advertising, or their image, is better than their product." (News-crypt) (Moskowitz is director of MPI Sensory Testing in Manhattan.)

New West (Magazine) has learned that the Reverend Sun Muying Moon's Unification Church has been instructing its faithful in suicide methods in response to threats to his cult posed by deprogrammers.

In his long, rambling speeches to his followers Moon has suggested they die for the Unification Church. "Without me," he says, "everything on earth will be nullified. So, who would you want to die, me or you?" And his faithful have shouted back, "Us!"

Many ex-Moonies have told New West they were given detailed anatomy lessons on where to cut with the razor if the time came. One explained that if possible, they were to make it look as if a deprogrammer had murdered them.

The magazine says that until now, Moon's church has been protected by the First Amendment -- but the suicide counselling may nullify that protection. (News-crypt)

Driving on Los Angeles' freeways is never a breeze, even under the best of conditions. But anyone venturing onto the Golden State Freeway next week would be well advised to keep their wits about them.

For next week, someone calling himself Klymax the Psychic Wizard is determined to qualify for the Guinness Book of World Records. Here's what his press release says he will do: he will drive "north on the Golden State Freeway, . . . blindfolded, with silver dollars embedded in his eyes, a hood covering his head, and handcuffed to the steering wheel, at the speed of 55 miles per hour, escaping danger with the forces of psychic energy to guide him." Well at least he's adhering to the speed limit. (News-crypt)

Thanks to a bungled extortion plot, the Justice Department has now acquired a topless bar. William Sibert, a former Department of Transportation employee apparently ripped off that department for some \$856,000 (dollars), but by the time he was arrested in Las Vegas, federal prosecutors could only come up with \$159,000 (dollars). Where's the rest of the loot?

Well, Sibert spent a lot of it on 14 cars, a house with a swimming pool, a separate houseboat, substantial amounts of stock in International Telephone and Telegraph, and \$80,000 (dollars) to buy the Lone Star Beef House -- a topless bar around the corner from the FBI.

Eventually the Justice Department hopes to sell the bar at a public auction to recoup the ripoff. In the meantime, it will run the Lone Star Beef House as profitably as possible, keeping an eye on -- as one of the auditors phrased it -- the, uh, assets." (News-crypt)

