

been doing them." The telecommunications industry's growing reliance on satellite technology, however, has radio astronomers worried about future safeguarding of radio observations in many frequency bands.

Turn that dissertation into cash: The Merrill Lynch Forum, a think tank operated by the investment banking firm, is looking for PhD research with commercial appeal. Through its Innovation Grants Competition, now in its second year, the forum aims "to harness the vast, unrealized potential of academic research and discovery" and to encourage "entrepreneurial literacy" among academic researchers, according to Merrill Lynch CEO David H. Komansky. The top prize of \$50 000 will go to the doctoral recipient who can best explain, in 3000 words or less, the market potential of his or her dissertation topic; two second prizes of \$20 000 and two third prizes of \$10 000 will also be awarded. The winners will get to discuss their ideas with entrepreneurs and venture capitalists. First among last year's 200 competitors was J. Mark Noworolski, a postdoc at the University of California, Berkeley, whose work on microresonant power conversion devices could lead to a single-chip power converter for laptops, cellular phones, and other portable electronics. The competition is open to people who successfully defended their

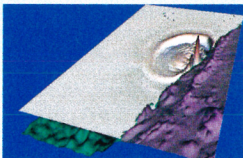
dissertations between 1 January 1997 and 15 September of this year. The deadline for entries is 15 September. How to contact the Merrill Lynch Forum: phone 888-333-6786, e-mail InnovationGrants@ml.com, Web <http://www.ml.com/woml/forum/>.

On 3 June, Switzerland's supreme court ruled in favor of the American Institute of Physics and the American Physical Society in a suit brought by the Gordon & Breach Publishing Group (see PHYSICS TODAY, October 1997, page 93). G&B had claimed that AIP and APS had engaged in unfair competition by publishing articles in this magazine and in the *Bulletin of the American Physical Society* that reported on the comparative costs to US libraries of various physics journals. The articles, written by the late Henry Barschall and published in 1988, found G&B's journals to be among the most expensive. The Swiss court required G&B to pay AIP and APS about \$13 000. But the real significance of the judgment, says the organizations' lawyer Richard Meserve, a partner with Covington & Burling in Washington, DC, "is that it allows the publication of scholarly information even if it is alleged to have a commercial component." AIP and APS earlier prevailed in similar cases in the US and Germany; the Swiss ruling leaves only one case pending, in France. ■

Web Watch

<http://walrus.wr.usgs.gov/tsunami/PNG.html>

Last year, the most devastating and deadly tsunami of the past two decades hit Papua New Guinea's northern coast. As part of its effort to understand the phenomenon, the US Geological Survey has created a Descriptive Model of the July 17, 1998 Papua New Guinea Tsunami, and the Web site includes an animation of the evolution of the event.

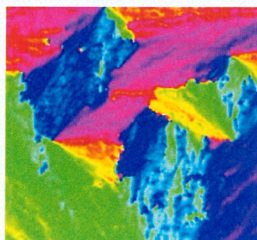


<http://www.towson.edu/~sweeting/wg/candywww.htm>

Scientific Experiments at Home: Wintergreen Candy and Other Triboluminescent Materials is an educational Web site devised by Towson University's Linda Sweeting. Triboluminescence happens when certain crystals are crushed, causing the charged, separated surfaces to emit photons. Sweeting explains how to observe the phenomenon, and discusses its properties and origin.

<http://milou.msc.cornell.edu/pattern.html>

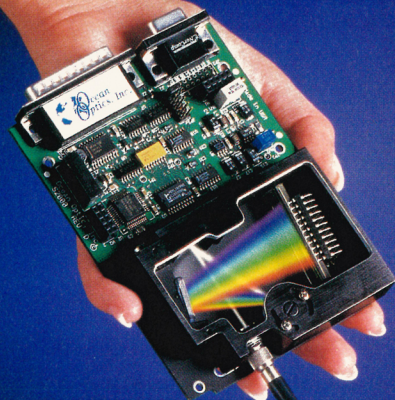
The dynamics of giant spirals in Rayleigh-Bénard convection is the featured subject of **Pattern Formation**, an animated Web page put together by the nonlinear dynamics and fluid dynamics group at Cornell University's Laboratory of Atomic and Solid State Physics.



To suggest topics or sites for Web Watch, please contact ptwww@aip.org by e-mail.

Compiled by CHARLES DAY

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