Cycles

**Peak month for accidents in the United States is August. Their numbers drop off with autumn. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**One variety of bamboo, Phyllostachys bambusoides, was recorded to have flowered in the year 999 A.D. in China. Since that time, it has continued to flower and set seed every 120 years. It follows this cycle wherever it lives; plants of the same species flower simultaneously no matter where they have been transplanted. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 179)***

**Our bodies may prefer to run on a 25-hour day. Researchers who went into caves to study human biological clocks found the 24-hour day was an hour short of perfect. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**It’s mostly between midnight and 8 a.m. that your body secretes a substance to fight cold viruses. Doesn’t turn out much of it between noon and 6 p.m. This leads researchers at the University of California School of Medicine to believe afternoons are when you’re most likely to catch colds. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature -- the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter. *(Rachel Carson, scientist and author)***

**A recent study of 30 cancer patients at the University of Minnesota shows that two powerful cancer-fighting drugs are less toxic if taken at certain times of day: Adriamycin does less harm to blood cells at 6 a.m., and cisplatin produces less nausea at 6 p.m. Also, in animal tests, each drug seems to be most effective at the hour when it is least toxic. The reason for the differences, says Minnesota’s Dr. William Hrushesky, is circadian rhythms – the changes that occur regularly during a 24-hour period in such body measurements as temperature, blood-cell counts and cell division. Researchers suspect that since many cancer drugs attack dividing cells, the drugs might work best and with fewest side effects if given when cancer cells are actively reproducing and healthy cells are resting. At a recent meeting of the American Cancer Society, Hrushesky predicted that such biological clockwork will eventually be proved to influence the safety and effectiveness of all drugs, from penicillin to birth-control pills. *(Discover magazine, 1981)***

**An outfit in Irvine, California, is counting all the things that come around again. Scholars at the Foundation for the Study of Cycles say, for example, that the solar system’s planets get back into exactly the same configuration every 93,408 years. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**It is much more dignified to say we’re moving in cycles rather than running around in circles. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Understand the earth rotates on its axis faster in September than it does in March. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Most girls 11 to 13 are none too confident about their looks, doubting they’re attractive enough to keep up with boys that age. Then about age 14 the girls discover their new allure and many become downright intoxicated over it. Or so contends a psychology scholar who studied 1,000 teems for 10 years. *(L. M. Boyd)***

Scientists have long debated what causes glacial cycles, which have occurred most recently at intervals of about 100,000 years. A study reported in a recent issue of the journal Nature found that variations in the tilt of Earth’s axis causes glacial cycles. Researchers at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and MIT developed a model to look at the effects of changes in Earth’s tilt, which determines climate belts around the planet and the seasons of the year. They found that ice ages end near times when the Earth’s tilt is large, although some ice ages continue through multiple tilt cycles. Obliquity, the angle between Earth’s equatorial and orbital planes or the tilt in Earth’s axis, varies between 22.5 and 24 degrees during a cycle of 41,000 years. As the tilt increases, so does the annual average sunlight reaching high latitudes, which can end ice ages. Earth’s tilt is currently 23.5 degrees and decreasing. Without human influences on climate, Earth probably would be slowly moving toward an ice age, the researchers say. *(Todd Neff, in Daily Camera, April 8, 2005)*

**The rhythmic rise of the grasshopper population is every 9 years 6 months. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Hair grows, rests and falls out. Findings of a five-year study indicate November is the month when it tends to fall out at the most rapid rate. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**There is no present or future. Only the past happening over and over again. *(Eugene O’Neill)***

**History should be allowed to repeat itself if it wants to, but with the bad parts removed. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot Shots)***

**Today the focus is on AIDS. Tomorrow attention may shift to influenza, a mutating and cyclical curse which could again turn killer. *(Stephen J. Leonard, in Rocky Mountain News, January 29, 1992)***

**A jackrabbit perambulating over grassland at every sixth stride leaps a bit higher to look around. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**How come leprosy, once epidemic in Europe, got to be relatively rare? Nobody knows. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**If you buy recent conclusions of researchers, 7 to 11 a.m. could be the best time of day to make decisions because that’s when you’re least likely to be depressed or anxious. They think you’re most apt to be depressed or anxious between 3 and 8 p.m. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Don’t dispose of me permanently – someday I may come back into fashion. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot Shots)***

**The U.S. last year had its worst year for measles since 1996. The 222 measles cases were a big jump from the usual 60 or so per year, and 86 percent occurred in people who weren’t vaccinated against the illness – including 50 children whose parents got exemptions from school vaccinations. *(The Washington Post, as it appeared in The Week magazine, May 4, 2012)***

**April is traditionally the worst month for measles. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Mumps makes a return: Until last winter, mumps was largely a forgotten disease, says The New York Times. Many in the youngest generation of Americans have never even seen mumps’ characteristic swollen lymph glands, because of the introduction of the standard measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) childhood vaccine in 1967. Most years, fewer than 300 cases of the vital infection develop in the United States, because mumps is prevented in 80 percent of those who receive the initial vaccine in childhood, and in 90 percent of those who get the recommended booster shot a few years later. But this year has seen an unprecedented outbreak of the disease since MMR’s introduction – as many as 1,000 people spread across eight Midwestern states have come down with mumps. The outbreak has surprised scientists at the national Centers of Disease Control. “We have absolutely no information to suggest that there’s a problem with the vaccine,” says Dr. Julie Gerberding. Their theory is that mumps has squeezed through a hole in the vaccination program – college students. Many young people aren’t getting their MMR boosters, and can easily spread the virus in dorms. When Chase Hardin, 19, an Iowa University freshman, first noticed symptoms, he was mystified. “It looked like someone had stuck an orange in the side of my neck,” he says. “I had no clue I could get that. I thought it was something of the past.” *(The Week magazine, May5, 2006)***

**Most tormented time of day for those withdrawing from nicotine is said to be around 7 p.m. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Neither periods of economic prosperity, nor depressions nor recessions have any influence or dominion in the life of a truth student. *(Harlan M. Oyer, in Spirit magazine)***

**Planets in our solar system are assembled in a certain configuration today. They will not be in the same configuration again for 93,408 years. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**RETURN OF RHEUMATIC FEVER: Recent outbreaks of rheumatic fever have health officials worried. In the last 2 ½ years, physicians at Primary Children’s Medical Center in Salt Lake City have seen over 120 children with the disease; they used to see six a year. Sudden upswings have also been reported in Pittsburgh, Dallas, Denver, and in Akron and Columbus, Ohio. Epidemiologists say it is too early to know whether these cases are the harbingers of an epidemic of a disease that had virtually vanished in this country by the early 1970s. “In developing countries, it is still a major problem. Up to half its victims suffer permanent – sometimes fatal -- heart damage.” *(Joanne Silberner, in U.S. News & World Report, 1988)***

**Whether you’re close to your brothers and sisters, if any, depends a lot on your age. Siblings tend to go their separate ways in their middle years. But they usually get together again later, if they can. After a 20-year study, researchers conclude that’s the common pattern. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Scientists used to assume that our sun shines with unwavering brightness. But satellite measurements have confirmed that the sun turns its thermostat up and down – based on the 11-year cycle of magnetic “sunspots.” The more spots, the brighter the sun *(Lowell Ponte, in Reader’s Digest)***

**At my grandparents’ 50th wedding anniversary, I was looking through a photo album of their marriage ceremony. “Grandma, so many of these styles have come back over the years,” I commented. Grandma never hesitated. “That’s why I’ve kept Grandpa all this time,” she said. “I know he’ll be back in style again one of these days.” *(Nan Graham, in Reader’s Digest)***

**One hundred swallows, greeted by thousands of tourists, returned for the 211th year yesterday to Mission San Juan Capistrano. The fork-tailed cliff swallows returned here at 8:26 a.m. on the Roman Catholic Feast of Saint Joseph and the last day of winter, but 94 of them slipped past tourists gathered at the Spanish-built mission. “They headed directly to their eaves in the back of the mission, which is off limits to tourists,” said Mary Susa, a tour volunteer. Six cliff swallows fluttered over the mission for about 30 minutes before 91-year-old bell-ringer Paul Arbiso set his mission carillon pealing. *(Rocky Mountain News, March 20, 1987)***

**Thunderstorms worldwide peak the second day after the full moon. Meteorological records from 108 weather stations over 25 years prove that. But experts don’t know why. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**The air has tides that behave just like ocean tides. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Time of day most tornadoes occur is from 5 to 6 p.m. Fewest occur 5 to 6 a.m. *(L. M. Boyd)***

Traffic statisticians say the accident rate of 75-year-old drivers is just about the same as that of 16-year-old drivers. *(L. M. Boyd)*

The World Health Organization is concerned about drug-resistant tuberculosis showing up in ever increasing numbers. 300,000: new cases per year of multiple-drug-resistant TB around the world. 79% of the cases now show resistance to three or more drugs. Problem areas include Kazakhstan, Israel, Tomsk Oblast in the Russian Federation, Estonia, Lithuania, Ecuador, and several provinces in China. *(Associated Press, as it appeared in Rocky Mountain News, March 16, 2004)*

**Young audiophiles are rediscovering vinyl records, which they deem to have better sound quality than CDs and MP3 players. Artists such as Elvis Costello and Radiohead, are releasing albums on vinyl, and sales of turntables have spiked 500 percent every year for the past four years. *(The Boston Globe, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 13, 2008)***

**If speed is what you need on a job, do it after lunch. That’s when you’re swiftest. But if accuracy is what you need, do it after breakfast. That’s when you’re best at detail. Or so contends an efficiency expert. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***