

FOX 55/27 Illinois Springfield, Illinois

Sex offenders must register with colleges according to new law

Originally printed at <http://www.foxillinois.com/news/local/Sex-offenders-must-register-with-colleges-they-attend-according-to-new-law-136427428.html>

December 30, 2011

Sex offenders must register with institutions of higher education if they attend or employed there according to a new state law beginning January 1. Story by

[Newschannel 20.](#)

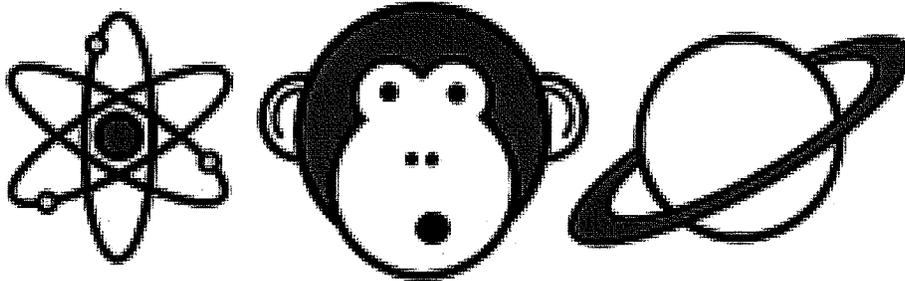
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Published on WBEZ (<http://www.wbez.org>)

Clever Apes: Top 5 Chicago science stories of 2011

Gabriel Spitzer December 28, 2011

WBEZ91.5 CLEVER APES



Here at Clever Apes, we're big proponents of giving the people what they want. First off, I have decided that they want a one-hour Clever Apes special, with our favorite segments from 2011 all gift-wrapped into one apey package. I have chosen to be overwhelmed by a groundswell of public pressure for such a special, and have therefore answered the call that (I would guess) has rung out loud and clear. Click the "listen" button above to hear.

Secondly, based on our web traffic, what the people want are Top 5 and year-end lists. So here are our nominations for the top 5 Chicago science stories of 2011:

5. Lab-grown neurons advance Alzheimer's research

A team at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine has figured out how to grow a type of neuron affected by Alzheimer's Disease. Basal forebrain cholinergic neurons are crucial to retrieving memories. Thanks largely to the determination of a grad student named Christopher Bissonette, scientists can now make these cells to order based on human embryonic stem cells, or even artificially made stem cells. This could

greatly speed up the testing of drug candidates, and could someday open up the possibility of transplanting healthy neurons into the stricken brain of an Alzheimer's patient.

4. New artifacts rewrite the history of human settlement in North America

A major find in central Texas has largely overturned the long-dominant theory of when humans arrived in North America. For years, archaeologists believed that the first North Americans were the Clovis people, who showed up around 13,000 years ago. Cracks had been appearing in that theory, and the latest excavation may spell its end. The newly dated artifacts appear to be 15,000 years old. That insight comes partly from the lab of University of Illinois at Chicago professor Steven Forman. He uses a technique called luminescence dating, which calculates when the last time deeply buried object was exposed to sunlight.

3. Satellite discovers new worlds

The Kepler satellite mission has had a huge year. To date it identified about 2,326 planets outside of our solar system, known as exoplanets. Recently it found the first known planet in the "habitable zone," meaning it sits in a region where liquid water could exist. It also found the first known earth-sized planets, and earlier this year, a batch of multiple-planet solar systems, including one with six planets. Batavia-based astrophysicist Jason Steffen is part of the Kepler team, and did much of the computational work behind the finds. It has also, coincidentally, been a big year for Steffen, who got much attention for experimental results supporting his theory on the best way to board an airplane.

2. Chicago River gets less icky

The Chicago River, long relegated to glorified sewage ditch, is poised to get a lot less disgusting. The water reclamation district, under pressure from state and federal environmental regulators, has agreed to start disinfecting the effluent that makes up most of the river system's water. That represents a big about-face for the agency and a victory for environmentalists and river users (though the cost to homeowners, who will finance much of the project, remains a big question mark). The agency also recently agreed to curb discharges of raw sewage into the river by committing to a timetable for completing the deep tunnel and reservoir project and beefing up green infrastructure. It will still be years before you can swim in the river without a Purell bath afterwards, but this year clearly marked a basic shift in how the region thinks about its waterways.

1. The passing of the Tevatron

For decades, Fermilab's big particle collider kept the Chicago area (and the United States) at the frontier of high-energy physics. Finally, this year, scientists pulled the plug on one of the most remarkable machines ever constructed. The Tevatron gave scientists a clear look at the top quark, a fundamental building block of matter that had long eluded detection. It yielded a trove of insights into how the tiniest particles behave, pushed forward the search for the mysterious Higgs Boson, advanced superconducting technology and seeded its eventual usurper, the Large Hadron Collider. There's lots more cutting-edge research unfolding at Fermilab, but its longtime crown jewel is now an artifact on the prairie.

There you have it, 2011. Clever Apes will be back next year with lots more from the fascinating, odd and deeply human world of Chicago-area science. As always, don't forget to subscribe to our [podcast](#), follow us on [Twitter](#), and find us on [Facebook](#).

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The New York Times

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December 28, 2011

Scheduling Partnership Links Pac-12 and Big Ten

By PETE THAMEL

In a time of instability and uncertainty on the college sports landscape, the Pacific-12 and the Big Ten announced an innovative scheduling agreement Wednesday that links the two conferences and shows they have no imminent plans for change.

Starting in 2017, each team from the Pac-12 and the Big Ten will play a team from the other conference in football each season, and the conferences will also begin to play each other extensively in other sports starting as soon as next season.

The Big Ten commissioner, Jim Delany, said the essential idea was to create some of the benefits of conference expansion — greater reach, increased brand recognition and more quality games — without actually expanding. Delany called Larry Scott, the Pac-12 commissioner, about the idea in the summer, and the plan crystallized through a series of meetings between athletic directors and university presidents. The last meeting was in New York earlier this month. The two conferences have their own television networks and share more than a century of history tied to the Rose Bowl.

“To me, this is a creative and inventive approach through collaboration to achieve some of the same objectives that expansion can help you with,” Scott said. “It gives our conference more of a national platform, more play on the Big Ten Network and higher quality programming on our network without having to expand.”

Scott and Delany said they would continue to monitor the landscape in regard to expansion. But they said the agreement was a sign they wanted to identify growth possibilities and value through ways that did not entail adding more teams.

The football possibilities of the agreement are tantalizing in an era in which early-season nonconference schedules often feature traditional powers playing inferior opponents. The Pac-12-Big Ten games will be created to match up programs of similar strength, meaning that marquee games like Ohio State versus Southern California, Wisconsin versus Stanford and Michigan versus Oregon could soon be seen early in the season.

Delany said the games would most likely be played in the second, third and fourth weeks of the season. Scott said they could be incorporated into events like season kickoff games.

Delany said the idea stemmed from a discussion he had with the former Illinois athletic director Ron Guenther during the realignment frenzy last summer. The agreement will also help fortify quality programming for the Big Ten Network and the Pac-12 Network, which is scheduled to debut in the summer.

“How can we think about this in a way that allows us to continue to create interesting and compelling games and enhance the fans’ experience and athletes’ experience and help our television partners and build our networks?” Delany said.

The scheduling agreement will go beyond football, with the conferences’ men’s and women’s basketball teams playing one another regularly starting next year. Other sports are beginning to evaluate how the agreement can be used to benefit them. In Olympic sports, for instance, Delany said that universities like Michigan or U.S.C. could host a showcase track meet that would feature aspiring Olympians from both conferences.

Delany also said the partnership in basketball could help the sport open its season more definitively, the way Major League Baseball does with its opening day. He suggested that the scheduling collaboration could give the leagues a chance to have a strong start to the season, be it through an exempted event or by playing a marquee game in an N.B.A. arena.

One significant adjustment the Big Ten will make is that it will not be going to a nine-game conference football schedule, as it had planned to do in 2017. Delany said the eight-game schedule works because it is balanced and each team has four games at home and four on the road. The Pac-12 will most likely stick with its nine-game schedule, but will discuss it further.

The collaboration could lead to the conferences creating bowl partnerships and postseason games that would be shown on their networks. Delany pointed out that ESPN and the NFL Network both run bowl games.

While Delany and Scott said the idea of starting a bowl game shown on their networks had not been formally discussed, both said they were open to the idea.

“I think it’s a conversation that anyone would see, and could see us having, and it wouldn’t be from out of left field,” Delany said.