

**AUDIO FILES ARE IN "OW 268" CLIPBOARD IN OUR WORLD / READY**

**SEGMENTS**

**MUSIC (Minidisc): Establish :08 and under**

Straight ahead on "Our World" ... A startling discovery in plant genetics ... seeing light from planets outside our solar system ... and the power of do-it-yourself genetic testing...

**DALET: TEASE - (:09)**

**IN      When women get cancer**  
**OUT    I want to be proactive and get it before it got me.**

DNA testing at home, our website of the week, and more. I'm Art Chimes.

Welcome to VOA's science and technology magazine, "Our World."

**MUSIC: Up to button**

A fascinating announcement this week from plant scientists at Purdue University in Indiana.

A research team led by Robert Pruitt has discovered a plant that ignored a mutation in its own DNA and somehow reached back to its ancestors to provide the correct genetic instructions for its offspring.

**PRUITT (:22)**

**IN        So what we've discovered**  
**OUT      anything we've seen before**

Arabidopsis is a mustard plant commonly used by scientists to study genetics. Dr. Pruitt and his colleagues studied arabidopsis plants that had a mutation which they should have passed on to the next generation.

**PRUITT (:11)**

**IN        we can show that**  
**OUT      inherited from an earlier ancestor**

Purdue's Robert Pruitt says this startling discovery, which is not fully understood, seems to disregard long-held understandings of genetics.

**PRUITT (:20)**

**IN        I think the other thing**  
**OUT      that sort of thing**

Obviously, though, this discovery is still a long way from any possibly application in treating diseases in plants or animals.

Astronomers have for the first time detected the light of two planets, hundreds of light years from Earth. The scientists say the sighting paves the way for the discovery of more earth-like planets outside our solar system. VOA's Jessica Berman reports.

**BERMAN (3:37)**

**IN: Since 1995, astronomers**  
**OUT (signed)**

Time again for Our World's Website of the Week. This time it's a kind of time machine that provides an Internet window -- make that 10 million windows -- on the past.

**LAMOLINARA (:11)**

**IN American Memory is a website**  
**OUT currently it has more than 10 million items.**

Guy Lamolinara is a spokesman for the Library of Congress, which has the world's largest collection of books, manuscripts, maps, film, audio recordings and so on. But until 1990 you normally had to visit the library here in Washington to use that material. Fifteen years ago, the Library of Congress began digitizing some of its materials. At first the plan was to distribute CD-ROMs to selected libraries. But when the Internet began to take off, around a decade ago, they saw the global

network as the way to make all this material even more widely available, with an emphasis on items unique to the Library of Congress.

**LAMOLINARA (:28)**

**IN     You're going to find**

**OUT    relating to the struggle for women's suffrage.**

The American Memory website also includes audio and video material, including one of the very earliest movies from 1894.

**LAMOLINARA (:16)**

**IN     One film is simply**

**OUT    their experiences were during the time of slavery.**

Mr. Lamolinara says the American Memory website gets 70-million hits a month from users including serious researchers, students and educators and what they call "lifelong learners" -- people who are just plain curious.

If you're curious, you can surf over to [memory.loc.gov](http://memory.loc.gov), and check it out, or you can get the link from our site, [voanews.com/ourworld](http://voanews.com/ourworld).

The map of the human genome was completed five years ago. That work has paved the way to new tests to diagnose human illness. Some of the tests, which indicate risk for diseases like cystic fibrosis and some forms of cancer, are part of

a growing market for do-it-yourself genetic tests. VOA's Rosanne Skirble has the story:

**SKIRBLE (3:32)**

**IN Alison - not her real name**

**OUT I'm Rosanne Skirble**

By the way, DNA Direct's home genetic tests are not cheap. Most of the tests are several hundred dollars, and one cancer test is over \$3,000.

**MUSIC (use in Post-prod) -- Old Funky Gene's (**

**WILDTRACK FOR POST-PROD VO** — You're listening to VOA's science and technology magazine, Our World. I'm Art Chimes in Washington.

A United Nations report issued this week says progress is being made in the fight against tuberculosis, but that in Africa the campaign against TB is losing ground.

Chris Dye wrote the "Global Tuberculosis Control" report, and he told reporters that TB rates have tripled since 1990 in countries where HIV is a major problem.

**DYE (:19)**

**IN Continent-wide in Africa**

**OUT TB in the world is continuing to increase.**

The WHO says about 1.7 million people died of tuberculosis in 2003, the most recent year with complete statistics.

Also this week, U.S. officials reported progress in fighting another disease. Most people would not consider rubella as big a threat as tuberculosis, but whenever a country wipes out a disease, it's an important public health achievement. And that's just what American officials announced this week, that rubella has now officially been eliminated from the United States. The announcement was made by Dr. Julie Gerberding, head of the government's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

**GERBERDING (:19)**

**IN For the last several years**  
**OUT are not as high as they are here in the U.S.**

Rubella has been a common and usually not very serious disease among children. But rubella can be disastrous when pregnant women are infected. It can result in birth defects, including blindness and mental retardation.

Cuba was the first country to eliminate the disease about a decade ago, and the United States has been working with other countries in the Americas on controlling rubella. Dr. Mirta Roses, regional director of the Pan American Health Organization, said the control of diseases like rubella has economic and development implications as well.

**ROSES (:19)**

**IN        This is also a very important**  
**OUT      of development, of improvement of their condition.**

Public health officials in the Western Hemisphere are making progress against the disease, with only about 1,600 rubella cases in the Americas last year. But the picture is bleaker in other developing countries, where the World Health Organization estimates there are 100,000 rubella cases each year.

The Pan American Health Organization is coordinating Vaccination Week in the Americas starting April 23. The program will focus on millions who are less likely to be vaccinated -- indigenous peoples, women of childbearing age, children in rural border areas, and the elderly. Health workers will be vaccinating against measles and polio, as well as rubella and other diseases.

Incidentally, rubella was first described in 1814 by medical researchers in Germany, which is why many people still call it "German Measles."

Finally today, Apple's hugely popular iPod portable music player has given a name to the hottest thing in audio -- podcasting. Think of podcasts as radio programs that are distributed over the Internet, and that you listen to on your computer or anywhere on your iPod or similar device. Fans of podcasting say it liberates them from the limitations of radio. VOAs Adam Phillips has more.

**PHILLIPS (4:30)**

**IN: Crop farmers in the United States**

**OUT: (SIGNED)**

**MINIDISC: Closing theme, estab for :08, then under**

That's our show for this week. If you've got a question about science, technology, health or the environment, we'd like to answer it. And we've got a VOA gift for you -- if we use your question on the program. Email us at [ourworld@voanews.com](mailto:ourworld@voanews.com). Ourworld is all one word. Or write us at -

Our World

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Our World is edited by Rob Sivak. Our technical director is Gary Spizler. And this is Art Chimes, inviting you to join us online at [voanews.com/ourworld](http://voanews.com/ourworld) or on your radio next Saturday and Sunday as we check out the latest in science and technology...in Our World.

**MUSIC: Theme up**