

It snowed a lot last week! I don't know if that is earlier than usual or later than usual, but I am not ready for it. I have winter tires for my bicycle, but I haven't put them on yet. They have spikes and the tires don't slip. They are incredibly good. Last winter, I only fell off my bicycle twice. The first time I stopped, put my foot down, and my foot slipped. The second time there was about 30cm of soft snow and I cycled into one of those concrete blocks you get in parking lots to stop cars hitting a wall. What do you think? How many times will I fall off this winter?

### Something You Didn't Know (Venice)

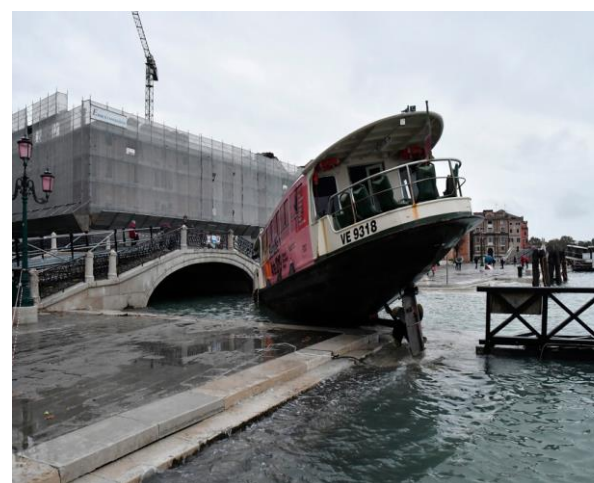
1. Venice is not on an island. In fact, it stretches across 117 islands. Some of them are manmade.
2. Venice is sinking by 2mm per year.
3. Venice was probably first built in 421 AD by Roman people running away from the Germanic tribes<sup>1</sup> that were sacking<sup>2</sup> Rome.
4. Until 1797, Venice was a separate and very powerful independent nation. It was very rich due to trade. In 1797, it was conquered<sup>3</sup> by Napoleon.
5. Venice is built on millions of logs<sup>4</sup> that were taken from Slovenia and Croatia.
6. The number of full-time residents has dropped from 120,000 to 50,000 because of the number of tourists and the skyrocketing<sup>5</sup> costs of living.



Never regret<sup>6</sup> a day in your life. Good days give you happiness and bad days give you experience.

### Venice Hit By Heavy Flooding

Last week, Venice was hit by terrible floods. The water rose to 187cm, the second highest flood in the history of the city. The worst flood came in 1966. The water covered 85% of the city. Many people wonder if another, higher flood is just around the corner<sup>7</sup>. Venice is entirely surrounded by saltwater which makes the flooding ever worse. Regular, freshwater floods are obviously bad, but saltwater can do far more damage to the buildings and it is much harder for an area to recover.



The mayor<sup>8</sup> of Venice has said that this flood is being caused by global warming and that floods will only get worse as the sea levels around the world continue to rise. He says that we must do something to stop global warming or we will lose places such as Venice. We find it easy to ignore this problem, safe here in Sapporo, but people who are in low lying areas cannot afford to look away anymore.

The government of Italy has pledged<sup>9</sup> money to rebuild Venice, but, if this is the first of many worsening floods, just rebuilding won't be the answer. There is talk of trying to raise the city, or of building a sea wall, or gates that can be opened and closed to let ships through. However, environmentalists<sup>10</sup> say that any of these solutions will damage the ecosystems that live in the lake. I hope there is a solution.



- 1.Germanic tribe ゲルマン民族 2.Sack 略奪する 3.Conquer 獲得する 4.Log 木の丸太  
5.Skyrocket 飛躍的に上昇する 6.Regret 後悔 7.Around the corner すぐ近くに 8.Mayor 市長  
9.Pledge 約束する 10.Environmentalist 環境保護主義者





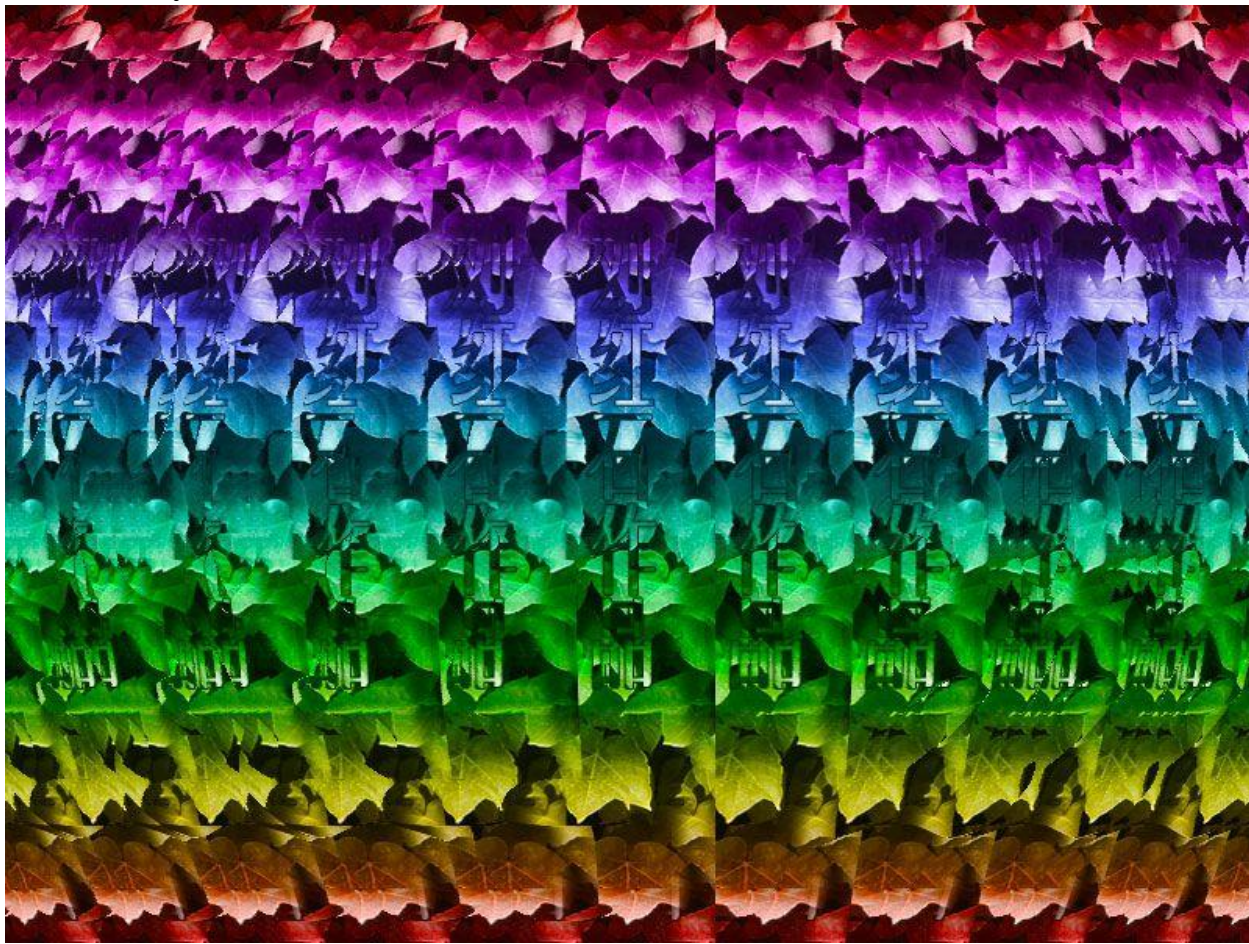
### World Records

Now, here is a world record I think we could break if we worked together. American dentist, Val Kolpakov, has the world's largest collection of toothpaste. He has 2,037 different tubes of toothpaste from different countries around the world. He has been interested in teeth and toothpaste for a very long time. Whenever he travels somewhere he buys a tube and his friends send him tubes as well. Nothing says, "I love you," like a tube of toothpaste. Admittedly<sup>1</sup>, it might take us a while to break this record, but if you all travel to different countries and send me a tube of toothpaste, I'm fairly<sup>2</sup> confident that we can do it. What do you say? Will you help me?

### Last Week's Answer:

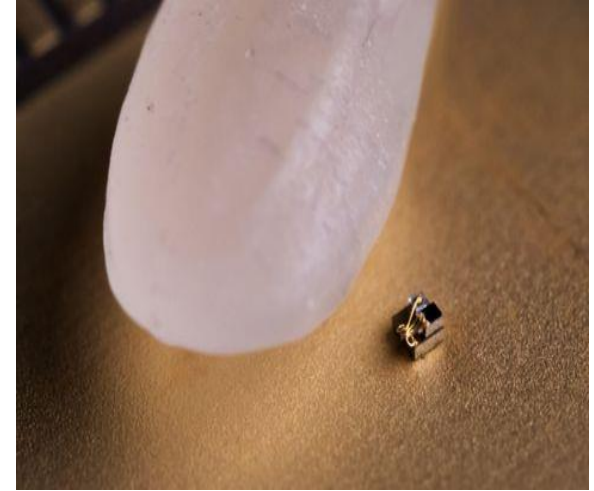


### What can you see?



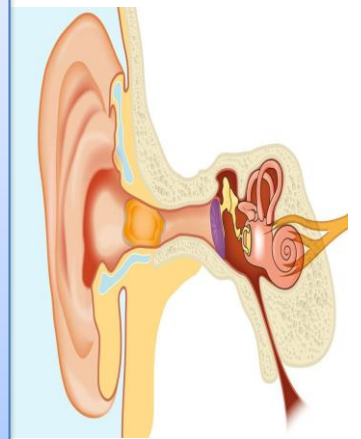
## Something Big and Small

This topic is a little difficult to define, but let's look at the world's biggest and smallest computers. The biggest computer is IBM's Summit. It fills a very large room and is capable of 200 petaflops<sup>3</sup> (floating point operations per second). It can do a quintillion<sup>4</sup> (1 with 18 zeros) calculations a second. I can't even do one. It uses the same power as a small town. Then, the smallest computer was also built by IBM and is 1mmx1mm. It is smaller than a grain of rice. It can measure temperature changes in cells. However, when it is switched off, it loses all of its data, so some people say that it is not actually a computer. The way things are going at both ends of this category is amazing. Soon the biggest computers will be ruling our world and the smallest ones will be inside us.



### Why do we...

... have earwax<sup>5</sup>? Your ear canal<sup>6</sup> produces a waxy oil called cerumen. The job of this oil is to catch dust, foreign objects<sup>7</sup> and microorganisms<sup>8</sup> that would otherwise fall into the ear and damage all of the delicate parts. It also stops your ear filling with water. This oil then hardens so that these small pieces in your ear can just fall out. Sometimes you can have too much earwax and it can cause hearing loss. This problem can actually be made worse by people who try to clean their ears with cotton buds. You can actually push the earwax further down into your ear canal. Earphones (the type that you push into your ear) can also make the problem worse. Now you know why I can't hear you when you talk to me.



1. Admittedly 確かに 2. Fairly かなり 3. Petaflop コンピューターの処理速度を表す単位。1 ペタフロップスは 1 秒間に 100 京回の浮動小数点演算が可能であることを意味する 4. Quintillion 10 の 18 乗、100 京 5. Earwax 耳くそ 6. Ear canal 外耳道 7. Foreign object 異物 8. Microorganism 微生物