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Quantum computers move a step closer
Nature News
Quantum computing has made another advance along the path from theorists' darling to working device. The concept depends on entanglement, a strange phenomenon in which the quantum states of spatially separated systems, called 'qubits', become intrinsically linked. The entanglements of two or more qubits sets up a 'superposition' of states in which calculations can run in parallel — in principle allowing a quantum computer to race through problems that it would take a classical computer years to solve. [MORE](#)

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What's eating the stars out of our galaxy's heart?
New Scientist
A little over 25,000 light years away lies the most mysterious place in the nearby universe. Jam-packed with colliding stars and cloaked in dust, it is the center of our galaxy. At its very heart, we suspect, lurks a monstrous black hole more than 4 million times as massive as the sun. Known as Sagittarius A*, it is thought to rip stars apart, orchestrating stellar mayhem as it warps the very fabric of space and time. [MORE](#)

Scientists find potentially habitable planet near Earth
PhysOrg
To astronomers, a "potentially habitable" planet is one that could sustain life, not necessarily one that humans would consider a nice place to live. Habitability depends on many factors, but liquid water and an atmosphere are among the most important. To astronomers, a "potentially habitable" planet is one that could sustain life, not necessarily one that humans would consider a nice place to live. Habitability depends on many factors, but liquid water and an atmosphere are among the most important. [MORE](#)

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Cosmic accidents: How we avoided the void
NewScientist
It began with a bang. What cosmic coincidences preceded our universe's birth are in the realms of speculation. Suffice it to say that some 13.75 billion years ago — give or take a yoctosecond — the cosmos was deciding what to be when it grew up. "Much bigger", if the most popular model of the universe's beginnings is to be believed. According to the theory of inflation, the newly born universe was suffused with something called the inflation field, which drove an exponential expansion of the cosmos for a period of about 10⁻³² seconds, stretching it flat and uniform in the process. [MORE](#)

Everything really is relative
Science News
Exploring the peculiar effects of Einstein's relativity is no longer rocket science. Tabletop experiments at a lab in Colorado have illustrated the odd behavior of time, a strangeness typically probed with space travel and jet planes. Using superprecise atomic clocks, scientists have witnessed time dilation — the bizarre speeding up or slowing down of time described by Einstein's theories of relativity. The experiments are presented in the Sept. 24 Science. [MORE](#)

South Africa opens new school for studying physics
AbeuLoom
In Stellenbosch, South Africa, there is a new type of school. It's the African School of Fundamental Physics and Its Applications. It is the first of its kind to find a home on the African continent. The school held a conference through August — a bi-annual event — that brings together 50 or more physics students from across Africa, with preference given to those coming from Sub-Saharan Africa. [MORE](#)

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Deputy Minister of Ghana, Africa, stresses importance of science and technology
Ghana News Agency
The application of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) is the bedrock to the sustainable development of African countries, Dr. Edward Ocran-Boamah, Deputy Minister for Environment, Science and Technology, said. He also said the absence of the application of STI in Africa had created a gap between the developed and the developing countries which had manifested in the grading of the recent Global Competitiveness Index Report for 2010/2011, which placed all African countries, with the exception of Namibia, South Africa, Mauritius and Tunisia, in Stage One. [MORE](#)

Countdown to oblivion: Why time itself could end
NewScientist
"We could run into the end of time," Ben Freivogel tells a seminar at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge. Several colleagues seem transfixed, and one Nobel laureate looks downright exasperated. "I'm aware that this sounds like a crazy conclusion," Freivogel admits, generating a round of what sounds like relieved laughter, but perhaps their relief is short-lived. The nature of time, our perception of it and even whether it exists at all are hot topics for both physicists and philosophers. But Freivogel isn't pushing a strange new concept of time. [MORE](#)

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