

▼ **Net Press.** Record and movie companies succeed in pressuring Internet Service Providers to police users. ISPs, fearing copyright infringement charges, obey lawyer-drafted "requests" that they cancel the accounts of people using Gnutella or iMesh file-trading software.

▼ **Phone Homeless.** The Wisconsin state budget proposes spending \$40,000 to give the homeless free voice mail. A fat universal service fund, swollen to \$7 million with fees levied on phone users, would supply the cash.



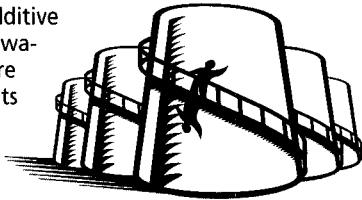
▼ **Red Line.** California's state-run power buys put taxpayers in the red. The state could lose as much as \$500 million by selling power for as little as one-fifth the price bureaucrats paid for it during energy-crunch hysteria.



▼ **Side Out.** The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association bans cheering by players on the bench. Chants like "One, two, three, ace!" now count as taunting and will result in a team penalty.

▼ **Escort Service.** Authorities in Michigan confiscate a 10-year-old girl's 1992 Ford Escort after her stepfather is arrested in the car during a prostitution sting. The girl inherited the car from her cancer-stricken father three years ago, but can't have it back unless she pays \$900.

▼ **Gas Tanks.** The gasoline additive MTBE has spread to ground water far from the places where government regs mandate its use. The cancer-causing compound spreads via tanker trucks, storage facilities, and pipes, a Purdue University study finds. MTBE will be phased out by 2003.



**LIABILITIES**

priations Committee, less optimistic, voted to decrease the space station budget by \$150 million.

Unless project partners Japan, Russia, and the European Union decide to spend their own public money to meet the U.S.'s unfulfilled promises, the only function of the space station, besides a minimal amount of robot-performed research, will be to float around. Though that might still seem kind of neat to hard-core space buffs, it doesn't seem worth the cost: \$17.9 billion to date, \$29.1 billion by 2006, and an estimated \$94 billion overall.

The Alpha money pit has resulted in other casualties, such as a brand new \$120 million spacecraft that Al Gore conceived after consulting elementary school students. Spacecraft Triana was to relay a constant image of Earth to Web surfers. Instead, it will have an equally purposeful existence sitting in storage, at a cost of more than \$1 million per year.

**Classified**

By Sara Rimensnyder

**D**oes Secretary of State Colin Powell have something to hide?

Don't expect to find out anytime soon. The Bush administration has halted the release of 68,000 pages of documents from the Reagan White House, whose staff included Powell and several other current Bush hands. The papers were due to be delivered into the hands of eager historians in January, but White House Counsel Alberto Gonzalez has now twice invoked an executive order to allow the administration to review the papers. The current extension is ►

**SOURCE**

The July 16 arrest of Russian hacker Dmitri Sklyarov outraged opponents of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, the law that punishes not only thieves but people who circumvent copy protection schemes for any reason—research, innovation, or simple curiosity. Sklyarov violated the DMCA when he cracked the encryption code for Adobe's much-vaunted "e-book."

Before he could digest his first prison breakfast, **the online movement to "Free Dmitri!"** was already developing. **BoycottAdobe.com** functions as an unofficial central command. Other sites include: **FreeSklyarov.org**, which catalogues the latest news; **Anti-DMCA.org**, which has an informative "frequently asked questions" page; **EFF.org/Intellectual\_property/DMCA/**, the Electronic Freedom Foundation's archive on the subject; and finally, **www.NoDMCA.org**, which manages an e-mail discussion list on Sklyarov.

**QUOTE**

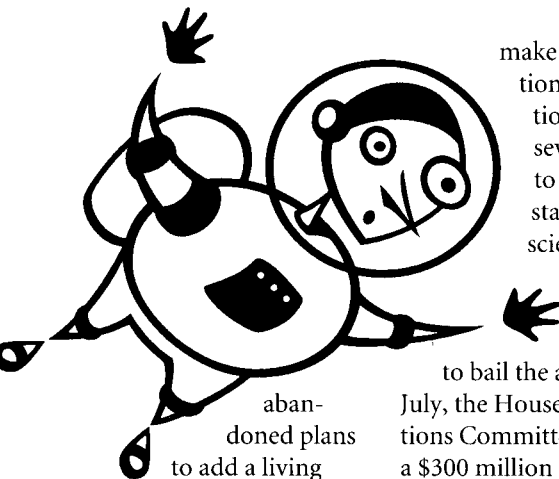
**"It's a cat-and-mouse game. The minute you leave, everybody lights up again."**

—Los Angeles Fire Department Inspector Gabriel Orona, commenting on his attempts to enforce California's ban on smoking in bars and other indoor workplaces, in the July 11 *Los Angeles Times*

make sure the station stays operational) to six or seven (enough to maintain the station and do scientific research).

Congress is unwilling to bail the agency out. In

July, the House Appropriations Committee approved a \$300 million increase—modest, by NASA standards—in the space station's budget, contingent on the space agency enacting certain reforms. The Senate Appro-



abandoned plans to add a living module and an escape ship. Those are the devices necessary to increase the station's human carrying capacity from three (enough only to

## BRICKBATS

◆ **Parenting a child is expensive. Sometimes, so is parenting an adult. In California, a Ventura County superior court judge has ordered James and Bertha Culp to support indefinitely their 50-year-old son to the tune of \$3,500 per month. The son, David, is a Stanford graduate who practiced law for 19 years, earning up to \$10,000 a month. Now he says he suffers from bipolar disorder and can't work. Judge Melinda Johnson invoked the state's family code: "The father and mother have an equal responsibility to maintain, to the extent of their ability, a child of whatever age who is incapacitated from earning a living."**

◆ **An Irish politician concerned about a rise in assaults by knife-wielding thugs has found a solution: knife control. "Irish gun controls are amongst the best in the world," says Batt O'Keefe, chairman of the national Health and Children Committee. But "there is an alarming disparity of control for weapons such as knives and swords." O'Keefe proposes that the government set up a national registry of all knives capable of hurting someone.**

◆ **In Great Britain in 1997, the Labor government enacted gun controls so sweeping that Olympic shooting competitors must go out of the country to train. The impact of the stricter laws, which virtually ban handguns, is now becoming apparent. One study shows gun crimes have risen 40 percent.**

## CLASSIFIED

due to expire August 31.

The papers would have been the first released under the Presidential Records Act of 1978. The act, passed in the wake of Watergate, makes presidential papers public property. But a law intended to make government more open can't last long in Washington. As Reagan left office, he issued the executive order now being exercised by the present administration, giving himself and future presidents an essentially unlimited period to review records before their release, so they could invoke executive privilege to keep anything unpalatable locked away.

### Going after Grandma's House

By Michael W. Lynch

In New London, Connecticut, the government is currently in court defending its inalienable right to evict 83-year-old Wilhelmina Dery from a property that's been in her family for more than 100 years.

The city's historic Fort Trumbull area, where Dery lives, became a target for development in 1998, when Viagra-maker Pfizer decided to build a \$270 million research facility next door. The problem, say planners, is that they need to increase the "radii" of the road that surrounds Dery's property so that a private developer can build a mecca of upscale apartments, marinas, retail shops, and restaurants. There will also be a conference center for use by Pfizer.

There's just no place in

such a grand plan for Dery's quarter-acre property, which contains four impeccably maintained houses. It

has "no reuse value," according to the planners, a fate it shares with 114 other properties, the majority of which have already been destroyed. Six others have joined Dery in holding out. They have teamed with the D.C.-based Institute for Justice to sue the city and the New London Development Corporation.

The city's position is starkly opportunistic. More than half of New London's property can't be taxed and the remaining 46 percent is fully developed, points out NLDC spokesman Christopher Riley. Local pols can only grab more money if they increase the city's tax base by upgrading existing property. Officials get dollar signs in their eyes, down to the penny, when they look to

Fort Trumbull. The development "will result in a potential increase of taxes of \$2,241,684.98," city lawyers note in a court document.

### Banning Fatherhood

By Brian Doherty

It's not quite eugenics, perhaps, but the Wisconsin Supreme Court agrees that it's OK for a judge to order



☛ "New York's religion is Government, Social Necessity, Public Good, and attendant lesser sacraments. It has taken the faith very seriously, because it convinced itself early on that social awareness is very noble and very necessary—in sum, very humanitarian."

☛ "Subways in New York are suffocatingly hot, dirty, and crowded. And now—shades of Soviet Union or Communist China—it's illegal to take pictures of them."

—Mark Frazier, "New York—Death of a City"

☛ "Freedom, to be meaningful, must find direct expression in practice as well as in principle. Articulations of principles of liberty may provide the understanding, but these must be practiced to give freedom objective existence."

—Ralph Nader, "You Can Fight City Hall"

☛ "2,345 [West German] women have, up to now, accused themselves of having committed abortion. Emotionally sympathetic but biologically puzzling is the fact that 973 men did the same."

—Guy de Maetelaere, "Foreign Correspondent"