

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2001

## Here and there

### KIDS IN SPACE

Lincoln Laboratory's decision to name some of the asteroids it has discovered after 40 top middle-school science students and their teachers was news in several of the kids' hometown newspapers.

The students, finalists for the title of "America's Top Young Scientist of the Year" in the third annual Discovery Young Scientist Challenge, learned of the honor in late October at a dinner that concluded the contest ([MIT Tech Talk, Oct. 31](#)).

"I'm kind of amazed," ninth-grader Elizabeth Sears told her hometown paper, the Lubbock (Texas) Avalanche-Journal. "I didn't think I heard them right the first time." The headline for the Oct. 24 story about her: "All Saints student's project provides out-of-this-world honor."

Elizabeth's teacher, Martha Alexander, will also have an asteroid namesake. "It just kind of makes you look up in the sky with a whole different perspective," Alexander told the Avalanche-Journal.

Cole Sullivan, 13, had a similar reaction. "I think it's awesome," he told the Oct. 24 Vero Beach (Fla.) Press Journal, in a story that ran on page 1.

Back in New England, Hillary Giacomelli of Falmouth was contacted by the Cape Cod Times for an Oct. 25 story. "I'm really excited and honored," said the 13-year-old. "I think my brother is going to be a little jealous." She went on to praise her teacher, Audrey Meyer. "She has inspired me so much. She is so helpful and enthusiastic, and I just really like her a lot."

### KYOTO COMMENTS

When the final details of the Kyoto Protocol, a treaty designed to limit greenhouse emissions, were announced in November, The New York Times asked an MIT professor to comment.

According to Richard L. Schmalensee, dean of the Sloan School of Management, "the main benefit of the treaty was not the modest cuts in emissions it set, but the mechanisms and institutions it would create," wrote the Times' Andrew Revkin in his Nov. 11 story. "It'll build some engagement and the habit of compliance. This is a first step."

### CLIPS AND QUOTES

"You have to define what 'normal' is."—Professor of Biology Rudolph Jaenisch in response to reports that 24 cow clones are healthy and "perfectly normal." His comment originally appeared in the New York Daily News and was reprinted on Newsweek's Dec. 3 Perspectives page.

"Think of figure skating and gymnastics with these shoes on. The musical possibilities are endless." — Joseph Paradiso, director of the Media Lab's Responsive Environments Group, in a Nov. 29 New York Times story about technology's impact on music. He was referring to shoes his group is developing that respond to different pressures by producing different computer-generated sounds.

"The software systems themselves, left alone, cannot cope with this kind of disruption to the historical database. All the math, all the forecasting, all of the optimization models are based on the naive assumption that the past can predict the future and that everything is stable."— Peter Belobaba, principal research scientist (and airline fare expert) in the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics. Belobaba was quoted in a Nov. 5 story in the San Jose Mercury News about the software that airlines use to manage air fares.

"It's possible. Unlikely, but possible. If they could make a bomb, and that's a big if, they could get it here. The US border is very porous."—Geoffrey Forden, a research Associate in the Security Studies Program, in a Nov. 2 Boston Herald story about whether the Taliban could attack the United States with a nuclear weapon.

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