

Science news



NASA

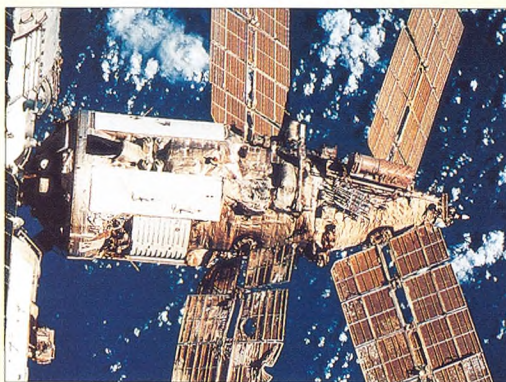
◀ Viewers worldwide see the first-ever high-resolution color pictures of Mars when the *Pathfinder* spacecraft lands July 4. The lander and its rover, Sojourner, collect and transmit extraordinary data for three months.

AP/Wide World



▶ For \$8.36 million, Chicago's Field Museum of Natural History buys "Sue," the most complete *Tyrannosaurus rex* fossil yet discovered. The sale occurs October 4 at Sotheby's in New York.

▶ Russia's aging *Mir* space station collides with an unmanned supply vehicle in June and is seriously damaged. This is only one in a series of crises casting doubt on the viability of the station.



NASA



Reuters/Archive Photos

▶ In September, CAT scans of petrified dinosaur eggs found in China reveal a dinosaur embryo.



Reuters/Archive Photos

▶ Scottish scientists in February 1997 announce the world's first cloning of an adult mammal. The sheep, named Dolly, fuels controversy over possible misuse of the technology.

flash

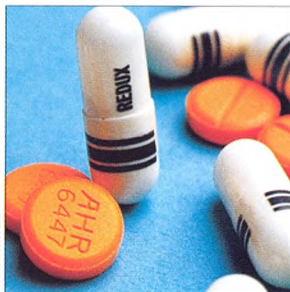
Fuel cells that convert a fuel's energy directly into electricity are being developed for use in cars, making possible an efficient, low-emission car of the future.

The first prescription pill for male-pattern baldness is approved by the Food and Drug Administration in December. The drug Propecia is made by Merck and Company.



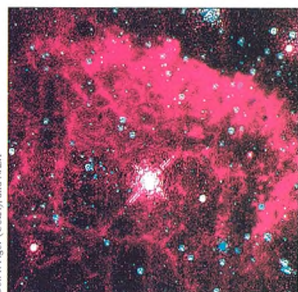
©Ted Horowitz, The Stock Market

▶ Research produces medical breakthroughs, including a genetically engineered "bullet" molecule being tested to fight cancer and new drugs to control or prevent Parkinson's disease, osteoporosis and congestive heart failure.



Matt Mendlesohn

▶ The popular diet regimen fen-phen is pulled off the market in September. The combination of fenfluramine and phentermine is shown to cause heart valve disorders, as is the diet drug Redux, also recalled.



Don F. Figer (UCLA) and NASA

▶ Aided by the Hubble Space Telescope, astronomers discover the Pistol Star—the brightest star yet observed in the Milky Way. The Pistol Star is 25,000 light years from Earth.

▶ Comet Hale-Bopp captures imaginations worldwide as it streaks past Earth for the first time in 4,200 years—or, since 2203 B.C. Hale-Bopp next returns in 4397.

AP/Wide World



▶ On October 13, the British jet car *Thrust SSC* becomes the first vehicle to break the sound barrier on land, traveling 766.6 miles per hour in the Nevada desert.



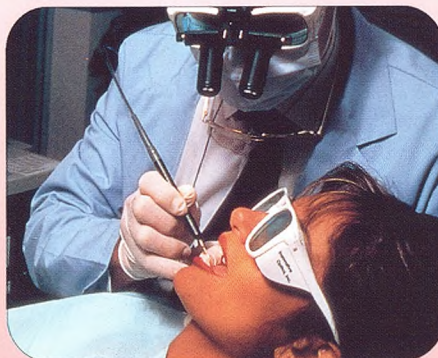
Reuters/Archive Photos



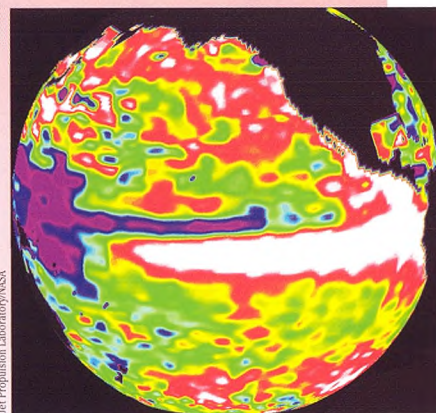
©Xaku Kurita, Gamma Liaison

▶ In December, 159 nations gather in Kyoto, Japan, and negotiate a climate treaty to combat global warming by reducing greenhouse gases.

▶ The Food and Drug Administration approves a dental laser for treating cavities. Unlike traditional dental drills, the laser in most cases causes virtually no discomfort.



Premier Laser Systems, Inc.



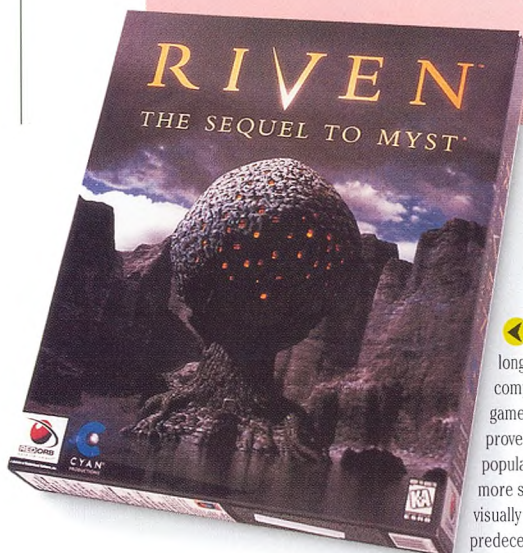
Jet Propulsion Laboratory/NASA

▶ El Niño stirs up global weather patterns. Caused by warmer-than-normal water temperatures in the equatorial Pacific, the '97 El Niño is blamed for storms and weather problems worldwide.



Reuters/Archive Photos

▶ Protesters unsuccessfully attempt to prevent the October launch of NASA's *Cassini* spacecraft to Saturn, fearing an accident could shower the Earth with the rocket's radioactive plutonium.



▶ Riven, the long-awaited computer adventure game sequel to *Myst*, proves to be just as popular and even more sophisticated visually than its predecessor.

flash

Hong Kong authorities in December order the slaughter of more than a million chickens in an effort to halt the spread of a bird flu virus that killed six people.

The space shuttle *Columbia* releases the errant *Spartan* satellite in November. U.S. astronaut Winston Scott and Takao Doi, the first Japanese astronaut to do a space walk, retrieve the satellite for return to Earth.



Reuters/Archive Photos

▶ French oceanographer and award-winning filmmaker Jacques Cousteau dies in June at 87. His work gained renown through the popular television series "The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau."