



**QUICK TO THE RESCUE:** The X-Hawk chopper

## AERONAUTICS Cool Copter

**M**ILITARY HUMVEES dodge insurgents while winding through city streets. Firefighters struggle to reach blazes in high-rise office buildings. And sometimes even the best ambulance drivers can't get through bumper-to-bumper traffic. Now there's a new vehicle to manage such uniquely urban situations: the X-Hawk, the first helicopter designed to maneuver in tight spaces. De-

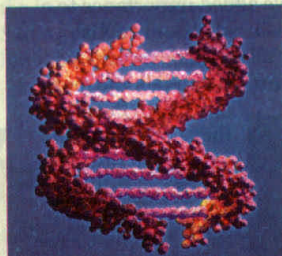
veloped by Israeli helicopter company Urban Aeronautics, the X-Hawk is a "rotorless" aircraft. Whereas top-mounted rotors make it hard for conventional choppers to avoid buildings and power lines, the X-Hawk's rotors are encased and mounted at the back of the vehicle, allowing vertical lift of up to 3,600 meters with unprecedented safety and controllability.

Although the X-Hawk won't be airborne until 2010, a prototype completed 10 hover tests with flying colors in December 2004. Israel's Herzliya Medical Center has already placed the first order for the \$2.2 million vehicle. "We're moving to a real big change in the way rescue operations are done," says Urban Aeronautics founder Rafi Yoeli. Straight up.

—KATHRYN WILLIAMS

## DNA Rooted in the Web

**E**ver wonder if you're really descended from royalty? One way to find out is to join existing DNA projects that allow you to compare genes with people of the same surname. According to genealogist Megan Smolenyak, who co-authored a new book called "Trace Your Roots With DNA" with colleague Ann Turner, surname tests (DNA tests that trace the Y-chromosome along a line) have taken off since they became available to the public in 2000. Smolenyak estimates that more than 50,000 people now participate in DNA projects offered on Web sites like familytreedna.com and aheritage.com. One type of test that can show where your ancestors hailed from is offered on dnaprint.com. So how can you get started on the road to self-discovery? First, she advises, establish a paper trail with preliminary genealogical research. (For example, interview your grandparents or put together a family tree.) And when you do get those DNA test results back, be prepared for surprises, says Smolenyak. Instead of the Romanovs, you might find you're related to Rasputin.



**DNA:** Seek the family secret

—LISA HELEM

### PERSPECTIVES

## "What did we do to deserve this?"

Construction worker **Satya Kumari**, of Pondicherry, India, mourning in the aftermath of the tsunami



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"It's over. Now, today, the Ukrainian people have won. I congratulate you." Ukrainian opposition leader **Viktor Yushchenko**, celebrating his victory in the country's re-vote

"Anyone who takes part in this election consciously and willingly is an infidel." **Osama bin Laden**, calling for a boycott of the upcoming Iraqi elections on his latest audiotape

"It was like something out of the movies." Policeman **Marcelo Albuquerque**, on the rioting mob of motorcycle-taxi drivers that destroyed police stations and a courthouse in Capenema and Salinopolis, Brazil. Roughly 600 drivers showed up hoping to lynch two suspects in the murder of a colleague.

"In the years I've been president, I've won more than anybody else in the world—in international championships, that is." Italian Prime Minister **Silvio Berlusconi**, on his role as the president of AC Milan, which he renounced last week after a court ruled his position a conflict of interest. The team won four European Cups and seven Series A titles from the time he took over in 1986.

"She [insisted] that with literary talent came an obligation to defend the sovereignty of the creative mind and imagination against every kind of tyranny." British author **Salman Rushdie**, reflecting on the life of American author and social activist Susan Sontag, who died last week of leukemia