

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2007

By Albert R. Hunt  
**A Southerner in the South**

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## 'Man in the middle' of U.S.-Iran dispute

All sides assail ElBaradei, but they also must rely on UN atom negotiator

By Elaine Sciolino  
and William J. Broad

**VIENNA:** Late last month, Mohamed ElBaradei put the finishing touches on a nuclear accord negotiated in secret with Iran.

The deal would be divisive and risky, one of the biggest gambles of his 10 years as head of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Iran would answer questions about its clandestine nuclear past in exchange for a series of concessions. With no advance notice or media strategy, ElBaradei ordered the plan released in the evening. And then he waited.

The next day, diplomats from Britain, France, Germany and the United States marched into his office atop a Vienna skyscraper to deliver a joint protest. The deal, they said, amounted to undermining a United Nations Security Council strategy to punish, not reward, Tehran.

The Egyptian-born lawyer was polite but firm. "If Iran wants to answer questions, what am I supposed to do, tell them it can't?" he asked. Then, brandishing one of his characteristic mangled metaphors, he dismissed his critics as "living room coaches who shoot from the hip."

Almost five years after he stood up to the Bush administration on Iraq and won the Nobel Peace Prize for his trouble, ElBaradei now finds himself at the center of the West's turbulent confrontation with Iran, derided yet relied upon by all sides.

To his critics in the West, he is guilty of serious diplomatic sins — bias toward Iran, recklessness and, above all, a naive grandiosity that leads him to freelance far beyond his station. Over the past year, even before he unveiled his deal with Tehran,

Western governments had presented him with a flurry of formal protests over his stewardship of the Iran case.

Even some of his own staff members have become restive, questioning his leadership and what they see as his sympathy for the Iranians, according to diplomats here.

Yet the Iranians themselves also seek to humiliate him and block his inspectors.

"He is the man in the middle," said Lee Hamilton, a former Democratic congressman long respected for his foreign-affairs acumen. He added: "The United States and Iran simply do not believe one another. There is deep distrust." And that, he continued, made the situation "very difficult" for any go-between.

Even so, while ElBaradei's harshest detractors describe him as drunk with him on center stage is a pragmatic truth: He is everyone's best hope.

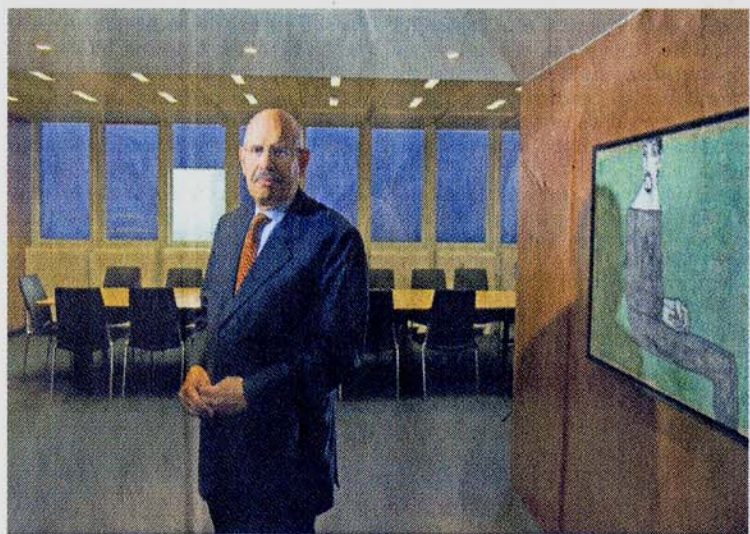
He has grown ever more indispensable as American credibility on atomic intelligence has nose-dived and European diplomacy with Tehran has stalled. For the world powers, he is far and away the best source of knowledge about Iran's nuclear progress — information Washington uses regularly to portray Tehran as an imminent global danger.

Even the Iranians need him (as he likes to remind them) because his maneuvers promise to lessen and perhaps end the sting of UN sanctions.

ElBaradei, who is 65, seems unfazed, even energized, by all the dissent. He alludes to a sense of destiny

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White House divided on how to deal with Iran. Page 4



Lukas Beck for The New York Times  
Mohammed ElBaradei at the IAEA headquarters in Vienna.

## Travelers and businesses ready for the last frontier

By Nicola Clark

**PARIS:** The week after Richard Laronde returned home from a 16-day trek to the South Pole in January, he bought a ticket to outer space.

For Laronde, who had also journeyed to the North Pole in 2006, making the decision to splurge \$200,000 on one of the world's first commercial spaceflights took about as long as it takes to do a Google search for "space tourism." "As soon as I got back from the South Pole, I got on the Internet," said Laronde, 56, who owns a prospering event-planning business in Boston.

Within days he had wired a \$20,000 deposit to an accredited space travel agent in New York. "Astronauts were

my heroes growing up," said Laronde, who came of age in the early years of the U.S. space program. "It's always been a childhood dream."

With a personal net worth of more than \$5 million, Laronde has the means to transform this particular fantasy into reality. As a steadily growing number of companies have come to realize, he is not alone.

There are already several dozen space tourism ventures in various stages of development worldwide, analysts say, offering experiences ranging from a brief trip to the outer limits of the Earth's atmosphere to an extended stay in a zero-gravity space hotel. Public and private investors in places as far flung as Dubai, New Mexico and Singapore are preparing to invest hundreds of millions of dollars to develop full-blown "spaceports," complete with hotels, museums, IMAX theaters and other space-themed diversions.

With the first paying passengers expected to take flight sometime in late 2009, Futron, a market research firm, predicts that as many as 14,000 space tourists will be heading into space each year by 2021, generating annual revenue of more than \$700 million.

"There is quite a contest going on at the moment between a number of companies," said Walter Peeters, dean of the International Space University in Strasbourg. "I think people underestimate how fast this is developing. For the companies who succeed, it could be very, very lucrative." The leading entrepreneurs driving this recreational space race include several household names, including Richard Branson and

SPACE, Continued on Page 2



**Scores of tourists killed in jet crash on Thai resort island**

Rescue workers at the scene of a plane crash Sunday that killed at least 87 people on the Thai island of Phuket. The jet, operated by the low-fare airline One-Two-Go and carrying 130 passengers and crew members, crashed as it tried to land. The cause was unclear, but some witnesses reported that the plane slid off the runway after trying to land in heavy wind and rain. Page 7

## Microsoft verdict as watershed?

Case seen as test of antitrust chief's credibility as regulator

By Stephen Castle and Dan Bilefsky

**BRUSSELS:** As president of a Dutch business school, Neelie Kroes once presided over a Latin ceremony in which Bill Gates was awarded an honorary doctorate and black academic gown as a tribute to his contribution to global innovation.

Almost 11 years later Kroes, the European Union's top antitrust official, hopes Europe's second-highest court will confer on Gates, the Microsoft founder, a less auspicious honor by confirming the largest fine ever imposed on a single company by European regulators.

On Monday, the European Court of First Instance, second highest after the European Court of Justice, will rule on whether to confirm or reject the EU's decision in 2004 to fine Microsoft €497 million, or \$690 million at current exchange rates, for abusing its dominant position in the computer desktop software market. Microsoft, the world's biggest software maker, is accused of tying its Windows Media Player to its

Windows operating system and failing to make public the technical information that permits products made by rivals to operate with it.

The verdict — after a marathon legal battle — is a critical moment for Kroes, a 66-year-old former Dutch transport minister and businesswoman. Though the case dates to 1998, long before she took up her post, the clash with Microsoft is the European Commission's highest-profile case, and one that Kroes embraced when she became European competition commissioner in 2004.

An appeal is expected, no matter which side prevails.

Some antitrust experts say that while her predecessor, Mario Monti, had a defining philosophy — in his case, expanding the commission's emphasis from busting up mergers to include more focus on anti-competitive cartels — Kroes appears to have no



Francois Lenoir/Reuters  
'Nickel Neelie' Kroes

overarching approach to regulation. They say the Microsoft case has become a test of her credibility as a regulator.

"There is no 'Kroes approach' to competition law," said Dennis Oswell, managing partner of Oswell & Vahida, an antitrust law firm in Brussels whose clients have come under her scrutiny. "Monti was the GE-Honeywell guy," he said, referring to the huge merger of two companies based in the United States that Monti overturned in 2001 when he was competition commissioner.

"Under Kroes, the competition unit has been more of a technocratic administration," Oswell said. "So a lot is riding on this case."

KROES, Continued on Page 13

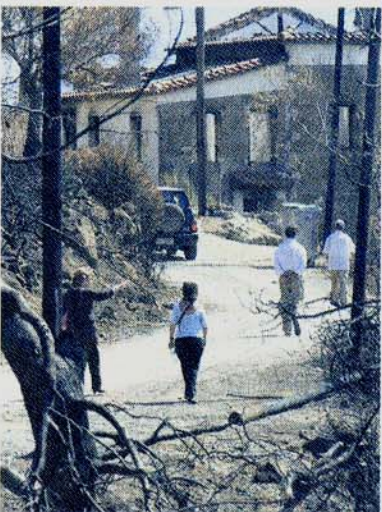
Microsoft awaits landmark ruling from European court. Page 11

## Greenspan assails Bush's fiscal lead

Alan Greenspan, who was chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve for nearly two decades, in a long-awaited memoir is harshly critical of President George W. Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney and the Republican-controlled Congress for abandoning their party's principles on spending and deficits. In his book, "The Age of Turbulence: Adventures in a New World," due out Monday, Greenspan describes the Bush administration as so captive to its own political operation that it paid little attention to fiscal discipline. "The Republicans in Congress lost their way," wrote Greenspan, a self-described "libertarian Republican." Page 13

## Predicting the Internet

The Sloan Center for Internet Retailing in California will soon introduce a Web site relying on "prediction markets" to tell the future popularity of Web sites. Although online research has been widely used to assess offline companies, this is the first time it will be used to study the online sites. Page 12



Dimitris Doudounis/Icon, via Reuters  
Greeks heading to the polls Sunday in the burned village of Livadaki. The government, criticized over the fires last month, retained power, if barely. Page 3

## A tough week ahead for Northern Rock

The fate of Northern Rock, a British mortgage lender, appeared uncertain Sunday after account-holders withdrew an estimated £1 billion over the course of two days. Even as British officials tried to reassure depositors that Northern Rock's request for an emergency credit line did not endanger their money, the company chief raised questions about the bank's ability to remain independent. Page 13

## Denmark is target of Islamist terrorists

Three terror cases in less than two years, including an alleged bombing plot foiled this month, highlight how jihadists have made Denmark a leading target of Islamic terrorism in Europe. Denmark illustrates the powerful interplay between foreign agitation and domestic discontent. The country climbed the hit list of international Islamist terrorist groups after the worldwide attention caused by cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad first published two years ago in a conservative newspaper here. At home, the children of Muslim immigrants complain of job discrimination and integration problems, feeding the disenchantment of the small but growing Muslim population, which provided the recruits for the ranks of the most recent alleged plot. Page 3

## Fiji, in fight to the line, stops Canada in rugby

The Fijian team contrived a nail-biting finish on Sunday against Canada in a largely empty arena in Cardiff, Wales.

The Fijians, clinging to a narrow lead, finished with a flourish. With the clock past 80 minutes, the Canadians, needing a try to win, fumbled. Kameli Ratuvou, the Fijian fullback, picked up and broke away for Fiji's fourth try. Nicky Little's conversion made the final score, 29-16. Page 18

## Pentagon expects protracted role in Iraq

Defense secretary favors veto of limits on troop presence

By Brian Knowlton

**WASHINGTON:** Two days after predicting that U.S. forces in Iraq might be reduced to 100,000 by the end of next year, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Sunday that American troops were likely to remain in that country for a "protracted period." He also said he would recommend a presidential veto if Congress approved a Democratic effort to limit the time troops could spend in Iraq.

But Gates emphasized in two television interviews that U.S. troops would play an increasingly circumscribed role. "The idea is that we would have a much more limited role in Iraq for some protracted period of time as a stabilizing force, a force that would be a fraction of the force that we have there now," focusing on border security, fighting terrorists and training Iraqi security personnel, he said.

Gates said he was talking about "a relatively small number compared to what we have today" but that it was far too soon to nail down precise levels; much would depend, he said, on whether there was no unraveling of the progress reported last week by General David Petraeus, the top U.S. commander there.

The defense secretary also said the United States could deal with Iranian meddling in Iraq without attacking Iran and that the United States was intently watching Syria and North Korea after reports of possible nuclear cooperation by Pyongyang with Damascus. Such cooperation, Gates said, "would be a real problem."

Democrats, forcefully rejecting President George W. Bush's new plan for a gradual troop drawdown as tantamount to an "endless" occupation of Iraq, are preparing this week to advance a new, constraining proposal. It would force the administration to give individual soldiers more time away from the battlefield.

But Gates said the proposal, while "well-intentioned," would leave the Pentagon with "extremely difficult" problems in managing its forces.

"We'd have to look at potentially making greater use" of the national guard and army reserve, Gates said on Fox television, "we'd have to cobble together units" and to withdraw some units before others were able to replace them. He said the Pentagon would face a management nightmare: having to track the service in Iraq of each soldier.

Gates had projected Friday that the U.S. presence could be brought down to 100,000 by the end of 2008. That went beyond, but did not contradict, Bush's plan to move from the 169,000 troops now in Iraq to perhaps 130,000 by July;

IRAQ, Continued on Page 4

British Basra pullout puts supply line to Baghdad at risk. Page 7

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Albert R. Hunt

Letter from Washington

## South Carolinians seem to favor a Southern son

The waiting for Fred is over; Harry Cato is on board. Fred Thompson entered the Republican presidential race early this month and was immediately endorsed by Cato, an influential South Carolina state legislator who had been courted by the other candidates. He was taken by Thompson's Tennessee roots and down-home charm. "He reminds me of my granddaddy," Cato said.

Cato, a middle-of-the-roader by South Carolina Republican standards, likes Thompson's ideological profile. "He's a conservative," Cato, 49, said while sitting in the office of the trucking-supply company he runs in Travelers Rest, South Carolina. "But I'm not looking for a zealot."

Ten miles away, in the heart of the far right of the South Carolina conservative movement, Steve Jones, the president of Bob Jones University, said Thompson, 65, was one of a few Republican candidates who would be welcome on the campus.

The other major contender, Jones said, would be Mitt Romney, although some at the university, a fundamentalist Christian institution, are "having a hard time getting over" his Mormon religion.

A Bloomberg/Los Angeles Times poll this month showed Thompson narrowly ahead of Rudolph Giuliani in South Carolina, with John McCain well back in third and Romney, despite an extensive advertising campaign, stuck in single digits.

Any possibility for a Thompson nomination must include a win in South Carolina. Thompson, a former U.S. senator and TV actor, needs a respectable showing in Iowa and New Hampshire, likely to be the first tests next January. When the race heads to his native South, there is no substitute for victory. Republicans in South Carolina are scheduled to hold their primary on Jan. 19, which they expect to be before any other contest in the region.

As the first likely Southern test, the primary may be important for Democrats, too. Over half the voters in the Democratic contest in South Carolina will be African-Americans, and the struggle for that vote between Senator Hillary Clinton, whose husband is idolized by many blacks, and Barack Obama, the first African-American with a serious chance at the presidency, will be intense.

The stakes are higher for Republicans; no one is ceding anything to Thompson. This was McCain's Waterloo in his 2000 defeat to George W. Bush, and McCain made a major effort to make amends; Giuliani is gambling that his tough-on-terrorism card is a winner in this security-conscious state; and Romney's campaign believes his conversion to a staunchly anti-abortion position and opposition to gay marriage should strike a chord with the one-third or so of this state's voters who identify themselves as social conservatives.

The best place to gauge sentiment today is the "upstate" region, the Republican stronghold in South Carolina. It is centered in Greenville, a city of 75,000 that during the past decade has been transformed from a pedestrian former textile town to a sparkling community with upscale restaurants, downtown parks and waterfalls, and a growing core of professionals and multinational companies. Conversations last week

with dozens of voters in this area underscore the political fluidity: Three out of five South Carolina Republicans say they may change their minds by January.

Lisa Van Riper, a political science professor at North Greenville University and a leader of the social conservatives in the state, said the leading candidates faced difficult obstacles. On McCain, she said, the "brutal battle in 2000 has not been forgotten" by many South Carolina Republicans, and he is "not seen as a team player." His support for immigration measures this year also cost him, Van Riper added.

Giuliani's fiscal conservatism and security credentials play well, she said, but his moderation on social issues like abortion and gay rights is probably a disqualifier. "On social issues," she said, "Rudy would be happier with the Democrats." Van Riper said she had met with Romney, liked him, but was puzzled by his low poll ratings. "It may be some of that is he's from Massachusetts, and some of it is that he's too packaged," she said.

How about Christian conservatives' rejection of his Mormon religion? "I hope that would not be the case," Van Riper said, "but I think it could well be."

Thus, almost by process of elimination, Thompson is the best positioned, she said, adding, "He can speak to all three parts of the Republican base: security, fiscal conservatism, and value voters or social conservatives."

At a breakfast in Greenville last week, attended by almost 400 South Carolinians, Thompson touched all those political hot buttons. A number of voters raved about his performance and persona. Yet some acknowledged later that there wasn't any compelling or memorable message.

Thompson has stumbled when unexpected issues arise — his non-attendance at church, the Senate's efforts to intervene in the case of Terri Schiavo, a Florida woman who was brain-dead, or confusion over some of his past lobbying activities.

In the next four months, he has to be more adroit, and on the big stuff he must convince voters he's as much of a leader and tax-cutter as Giuliani, more genuine on social issues such as

**Fred Thompson  
'can speak to all three  
parts of the  
Republican base.'**

abortion than Romney, and as steadfast on national security as McCain.

Others are already trying to fill in those blanks. An anti-Thompson e-mail message — questioning his intelligence and morals — circulated last week in South Carolina. It has been linked to Warren Tompkins, a shadowy figure who many suspect was also behind a smear campaign against McCain and his wife eight years ago.

Tompkins, who worked for Bush then and is with Romney now, said he knew nothing about the message, although it was written on a Web site that was associated with his firm.

If Thompson didn't know it already, American politics "ain't beanbag," as Finley Peter Dunne said more than a century ago. Welcome to the big leagues, Fred.

Bloomberg News

E-mail: pagetwo@iht.com

**Tomorrow:** John Vinocur on Angela Merkel.

## Cancer free, and weighing mastectomy

DNA tests provide early guide to risk

By Amy Harmon

**CHICAGO:** Her latest mammogram was clean. But Deborah Lindner, 33, was tired of constantly looking for the lump. Ever since a DNA test had revealed her unusually high chance of developing breast cancer, Lindner had agonized over whether to have a mastectomy, a procedure that would reduce her risk by 90 percent.

She had stared at herself in the mirror, imagining the loss of her familiar shape. She had wondered, unable to ask, how the man she had just started dating would feel about breasts that were surgically reconstructed, incapable of feeling his touch or nursing their children.

But she was sure that her own mother, who had had chemotherapy and a mastectomy after a bout with the cancer that had ravaged generations of her family, would agree it was necessary.

"It could be growing inside of me right now," she told her mother on the phone in February, pacing in her living room here. "We could find it anytime."

Waiting for an endorsement, she added, "I could schedule the surgery before the summer."

But no approval came.

"Oh, sweetheart, let's not rush into this," said her mother, Joan Lindner.

Joan Lindner, 63, is a cancer survivor. Her daughter, by contrast, is one of a growing number of young women who call themselves "previvors," because they have learned early that they are genetically prone to breast cancer, and have the chance to act before it strikes.

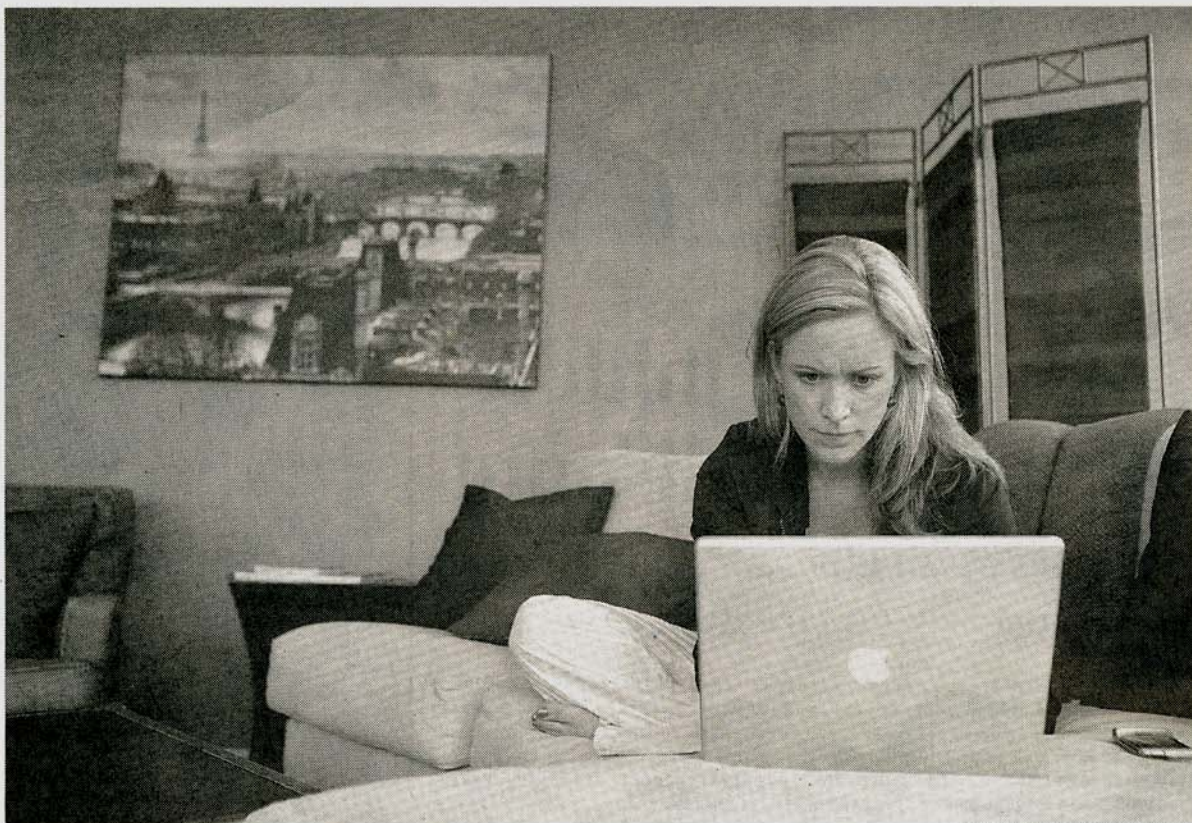
As they seek to avoid the potentially lethal consequences of a mutant gene, many of them turn to relatives who share its burden. But at a moment when a genetic test has made family ties even more tangible, they are often at their most strained.

Parents who have fought cancer typically have no experience with the choices that confront their children, and guilt over being the biological source of the problem can color their advice. Siblings and cousins who carry the risk gene preach their own approach to managing it, while those who dodged its inheritance seem unqualified to judge.

Even as she searched for her own answer in the year after her DNA test, Deborah Lindner, a medical resident, found herself navigating her family's strong and divergent opinions on the imperfect options that lay before her.

Her father, who once feared that he would lose his wife to cancer, encouraged the surgery. Her sister reminded her that cancer might be cured in a few years if she could wait. Her aunt said she hated to see her niece embrace a course of action akin to "leechings of the Dark Ages." A cousin declined even to take the DNA test.

But it was her mother's blessing that Deborah most eagerly sought. Joan Lindner, who had passed her defective gene to her daughter, wanted to will her more time. When she had her own breasts removed, she had been married for 27 years and had raised two daughters. Now Joan Lindner could not shake the fear that her daughter might trade too much in her quest for a cancer-free future. What if taking such a radical step made it harder for Deborah to find someone



Sally Ryan for The New York Times

Deborah Lindner did intensive research after a DNA test showed that she had a 60 to 90 percent chance of developing breast cancer.

special and become a mother herself?

"I have this amazing gift of knowing my risk," her daughter told her over the phone that winter night. "How can I not do anything about that?"

The Lindners share a defective copy of a gene known as BRCA1 (for breast cancer gene 1) that raises their risk of eventually developing breast cancer to between 60 percent and 90 percent.

So far, only 30,000 of more than 250,000 American women estimated to carry a mutation in BRCA1 or a related gene, BRCA2, have been tested. But their numbers have doubled in the past

by the age of 40 to avoid the family cancer. Nor did she want reconstructive surgery, having seen her mother struggle with the pain and cosmetic disappointment of hers.

The test results that French opened with shaking hands in the summer of 2005 offered a reprieve. She was free of the genetic defect. While she still had the 12 percent chance any woman has of developing breast cancer, she could not have passed on the steep BRCA risk to either her daughter or son.

Over Thanksgiving 2006 at her parents' winter home in Florida, Deborah

**'I have this amazing gift of knowing my risk. How can I not do anything about that?'**

two years and, with a sharp increase in genetic testing, are expected to double again in the coming one.

About a third opt for preventive mastectomies that remove the tissue where the breast cancer develops.

A majority have their ovaries removed, halving their breast cancer odds while decreasing the risk of highly lethal ovarian cancer, to which they are also prone. Some take drugs that ward off breast cancer. Others hope that frequent checkups will catch the cancer early, or that they will beat the odds.

Their decisions, which require weighing an inborn risk against other life priorities, are highly individual. But with DNA forecasts of many other conditions on their way, BRCA carriers offer the first clues for how to reckon with a serious disease that may never arise — and with the family turmoil that nearly always does.

Deborah Lindner's sister, Lori French, got her results first.

Long ago, before she knew about the DNA test, French, 37, had resolved to have her breasts and ovaries removed

Lindner ran through her risk analysis. Her father, Philip Lindner, listened and nodded.

Mammograms and ultrasounds, she noted, may miss more than half of cancers in younger women with denser breasts. Magnetic resonance imaging tests are more reliable but produce more false positives, which can lead to unnecessary biopsies and worry. And it is not yet clear that early detection improves survival rates in women with BRCA mutations.

"You can't argue with statistics," said Philip Lindner, a financial executive. "You don't want to get cancer and then say, 'I wish I would have done thus and so.'"

Joan Lindner agreed that it was important to know the risks. But not knowing them could be a luxury, too. Had she had the same options as her daughter, would she have found a man and had a family? It might have altered her whole life.

Deborah Lindner began to seek support elsewhere. A genetic counselor gave her a brochure for Bright Pink, a

## Gearing up for the final frontier

SPACE, From Page 1

Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon.com. But major corporations, including European Aeronautic Defense & Space, the parent company of Airbus, are also investing significant sums in projects designed to deliver well-heeled adventurers into space.

Branson's venture, Virgin Galactic, is by far the most advanced in its plans, with test flights on its six-passenger space plane scheduled to begin next year. The company, which counts Laronde as a customer, says it has received more than \$24 million in deposits from about 200 would-be space tourists in 30 countries.

For \$200,000, these people will receive four days of specialized training followed by a three-hour flight involving just five minutes of weightlessness at an altitude of 110 kilometers, or 70 miles, above sea level. From there, the company says, passengers will be able to see 1,600 kilometers in any direction, as well as the curved blue line of the Earth's atmosphere against the black sky of space. If all goes according to plan, Virgin Galactic says it expects to fly its first passengers in late 2009 or early 2010.

Virgin's six-seat space plane, which is expected to cost more than \$100 million to develop, is being built by Stcaled Composites, an aerospace start-up based in California that was acquired in July by Northrop Grumman. Branson's Virgin Group expects to invest a total of \$240 million of its own funds in the space flight project by 2013, money it expects to quickly begin to recoup once regular services begin. "We would hope to be profitable within the first three years of flying," said Will Whitehorn, a Virgin Galactic spokesman.

EADS Astrium, the space division of the European aerospace giant, unveiled plans this summer to develop its own four-seat space plane, with tickets to sell for around \$150,000. The company is in discussions with a number of private investors and commercial partners with an eye to raising as much as \$1 billion to finance the project by early 2008.

François Auque, the president of EADS Astrium, said in June he hoped

the plane, which is expected to enter commercial service in 2012, would "wake up the space ambitions of Europe." The project, he added, could also generate valuable technological spinoffs with other commercial and military applications.

Would-be rivals to Virgin Galactic and EADS abound. They include Benson Space, based in California, which plans to send its first test passengers into space in 2009 aboard a vertically launched craft that can reach space in

**'Tourist number 150 will not be willing to pay the same price as tourist number five.'**

just 15 minutes. Space Adventures, based in Virginia, claims to have more than 200 reservations with paid deposits worth \$3 million, for a 90-minute ride on a modified Russian spacecraft sometime after 2011. (Space Adventures is best known for brokering deals with Russia to send the first three space tourists into orbit for a reported \$20 million a person.)

Analysts say that Virgin's two-to-three-year head start on the competition should guarantee a steady stream of revenue for the company initially.

But forecasters at Futron and others predict that as the number of available seats on space planes increases, ticket prices will drop quickly — possibly as low as \$40,000 — bringing a joyride into space within reach of nonmillionaires.

"Tourist No. 150 will not be willing to pay the same price as Tourist No. 5," said Peeters of ISU.

Hence the need for the space tourism industry to quickly diversify its offerings, analysts say. A small handful of companies is planning for this second phase, which would bring passengers to an orbital station, or space hotel, where they could spend several days in a weightless environment, roughly 320 kilometers above the Earth.

One prospective space resort operat-

or is Galactic Suite, based in Barcelona, which aims to be host to its first guests in 2012. Created last year by a group of European engineers with backing from Spanish, Japanese and Middle Eastern investors, Galactic Suite expects to charge around \$4 million for an adventure that includes eight weeks of training on a still-unspecified Caribbean island followed by a three-day stay in space. The company says it has 28 prospective tourists signed up, who will be asked to advance half the ticket price as a deposit by the end of 2008.

But the real money, some analysts predict, is likely to be made from earth-bound ventures linked to the personal space flight industry. New Mexico has joined with Virgin Galactic to build a \$225 million spaceport and visitors center by 2010 in the desert near the U.S. Army's White Sands missile base. Space Adventures, of Virginia, together with the government of Singapore, is planning to spend at least \$115 million to build a similar facility there, along with a second \$265 million spaceport in the United Arab Emirates.

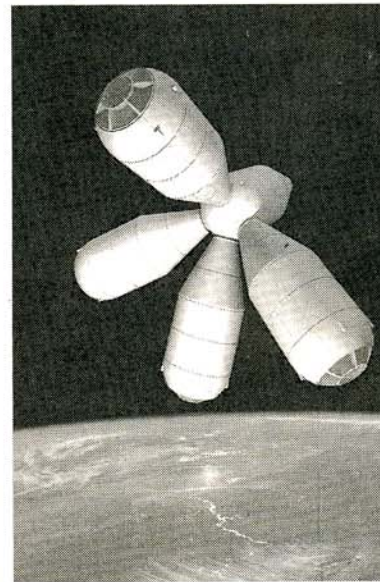
Xavier Claramunt, a founding director of Galactic Suite, said his company's Caribbean spaceport development would include resort villas and offer outdoor activities like golfing and scuba diving for tourists to use when they are not busy training for space.

New Mexico expects its "Spaceport America" to generate \$1 billion in annual revenue by 2020 and to employ more than 5,000 people.

Still, while the economic possibilities may seem endless to space-travel enthusiasts, some warn that environmental and safety concerns could put off many who could otherwise afford space travel.

"Many people are fascinated with the idea of space travel, but they are afraid that it's not ecological," said Jean-François Rial, chief executive of the French travel agency Voyageurs du Monde, which began promoting space tours for Virgin Galactic in July.

Whitehorn, the Virgin Galactic spokesman, said the company was developing a new rocket fuel made from nitrous oxide and oxidized rubber that would power the space plane. "The CO<sub>2</sub>



Galactic Suite

An artist's rendering of the proposed Galactic Suite space hotel in orbit.

emissions per person for one of our space flights will be less than a single business-class seat from London to New York," Whitehorn said. "It will be the most environmentally efficient space launch system ever developed."

The question of safety, however, does loom large, especially following a deadly explosion in July involving one of Virgin Galactic's planes. Three engineers were killed and three others critically injured during a test of a new fuel with one of the plane's engines.

"These companies are trying to start commercial operations before they really have a track record," said Marco Caceres, a space industry analyst at Teal Group, a consulting group based in Virginia. "None of these vehicles has really been tested that much. It is an open question whether the industry will be able to overcome one of these rockets blowing up with passengers on board."

Laronde, the prospective Virgin Galactic passenger, said the accident was a reminder of the high risks involved in this type of adventure.

"It makes you stop and think for a minute," Laronde said. "I'm certainly aware of the dangers, and I've thought about them, but I've never considered that I would not do it."

## IN OUR PAGES 100, 75 & 50 YEARS AGO

### 1907: Roosevelt Rankled

**NEW YORK:** A despatch from the Herald's correspondent published today says it is positively stated by friends of the President that there is only one contingency under which he would accept the nomination for the Presidency. This is that his enemies continued their attacks and made it appear that he had withdrawn because he knew he could not be re-nominated or re-elected if re-nominated. Such taunts, which are frequent nowadays on the part of Mr. Roosevelt's enemies, the President's friends assert, if persisted in, will rouse the fighting instincts in him, because they imply that his policies are no longer popular. Under those circumstances he might be willing to enter the fight to show that he is still the great idol of the people and that the public is with him and approves his plans for the regulation of corporations.

### 1932: Gamblers' Tax Break

**WASHINGTON:** Americans abroad who seriously attempt to play their systems against games of chance in legalized casinos may deduct gambling losses from their gross incomes, according to a ruling handed down today [Sept. 17] by Clarence M. Charest, chief counsel for the Internal Revenue Bureau. But they must be scientific in their methods. The ruling does not apply to play-

boys who gamble merely for sport. The ruling is applicable only "if the transactions producing these losses were entered into for profit, and the taxpayer submits sufficient evidence that the gambling transaction was entered into for profit to warrant the bureau's allowance of the losses."

### 1957: Will Russians Visit?

**MOSCOW:** Tourists from the Soviet Union will soon begin visiting the United States now that the regulation requiring fingerprinting of visitors has been relaxed, Deputy Premier Alexei Kosygin predicted tonight [Sept. 16]. For years Soviet tourists have not been able to enter the United States because the Kremlin insisted that fingerprinting was for criminals and that Russians could not submit to the practice. When it was deemed necessary for a Russian to go to America, he was provided with an "official" passport for which fingerprints were not needed. When Congress passed the changes in the fingerprint law Communist papers did not mention it. Last week, when President Eisenhower signed the bill, Tass, the Soviet news agency, filed from Washington a few grudging paragraphs. How many, if any, genuine tourists will now go to the United States is not known. The change is expected, however, to make possible tours of America by such groups as the Bolshoi Theater Ballet.