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The third column from this year's Chair of the Section of Science & Technology Law.
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Recently, physician-researchers have developed financial relationships with the investment industry. Although cooperative agreements between research-based pharmaceutical or biotechnology companies and physician-researchers have fostered a number of advances in medical treatments, the impact of the relationships between researchers and investment firms on the progress of medicine is not so clear. In fact, the ties between medical researchers and the financial community have raised concerns that the scientific enterprise may be compromised or impeded when researchers conducting clinical trials of new drugs or devices engage in ethically troubling and possibly illegal behavior. *By Mark S. Frankel, Ph.D.*
- 8 **PATENTS IN THE CROSSHAIRS**
The European Commission has recently made a controversial inquiry into competition in the pharmaceuticals sector. The interim findings are troubling. Rather than focusing on promoting improvements to Europe's byzantine regulatory landscape for pharmaceuticals, the report appears to characterize as suspect a range of practices relating to patents, patent litigation, settlements, and marketing of next-generation technologies that most had previously regarded as being business as usual in high-tech industries. The pharmaceutical inquiry may have far broader implications for other IP-driven sectors. *By Bill Batchelor*
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In 2006, six volunteers were seriously injured while taking part in a Phase I clinical trial for TGN1412, a new and promising compound being developed by TeGenero Immuno Therapeutics. Unfortunately, the TGN1412 study was not an isolated incident. Some irregularities identified in the TGN1412 trial procedure may be reflected in other trials. This article examines regulatory ways to improve the clinical trial process. *By P.R. Ferguson*
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No real-world collision between robotic cars has occurred yet. Accordingly, no court has considered how liability would be determined. However, it is clear that the day a court must assess liability for robotic driving mistakes is fast approaching. How a court will look at a tort caused by a robotic car is an exercise in prediction. But by looking at the history of other "self-driven devices," it is possible to imagine the factors that a court might consider. *By K. Krasnow Waterman and Matthew T. Henshon*
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