

Starwood trims jobs, C2

Deaths: C4 Weather: C6

Business & Money

Philanthropist gives \$10M to Burnham, C2

Markets:

Dow -226.44
8,149.01

S&P 500 -28.95
845.14

NYSE -200.56
5,300.90

Nasdaq -50.50
1,507.84

Oil -\$0.72
\$41.44

Look ahead: The Commerce Department releases its first look at 4th-quarter GDP today. Analysts expect a 5.5% drop.

OrlandoSentinel.com/business



PHOTOS BY GEORGE SKENE/ORLANDO SENTINEL

Unemployed Web designer Michelle Coutinho, 25, belts out a song about her career hopes Thursday for the 'Careereeki' contest sponsored by Workforce Central Florida and Orange County Public Schools.

JOB HUNTING ON A SONG AND A PRAYER

By SATTA SARMAH
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

If you're singing the blues about being unemployed in these tough economic times, you might want to grab a camera and capture your melancholy on video. It just might help you find a job.

It's an unusual talent show called "Careereeki," in which job-seekers submit videos of themselves singing about a career they want to pursue. The winner will get a prize package valued at \$8,000, which includes a scholarship for career training, job shadowing in the chosen career field, a gift certificate for a personal makeover and a \$100 gas card.

The unusual talent show is being run by Workforce Central Florida, Orange County Public Schools and an advertising agency called EVOK.

While the prizes will probably lure people, Workforce Central Florida, which handles training and other employment issues for the state, is hoping the contest will inspire some creative — and qualified — job applicants.

"I think this is going to hit a different audience for us, perhaps a more youthful and creative audience. I think it's going to stir a buzz," said Kimberly Cornett, a spokesperson for Workforce Central Florida.

More than 40 job-seekers have submitted videos, but "Careereeki's" sponsors are expecting hundreds of submissions before the winner is announced Feb. 16, said Jourdan Hathaway, director of client services for EVOK, the advertising firm that pitched the idea to the agencies.

"Other than doing some boring advertising, we thought we would do something out of the box,"



Millisha Kelly, a student at Colonial High and Orlando Tech, sings about her career hopes on Thursday.

said Stephen Hendricks, senior marketing manager for the school district's Career and Technical Education division.

Down-on-their-luck job-seekers are channeling their frustrations into catchy lyrics and dance moves. One submission, called "Put a Glove On It," features three would-be medical assistants singing and dancing to the beat of Beyonce's "Single Ladies: Put A Ring On It."

"And if you wanna be safe, put your gloves on it,"

PLEASE SEE SONG, C4

Bowl overflow not so super

By JENNIFER LARINO
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

Unlike previous occasions when the Super Bowl has taken place in nearby Tampa, this year's game is not expected to generate much spillover business for Orlando-area hotels, restaurants and attractions, local tourism experts say.

Orlando hoteliers are reporting only a slight increase in bookings tied to Sunday's championship football game in Raymond James Stadium, said Rich Maladecki, president of the Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association.

Although the National Football League and the game's network broadcaster, NBC, are each having high-profile events in Orlando prior to the big game, "most sponsors are choosing the Tampa area, to be closer to the game," Maladecki said.

In 2001, when the Super Bowl was last played in Tampa, Orlando-area hotels reported a steady flow of game-related bookings in the weeks leading up to the event. The league and the game's corporate sponsors, who together control most of the game tickets, always book large blocks of hotel rooms. But in addition, thousands of fans tend to converge on a host city and its environs — even if they don't have stadium tickets — especially if the game features popular, big-market teams.

Maladecki and others blame this year's lack of spillover business in Orlando on two things: the nationwide recession, which has pushed consumer confidence to historic lows, and the presence in the championship game of the Arizona Cardinals, a small-market team with little or no national fan



Joe Burbank/ORLANDO SENTINEL
A Super Bowl logo is hung at the Gaylord Palms Resort on Wednesday.

PLEASE SEE BOWL, C2

Bright House to raise rates

By ETAN HOROWITZ
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

Bright House Networks said Thursday it will raise the monthly cost of standard cable service 4.7 percent in March, an increase the cable provider attributed to rising programming costs.

Standard cable customers will see their rates go from \$52.99 to \$55.49 a month. The bills for digital cable subscribers will rise 5.8 percent, from \$59.99 to \$63.49.

"We have worked really hard to keep them as low as we can," said Bright House spokeswoman Sara Brady. "... Our expenses are being increased, and we have to manage that somehow."

In the past year, Bright House, which has about 929,000 customers in Central Florida, has been engaged in several high-profile negotiations with networks over the cost and placement of channels in its lineup.

Bright House spokesman Brian Craven said the addition of Fox Sports Florida and an agreement to keep Viacom channels occurred too recently to be a factor in the coming rate increase. Generally, sports programming is the most expensive for cable companies to broadcast.

"Programmers are trying to maintain their revenues, which is why all of the cable providers

PLEASE SEE CABLE, C4



Surviving the recession
A monthlong Sentinel help team series

- ◆ This week: Frugal living
- ◆ Saturday: Making some extra bucks
- ◆ More tips: Go to OrlandoSentinel.com/helpteam

LESS LEISURE SPENDING ISN'T THE END OF FUN

By LINDA SHRIEVES
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

Americans are hooked on expensive entertainment. We pay to watch first-run movies and don't think twice about eating at a restaurant — and putting the tab on a credit card. In Central Florida, many residents routinely visit theme parks that for many tourists are a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

But faced with the worst recession in decades, many Americans are cutting back on such amusements. In a Gallup survey taken in November, 44 percent of Americans said they were eating out less often, while 40 percent said they were trimming movies and concerts from their spending plans.

But other than movies and restaurants, where else can you cut expenses — and still amuse yourself?

Although it's unthinkable to many, Rebecca Robinson recently canceled her cable-television service to save money. Her family doesn't watch much television anyway, she said, so now she buys a few children's DVDs each month for her 3-year-old daughter, who can watch them repeatedly.

She also started renting movies by mail, so she and her husband can watch them at home on weekends.

"Even a \$20 Netflix subscription plus the cost of a few videos is still less than cable," said Robinson, who lives in Maitland.

Being frugal doesn't mean you have to be bored. Many museums offer free admission one day a week. Colleges offer free lectures, while bookstores bring in authors for free appearances.

And many Floridians are so busy with theme parks that they overlook the state's

PLEASE SEE LEISURE, C6

Union proposal is bad for everyone

Women across the country, myself included, couldn't help but smile Thursday at the photos of a beaming 70-year-old Lilly Ledbetter standing next to President Barack Obama as he signed into law an act bearing her name that makes it easier for employees to sue for wage discrimination.

Ledbetter, whose story became a favorite of Obama's on the campaign trail, discovered at the end of a 19-year career as a supervisor at Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. that men working at her same level were being paid more.



COMMENTARY
Beth Kassab
SENTINEL COLUMNIST

Her joy and relief as she clasped Obama's hand at the signing ceremony showed the justice she deservedly felt.

The law is a harbinger of more sweeping labor and employment changes to be ushered in by the Obama administration.

Not all the reforms on the Democrats' agenda, however, will bring such warm and fuzzy feelings.

The Employee Free Choice Act, also known as "card check," is feeding an undercurrent of concern in Central Florida business circles — and for good reason.

PLEASE SEE KASSAB, C6