

Sleep well with lux sheets. LIFE, 1D

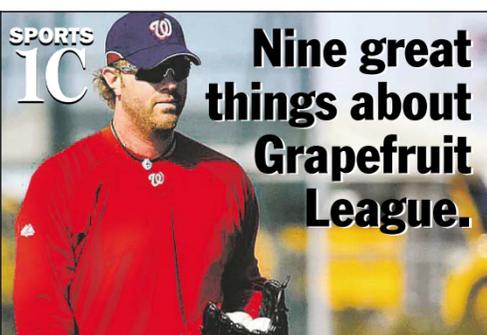
Former Melbourne Mayor John Buckley dies at 75.
SPACE COAST, 1B

FLORIDA TODAY

SERVING THE SPACE COAST

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2009

75 CENTS



SPORTS IC
Nine great things about Grapefruit League.

LIFE



Brevard Idol is back for a fourth season

FLORIDA TODAY's annual singing contest is back, and if you think you've got what it takes, we'd like to hear you sing. This year's contest will be hosted at **brevard.metromix.com**. Last year's winner, Ginnette Ward, is **above**. Get more on **1D**

Soldiers pray for each other in battle



As the chaplain at the Air Force Theater Hospital at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, "Spirituality" columnist Norris Burkes often asks wounded soldiers what they are praying for. Their answers contain some surprises, **1D**

WEATHER

Sunny, highs near 67
Chance of rain 5 percent.
Winds 8-16 mph. Overnight lows near 56, **12A**

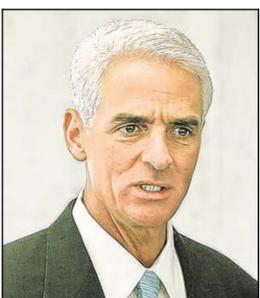
BUSINESS



Civic leaders honored in 4 under 40 event

Four Brevard residents and a Merritt Island student are recognized Friday for being community leaders. The 4 under 40 event is a formal nod to the area's young and talented by an organization called LEAD Brevard, **10C**

FLORIDA



Crist taps stimulus aid for balanced budget

Gov. Charlie Crist proposes a \$66.5 billion state budget Friday, leaning heavily on federal stimulus money to rescue Florida from tax increases and more cuts in state services, **8B**

SPACE

Next rocket launch

March 5: A United Launch Alliance Delta II rocket carrying NASA's Kepler spacecraft on a mission to find distant Earth-like planets, from pad 17B at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. **Launch window:** 10:48 p.m. to 11:18 p.m.

The latest Space Coast news: **FLORIDATODAY.com**
Gannett Co. Inc.

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Plan can't please everyone

Obama, FDR not perfectly matched for comparison

BY TOM RAUM
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — In sheer size, the economic measures announced by President Barack Obama to address "a crisis unlike we've ever known" are remarkable, rivaling and in many cases dwarfing the New Deal programs that Franklin D. Roosevelt famously created to battle the Great

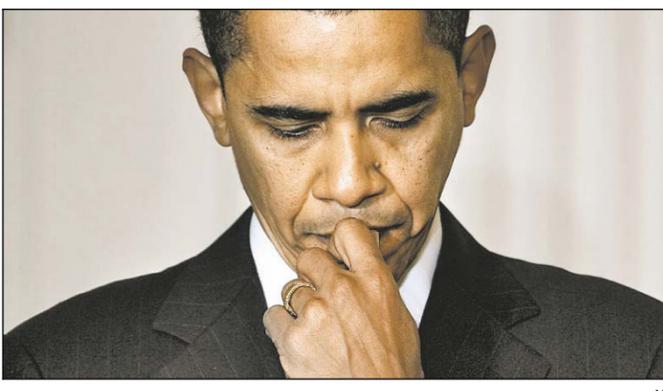
ANALYSIS

Depression. Winning approval was a political tour-de-force for the new administration.

Yet gloom and uncertainty persist about the plan's ability to deliver a cure for the economy's severe ailments.

Stocks plunged to six-year lows after the burst of bill signings, bail-out announcements and presidential pledges. And polls show Americans increasingly are worried about losing jobs and not having enough money to pay their bills.

Why the skepticism? See **PLAN, 5A**



Looking back. President Barack Obama's stimulus plan was a political tour-de-force, the results of which dwarf some New Deal programs.

WATER HEATERS: GETTING THE MOST FOR YOUR MONEY

What gets hot, for less



Rik Jesse, FLORIDA TODAY

Getting hotter. Senior research engineer Carlos Colon removes water from an integrated collector storage solar water heater to calibrate the system. The 40-gallon ICS system costs about \$3,500.

Testing 7 systems, researchers see more efficiency in solar

BY JIM WAYMER
FLORIDA TODAY

COCOA — In a 16-by-10-foot shed, researchers at the Florida Solar Energy Center run seven types of water heaters to find the cheapest and most efficient one.

With a \$150,000 federal grant, they're comparing how well the heaters work in hopes of saving energy and homeowners' money.

"We were trying to simulate a typical garage," said Subrato Chandra, project director for the energy center's Building America Industrialized Housing Partnership. "Our overall goal is research toward 'zero-energy' homes."

The researchers began their yearlong experiment this year in the new Hot Water Systems Labo-

ratory at the center's Cocoa campus. The systems include conventional and tankless electric water heaters, as well as natural gas and three different solar systems.

The solar systems are leading the pack in efficiency. The first-place model used about 39 kilowatt hours between Feb. 1 and Feb. 15, compared with 152 kilowatt hours used by the conventional electric water heater.

Solar water heaters cost more initially — they can be \$4,000 — but owners can hit a break-even point in 12 years or less, said Carlos Colon, a senior research engineer and task leader on the project. "The payback could be as early as seven years," he said. ■

Contact Waymer at 242-3663 or jwaymer@floridatoday.com.

Studying efficiency

The Florida Solar Energy Center's staff has been testing types of water heaters to determine which are the most energy efficient and cost effective. Read more about the study's data on **3A**



FLORIDA SOLAR ENERGY CENTER. The Legislature and Florida Energy Committee formed the center in 1974 during the energy crisis, in response to disreputable businesses bilking customers by making inflated claims about untested solar systems. The center, which rates solar systems, is the first state-supported energy organization.

Neighbors cleaning up disheveled structure



Christina Stuart, FLORIDA TODAY

Before. Evans Grocery Store, at 1361 Florida Ave. in Palm Bay, is closed Thursday. It will be converted into a community center with a small grocery store.

are working to transform it into a family-friendly place to shop, teach children about business and leadership, and for neighbors to look for a job.

The Powell Subdivision Neighborhood Watch, along with the Congregations for Community See **CLEANING, 9A**

MORE ONLINE. To see the accomplishments of the Congregations for Community Action, follow the link at **floridatoday.com**

Mortgage rescue may not save Brevardians

BY JOHN MCCARTHY
FLORIDA TODAY

There is little in President Barack Obama's mortgage rescue to offer hope for tens of thousands of Brevard County residents struggling with home payments.

When Obama unveiled his mortgage rescue plan Wednesday, he said it could help as many as 9 million families lower their mortgage payments and hopefully stave off foreclosure. The most immediate relief is available to those who owe no more than 105 percent of their home's value.

But with local median sale price of homes off 50 percent in the past three years, more than 30 percent of all local homeowners — about 30,000 households — owe more than that, according to real estate

research firm Zillow.

Only 17.5 percent of local homeowners with mortgages fall within the 80 percent to 105 percent loan-to-value ratio needed to qualify for streamlined, low-cost refinancing to take advantage today's historically low interest rates.

And that program is available only to those whose loans are owned or guaranteed by Fannie Mae of Freddie Mac. It is not known how many of those who owe less than 105 percent locally have such loans.

"It's not going to help those most afflicted from the loss of home equity," University of Central Florida economist Sean Snaith said. "The worst-hit states are not going to benefit very much."

See **MORTGAGE, 9A**