

Business

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▼ S&P -4.68 CLOSE 1,282.93	▼ NASDAQ -14.35 CLOSE 2,302.69

Guidant now likes Boston

Medical device maker picks \$27.2 billion offer over J&J's

By Mark Jewell
Associated Press

BOSTON: Medical device maker Guidant Corp. abandoned its support for a \$24.2 billion acquisition bid from Johnson & Johnson in favor of Tuesday's far richer \$27.2 billion offer from Boston Scientific Corp.

The shift came after Guidant's board had twice rejected higher offers from Boston Scientific in favor of a J&J proposal that Guidant had said offered a speedier route to completion after more than 13 months of contentious deal making.

But Boston Scientific on Tuesday morning increased the stakes again by offering a price more than \$2 billion richer than its previous bid last Thursday. Boston Scientific also sought to sway Guidant's board in its favor by negotiating new terms in a third-party deal that will raise more short-term cash for Boston Scientific to complete a Guidant acquisition.

Please see **Guidant, D4**

Tax credit unclaimed by many

Low-income workers to get help filing returns in Summit

By John Higgins
Beacon Journal staff writer

Last year, Summit County low and moderate-income residents claimed \$562,000 in refunds from the Earned Income Tax Credit, but \$19 million is going unclaimed in the county, according to the most recent statistics.

"This money just stays in the Treasury," IRS specialist Gloria McGhee said at a press conference on Tuesday announcing the program.

On Monday, Akron-Summit Community Action will begin helping low-income workers file their tax returns and claim the benefit. The maximum refund possible is \$4,400. It's not charity.

"The recipients have earned the right to receive this refund," said Jeffrey Wilhite, Akron deputy director of urban planning and development.

Please see **Tax, D2**

U.S. banks see decline in earnings

Bankruptcies, flat yield curve take toll during fourth quarter

By Eileen Alt Powell
Associated Press

NEW YORK: A surge in consumer bankruptcies and a flattening yield curve took a bite out of fourth-quarter earnings at some of the nation's largest banks, and some stepped up provisions for future loan losses.

Several banks - including Wells Fargo & Co., Cleveland's National City Corp. and Cincinnati's Fifth Third Bancorp in Cincinnati - missed analysts' profit expectations.

Please see **Banks, D2**

At right, Brian Hershberger (left) and Rob Delagrange paint Goodyear's new blimp. Below, Delagrange makes a leap of faith about 60 feet up as construction supervisor Jared Haren watches.



Goodyear paint crew adds gloss to exterior of airship

Silver lining for blimp

By Jim Mackinnon
Beacon Journal business writer

Painting Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.'s new blimp requires leaps of faith.

Plus literal leaps, in a manner befitting an extreme sport.

The Blimp Garage crew was already at work by 7 a.m. Tuesday inside the Wingfoot Lake hangar. A two-person team used a motorized boom lift to maneuver up, down and around the 192-foot-long airship.



One of a series: The envelope top gets painted

As they went, they coated the inflated envelope with a glossy, latex acrylic paint.

Meanwhile, two other painters prepared to use a decidedly different, lower-tech method to spread "Bright Silver" paint along the top of the envelope.

Rob Delagrange's and Brian Hershberger's job this day was to paint while in so-called bosun's chairs (short for the nautical term boat-swain chairs). The seats are suspended with thick ropes that run up through ceiling pulleys and back down to crew members on the floor acting as "fall-line holders."

The painters have faith that, if they slip on top of the blimp, the fall-line holders' firm grip on their ropes will keep them from falling and hitting the hard concrete floor some 66 feet below. (If their faith is misplaced, the bosun's chair apparatus includes a rope brake the painter can grab



PAUL TOPPLE/Akron Beacon Journal photos

Brian Hershberger (left) and Rob Delagrange use boatswain chairs while painting the top of the new Goodyear blimp at Wingfoot Lake.

slow or stop a fall.) The chairs support the painters' weight while allowing them to move, moonwalk-like, atop the bouncy surface.

"The bosun's chair is ideal," said Jared Haren, airship construction supervisor. "You have freedom of mobility."

Delagrange pointed to the special sneakers he and Hershberger wore. The soles and heels are smooth so that no tiny rocks can get stuck in

them and possibly puncture the envelope as they walk atop it.

Delagrange figured he has used a bosun's chair at least 20 times to work on blimps. This time, he was looking forward to using a roller to paint the top of the blimp.

"The last one I had to do, we had to use a brush," he said.

"It used to be a 4-inch brush," Hershberger added.

Please see **Blimp, D2**

ON WEIGHT

When it comes to building and flying blimps, every ounce counts.

Actually, the Blimp Garage crew counts every ounce.

"Everything on the airship is weighed. We keep a log," said Jared Haren, the airship construction supervisor. "A thousand cubic feet of helium will only lift so much."

For example, the latex paint covering the envelope weighs 300 pounds when wet, Haren said. "We calculate the dry (paint) weight afterward."

How much does the American flag attached to the belly of the Goodyear airship weigh? Try 0.63 pounds.

Ohio.com: Read previous articles, watch videos and see photos from the "Blimp Garage" on the **Newsroom Projects** page.

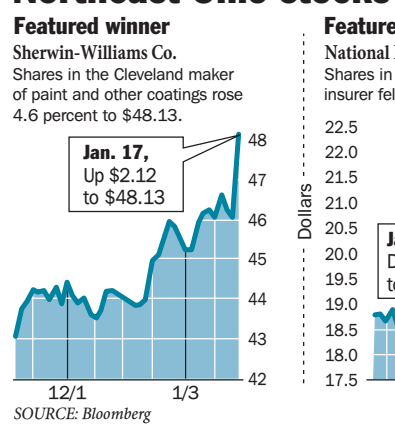
BOTTOMLINE

Strickland's wins national attention

Strickland's, the longtime Akron ice cream retailer, was named among the 50 top new franchises in the country by Entrepreneur Magazine. It was also in the magazine's list of the top 500 franchises overall.

strength and stability, growth rate and size of the system. Startup costs and the number of defunct units were also considered. Strickland's, which was founded in 1936 in the Ellet section of Akron, began franchising its concept in 2002. It has 13 units in Ohio, Colorado, Florida and California. It is looking to open them across the country.

Northeast Ohio stocks



Learn on Web about trust funds, how they work

A trust fund has become a popular and common estate tool for protecting assets from probate and tax concerns. Internet sites offer information on trust funds, how they work and the various types. Here are a few sites:

- Estate and Retirement Planning**
www.estateretirementplanning.com/trustfunds.html
Covers a host of general



topics related to trust funds.

- Federal Consumer Information Center**
www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/money/trustfund/trustfund.htm
Features sections on the benefits of a trust and different types.

- National Consumer Law Center**
www.consumerlaw.org/initiatives/seniors_initiative
Offers insights on how to avoid trust scams and probate issues.
- SaveWealth.com**
www.savewealth.com/planning/estate/livingtrusts/
Offers basics and thorough overview of a living trust.