



DOW -55.79 CLOSE 10,755.12	T-BONDS -0.05 CLOSE 4.67
S&P -1.53 CLOSE 1,255.84	NASDAQ -5.55 CLOSE 2,246.46

Business

Storm-related unemployment
Jobs lost after Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma climb to 599,700.
D2

On helium

Goodyear's still unnamed airship gets all of its lift from helium, a colorless, odorless, lighter-than-air nonflammable gas. Helium is the second most abundant element, and has nearly 93 percent of the lifting power of flammable hydrogen, which is the most abundant element. Helium exists primarily as a gas. The United States is the world's largest supplier.



Third article in series

This is the third installment of Blimp Garage, an occasional series chronicling the people and milestones involved in building Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.'s new blimp at Wingfoot Lake.

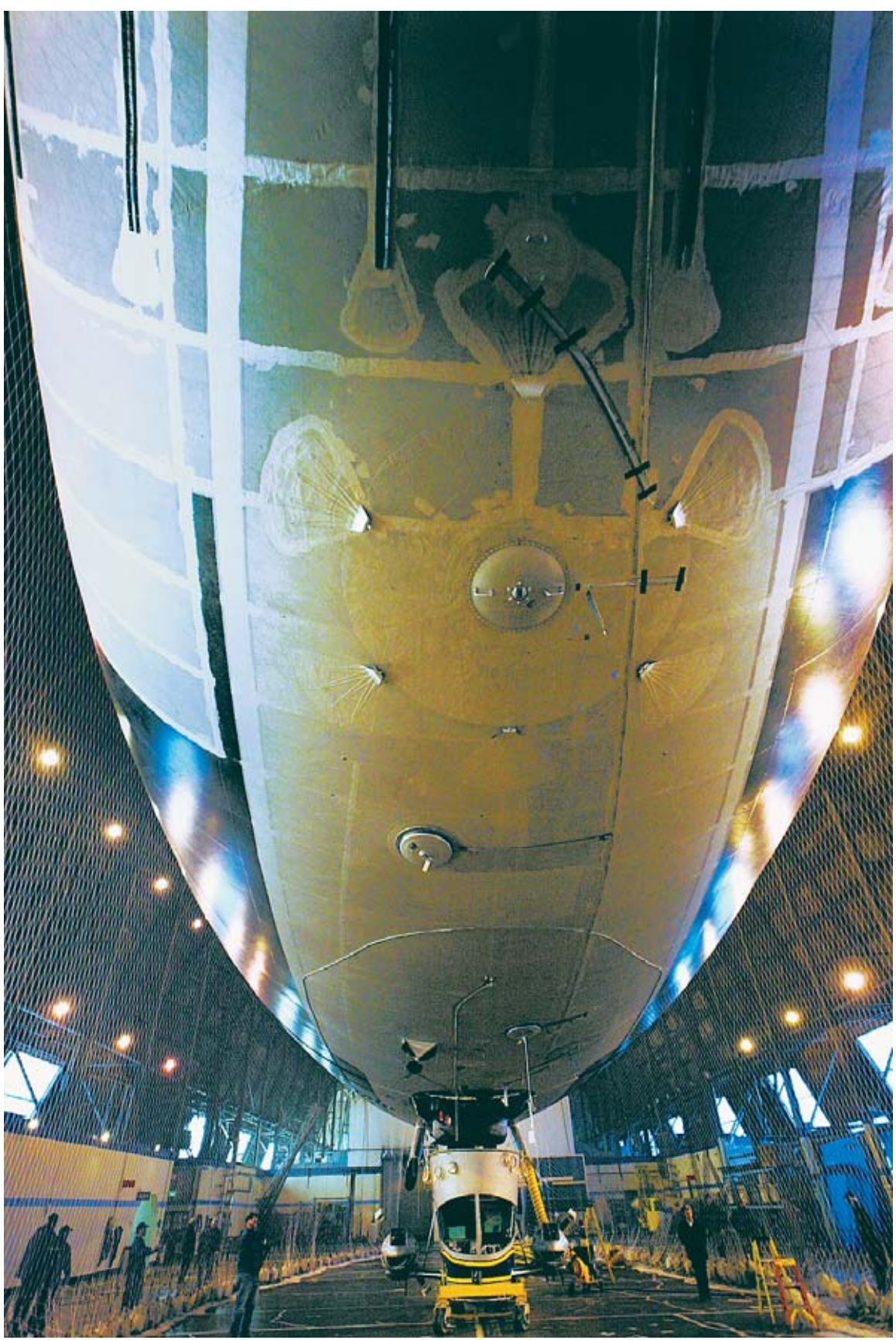
■ **Last Sunday:** Crew members finished patching the 192-foot-long envelope.

■ **Thursday:** The envelope was inflated with helium for the first time.

■ **Today:** The gondola, or car, was attached to the bottom of the envelope.

■ **Coming Sunday:** Meet some of the people who are building this new blimp.

■ **Online:** More photos at Ohio.com



A Goodyear blimp-building crew moves the 3,200-pound gondola into position Thursday morning beneath the new airship's envelope at Goodyear's Wingfoot Lake hangar in Suffield Township.

Welcome to cabin in the sky

Goodyear blimp crew carefully attaches gondola to envelope of new airship

By Jim Mackinnon
Beacon Journal business writer

It was the mating dance of the whale and the armadillo. Maybe that sounds unnatural, but it describes the scene Thursday morning at Blimp Garage. It takes careful, intricate work to get a fully inflated and floating 192-foot-long Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. airship envelope to hook up with its nearly 23-foot-long, 3,200-plus-pound gondola. You don't want to damage the

soft, thin-skinned underbelly of the ponderous envelope. And you want to make sure the metal gondola, where the pilot and passengers sit, is fully and firmly attached come time for the finished blimp to go up, up and away for the first time next spring. The blimp-building gang was fully up to the task Thursday morning, even with outside temperatures near zero and the interior of Goodyear's Wingfoot Lake hangar maybe 20 degrees

warmer. It's a lighter-than-air dance the seasoned crew knows well. "For today, what we want to do is get it hooked up and the weight on there," said Ron Duna, airship repair station manager. "(We're) right on schedule, exactly where we should be." What had been a pancake-like blob of neoprene fabric stretched out on the hangar floor was now

Please see **Blimp, D2**

U.S. warns Americans to conserve

Oil and natural gas production reeling

By Deb Riechmann
Associated Press

WASHINGTON: Oil and natural gas production in the Gulf Coast area probably will not recover from this year's hurricanes until next summer, Energy Secretary Sam Bodman said Thursday, urging conservation as the cost of heating homes is expected to soar this winter. "The infrastructure of our country took a real blow with Hurricanes Rita and Katrina," Bodman told reporters outside the White House. "Even to this day, we have about a third of the natural gas and a third of the oil that is produced in the Gulf of Mexico still shut in due to the damage that was done," he said. Short supplies will contribute to high energy prices this heating season, said Bodman, who urged Americans to step up conservation.

The Energy Department's Energy Information Administration recently predicted that households heating with natural gas can expect to spend from 50 percent to 70 percent more this winter, depending on location. The agency has scaled back its heating-cost predictions slightly because of mild weather during November. But with the recent onslaught of cold, stormy weather in the Midwest and Northeast, natural gas prices surged Thursday by 9 percent to a new high of nearly \$15 per thousand cubic feet for gas to be delivered in January. A year ago the price was \$7 per thousand cubic feet. Advocates for the poor have argued that as much as \$5.1 billion in federal energy aid is needed to keep up with the high fuel oil and natural gas prices people will face this winter. Energy legislation enacted this year authorizes that much money, but Congress has refused to appropriate it. The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) has been funded at about \$2 billion a year for several years. Congress, as part of a spending bill now being crafted, is proposing \$2.2 billion for this fiscal year and an additional \$1 billion in one-time emergency funds.

NATURAL GAS PRICES SURGED
Thursday by 9 percent to a new high of nearly \$15 per thousand cubic feet.

Merger to pay off for Akron General

Stark deal will make \$11 million for system

By Cheryl Powell
Beacon Journal medical writer

Akron General Health System will gain \$11 million if plans to merge its community hospital in Massillon with a competing facility go forward. This and other details about the proposed merger of Massillon Community Hospital and rival Doctors Hospital in nearby Perry Township are contained in hundreds of pages of documents the state attorney general's office released recently. Massillon Community Hospital is owned by Akron General, while Doctors Hospital is

owned by for-profit company Triad Hospitals Inc. of Dallas. The state had to approve the deal because it involves a nonprofit hospital merging with a for-profit venture. Now that the proposal has received the blessing of the state, the two sides plan to finalize the merger by early next month, Dan Cunningham, Akron General's senior vice president of legal services, said Thursday. According to details contained in public filings, Triad is paying \$35 million to Akron General to purchase Massillon Community Hospital. At the same time, Akron General is paying \$24 million to buy Doc-

Please see **Merger, D2**

Leaders of pilots union at Delta seek OK to strike

Rank and file to vote at bankrupt airline

By Harry R. Weber
Associated Press

ATLANTA: The executive committee of the pilots union at Delta Air Lines Inc. voted unanimously Thursday to ask rank-and-file members to authorize a strike. The decision came after a daylong closed-door meeting in New York, said Lee Moak, chairman of the executive committee.

The vote comes as the nation's third-largest airline, which filed for bankruptcy protection in New York on Sept. 14, has asked the court to reject the pilots' contract so it can impose \$325 million in concessions on its 6,000 pilots, in-

Please see **Delta, D2**



Gondoliers of Goodyear
Above, crew members maneuver the Goodyear blimp gondola into position Thursday beneath the envelope at the Wingfoot Lake hangar. At right, Tim Cartell adjusts sand-filled ballast bags. The new airship has not been named.

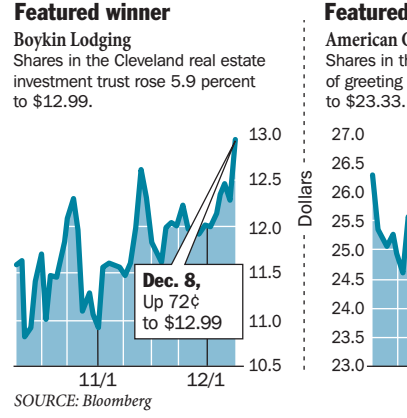


BOTTOMLINE

Taft asks PUCO to discuss energy

Gov. Bob Taft has asked the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio to find ways to promote new energy sources. Taft directed the PUCO to work with interested parties and the governor's Cabinet to address potential obstacles to expansion of decentralized or "distributed" generation of power from local sources. Distributed generation is small-scale power-generation equipment that is often owned by electric customers and located close to or near the customers' premises. The use of distributed generation can improve electricity quality and reliability as well as reduce air pollution emissions.

Northeast Ohio stocks



Sell stock at a loss to counteract a taxable gain

Want to maximize your tax benefits for 2005? Here are tips from H&R Block. **Examine your portfolio:** If you have a large net capital gain in 2005, you might want to consider reducing your tax liability by selling some stock that will generate a loss before year-end. Offsetting a short-term capital gain can be advantageous because



such gains can be taxed as high as 35 percent in 2005. **Think about a charitable gift:** Thanks to a provision in the Hurricane Katrina tax-relief bill, high-income taxpayers or those giving more than 50 percent of their adjusted gross income

can deduct the full amount of cash donations made between Aug. 28, 2005, and Jan. 1, 2006. The donations must be to a qualified charity, but do not have to be earmarked for disaster relief. This temporary law change may allow a larger tax benefit for donations of cash. Also, any donation paid by a credit card before year-end can be deducted on your 2005 return, even if you don't pay until 2006.