deal with ancian lessons and lenders for cuts of \$57 million a year from 2005 to 2009. The No 3 airline also got holders of \$332 million in Delta notes and certificates due in 2005 and 2006 to agree to exchange tnem for securities with later maturities

#### AIG settles investigations for \$126M

Insurance giant American International Group agreed to pay \$126 million to settle federal allegations that it helped PNC Financial Services Group commit accounting fraud. If the Securities and Exchange Commission approves, AIG will pay it \$46 million, and an independent monitor will examine certain AIG transactions from 2000 to 2004 to determine whether accounting rules were broken. AIG will pay the Justice Department \$80 million to settle a related probe.

#### Oracle has nominees for PeopleSoft board

Oracle plans to nominate four candidates to People-Soft's board at the 2005 annual meeting: UCLA economist Duke Bristow, former KeyCorp executive Roger Noall, former Laurel Crown Capital principal Laurence Paul and Northwestern University professor Artur Raviv. The PeopleSoft board has repeatedly rejected Oracle's \$24-a-share bid for the rival software firm, though shareholders voted in favor of it.

### Retailing: Stores bet on Black Friday

Industry throws deals at shoppers today to entice them to break this year's spending rut. 2B

## Personal finance: Hint for the holidays

Set a budget - now. Managing your money, 3B

#### Workplace: Gen X dads put families first

More men, especially younger ones, slow down careers to have time at home. 10B

#### Autos: Dealers push back against Big Three

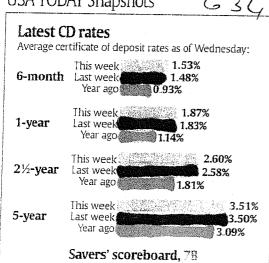
Car dealers say they'll cut back on inventory despite makers' plans to keep factories humming. 10B

Compiled by Tracy Lucht from staff and wire reports

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# **USA TODAY Snapshots**

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USA TODAY

# Efforts to slow growth may not be enough

By David I. Lynch **USA TODAY** 

BEIJING — Don't tell car salesman Wang Xin that the nese economy is growing too fast

At the Volkswagen dealership on Jingshun Lu whe works as sales manager, monthly sales fell from a peak cars in January to just 31 last month. They will probab main around that level for the next year. "I don't think it

ing back to the way it was before," Wan said ruefully.

Cover Storv

Wang's woes are no accident. In March government enacted tough new auto loa quirements, part of a series of administr measures aimed at taking the froth out d

world's fastest-growing economy. Required down paying were increased to at least 30% from 10% and maturities

trimmed to three years, down from five.

The moves are biting, as the government intended. B issue is whether enough other industries are cooling enough for the Chinese economy to avoid a disastrous landing." If Beijing can't rein in its hard-charging econ without resorting to tougher tactics, the good times will amid nose-diving corporate profits and socially destabili

"Despite the cooling measures we've seen over the

# Calendar is on the

Stocks tend to prosper as year ends, new one begins

By Adam Shell **USA TODAY** 

NEW YORK - If you believe in stock market history, the predictive ability of statistics and the long-scorned technique

known as market timing, Markets now is as good a time as ev-

er to own stocks.

"Seasonal" factors, or the propensity of stocks to go up the most in the threemonth period beginning in November and ending in January, could again give stocks a strong tailwind, money managers say. That could offset worries now weighing on stocks, including the weakening dollar, the swelling budget deficit and the threat of higher interest rates.

While analysts say it's not prudent to base all investment decisions on seasonal factors, they admit it plays into their thinking now. There's no shortage of statistical fodder to explain why:

► Triple play. Since 1950, November, December and January have constituted the best three-month span for stocks, as

the Standard 8 index has gaine average, during the Stock Trader says.

► November The year's poor fall even further as fund manag their losers for ta before closing the Oct. 31. As a resu hunters swoop stocks "on sale," sults in a big pe boost for the S& Smith Barney stu occurs in Januar beaten-down sto

➤ Double D's. be the best-perfe Dow lones industr the Dow has finish 73% of the time. of 1.5%, Ned Davis

► Last five pl gains. Stocks also of one year and th one. Dating to 197