

# Orlando Sentinel

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Condominiums could become a hot trend in downtown Orlando.

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Tavaris Capers' 2 TDs not enough to stop a 49-28 Virginia Tech win.

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FOUNDED 1876

## FBI joins probe into Iraq blast

Shiites mourned their slain cleric but lashed out at American security forces.

By ALEX RODRIGUEZ and GARY MARX  
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

BAGHDAD, Iraq — More than 300,000 Muslims began a three-day, 110-mile funeral procession Sunday to mourn the moderate cleric and Saddam Hussein opponent who was killed in a Friday car-bomb attack.

While Shiites marched from Baghdad to Najaf for Ayatollah Mohammed Baqir al-Hakim's funeral, Iraqi and U.S. officials said at least eight suspects have been detained, including two with possible links to al-Qaeda.

Also Sunday, the FBI agreed to join the investigation of the blast that killed at least 125. Cautioning that the probe is in its early stages, officials said they still have little idea who carried out the attack outside a Shiite shrine in the holy city of Najaf.

The FBI had been staying away from the investigation to avoid aggravating tensions with the Shiite community in Najaf. That changed Sunday when the top official in Na-

PLEASE SEE IRAQ, A12



MISHA JAPARIDZE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In Baghdad, Iraq, Iraqi Shiite Muslim women chant as they wait to see a symbolic coffin for the slain Ayatollah Mohammed Baqir al-Hakim at the Kadhamiya shrine Sunday.

## Fears grow that cyberattack may strike America

1 in 2 polled says nation's network at risk

By CHRIS COBBS  
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

Americans are increasingly worried that terrorists could launch cyberattacks against banks, transportation networks and other critical systems, a new survey shows.

And technology experts say those fears are grounded in reality.

"I think there is an 80 percent probability we could see an attack in the next two years," said Paul Henry, vice president of CyberGuard Corp.,

an Internet-security firm based in Fort Lauderdale.

"We know the expertise is out there among hackers and terrorists. It's simply a question of the will of terrorists to launch an attack."

One in two adults expressed concern about the vulnerability of national infrastructure to terrorist hackers in a poll conducted by the Pew Internet & American Life Project and released Sunday.

PLEASE SEE CYBER FEARS, A6

Two doctors in Tennessee are pioneering a procedure that offers parents a chance to confront the birth defect spina bifida.



PHOTOS BY GEORGE SKENE/ORLANDO SENTINEL

In Nashville, Tenn. Hope Lach and her son Bryce visit with Dr. Joseph Bruner (above), and Nicole Barber (below) looks out the window at Bruner's home recently. The children underwent fetal surgery for spina bifida. The birth defect occurs when the spine fails to close properly during development.

## Fetal surgeons operate on hope

By ROBYN SURIANO  
SENTINEL MEDICAL WRITER

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The children never seem to stop moving, running from one room to another in the sprawling house and outside to the pool. Some are in wheelchairs or braces; others propel themselves along on wobbly legs.

Two giant dogs — a Newfoundland and a Great Pyrenees — scour the floor for food. A cockatoo screeches from a living-room cage, and indignant cats dodge young hands.

"Where's Mable?" asks Meghan, a 4-year-old who has been pursuing the black cat relentlessly, forsaking her wheelchair to scoot expertly across the floor on her bottom.

"Cats are very smart," Dr. Joseph Bruner replies, his face stretching into one of his frequent wide grins. "I don't think you'll see Mable for the rest of the day."

It is the final day of a weekend get-together for the children and the Vanderbilt University doctors who operated on them before they were born, stitching up the openings on



their backbones that cause the birth defect spina bifida.

Every child has a number. Meghan is No. 31. Josiah, whose parents drove 38 hours and 27 minutes from Oregon, is No. 77. Bryce Lach, who flew in from Orlando with his parents and older brother, is the 146th baby operated on by Bruner and neurosurgeon Noel Tulipan.

Since 1997, more than 180 mothers and their developing babies have undergone the risky surgery at Vanderbilt rather than wait until after their children are born.

Someday, they may be hailed as pioneers of a successful procedure for treating spina bifida. Or doctors may conclude that the dangers of the operation outweigh the benefits. For now, it's too soon to tell.

But the parents who converged recently on the 49-year-old Bruner's home in the hills of Nashville are convinced early surgery helped lessen the severity of spina bifida complications, such as brain damage and

PLEASE SEE SURGERY, A16

## Democrats find Bush vulnerable on war, economy

By MARK SILVA  
SENTINEL POLITICAL EDITOR

NEW YORK — President Bush, personally popular yet politically vulnerable, faces a 14-month contest for re-election that may revolve more around a stumbling economy at home than a protracted war abroad.

But the Republican's chances in November 2004 hinge as much on the Democrats' ability this winter to identify an alluring and credible challenger, with a crowded and perhaps still-growing primary contest reaching high gear after Labor Day.

Bush, his leadership stripes earned in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks nearly two years ago, remains popular among nearly 60 percent of Americans surveyed in recent polls.

The war in Iraq has not gone as well as Americans hoped, the surveys show, and there is a growing discontent as the conflict almost daily claims more American lives. Since May 1, when the president declared major combat over, 144 Americans have died in Iraq, compared with 138 who died during the war. Yet a strong majority maintains that it was worth going to

PLEASE SEE DEMOCRATS, A14

### COLUMBIA INVESTIGATION

## NASA's fate may rest on chief's connections

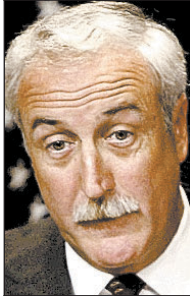
By GWYNETH K. SHAW  
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

WASHINGTON — In September of 1992, acting Navy Secretary Sean O'Keefe stood in the Pentagon's briefing room and addressed a blistering report that had just been released on the Tailhook scandal.

"I need to emphasize a very, very important message: We get it," he said. "We know that the larger issue is a cultural problem."

Last week, O'Keefe, 11 years older and a galaxy away from the Defense Department, repeated some of the very same words. Answering another harsh review — this one from the Columbia Accident Investigation Board — the NASA administrator again pledged that another culture will change: "We get it."

But when O'Keefe spoke in 1992, he was only four months away from losing his job, when Bill Clinton entered the White



Sean O'Keefe's White House ties could significantly help — or drastically hinder — the space agency's future.

PLEASE SEE O'KEEFE, A12

## WEATHER



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Plenty of sunshine early, with a chance of rain by afternoon. Low, 74.  
HIGH  
Forecast, B6

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### Holiday paper delivery

Because of the Labor Day holiday, today's newspaper is being delivered to all subscribers as part of their regular subscriptions.



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