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## SPECIAL REPORT

### Central Fla.: How Bad Is It?

by Diane Sears

#### SMALL BUSINESS

##### Economic 'Spasm'

"It's taken awhile to hit small businesses. ... A tough economy is going to shake out those that are having difficulty already. ... People are unsure of what's going to happen in so many areas that even if they're doing OK, they pause. There's the election, the tax implications for the future, negative news, the economic crisis. ... It's created a spasm ... a domino effect ... their business slows down and then their spending slows down. They say, 'Maybe I ought to save this \$2,000 I was going to spend on renovations and keep it in the mattress.' ... Biotech, high-tech and green-tech industries are growing. International travelers are still coming in, going to the theme parks, renting cars. I think we have it much better than other places."



Jerry Ross

— **Jerry Ross**, executive director, Disney Entrepreneur Center, Orlando