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State Jobless Rate Showing Signs Of Improvement

AUSTIN -- Texas' November unemployment rate was 8.0 percent, a decrease from 8.3 percent in October.

The rate, at two percentage points below the national average,

validates "the approach we take here in Texas," Gov. Rick Perry said on Dec. 18.

"Over the past two months, while the nation as a whole lost 122,000 jobs, Texas gained nearly

70,000 jobs, which is promising news for those Texans who are seeking employment," Perry said.

Also, according to figures publicized by the Texas Workforce Commission, the Texas civilian labor force reached its highest level ever at 12.1 million workers in November.

In other news, the Texas Workforce Commission alerted unemployment claimants about fraudulent e-mail text messages scammers use to illegally obtain personal identification information. Messages asking for that kind of information appear to originate from the commission, but the commission said it does not ask for personal ID numbers via email.

Job Turnover Rate Lowest In Years

State Auditor John Keel on Dec. 14 released an annual report on state employee turnover for fiscal year 2009.

The report says the statewide turnover rate was 14.4 percent for full- and part-time employees, the lowest turnover rate recorded in the last five years. The rate was 17.3 percent for the year 2008.

Excluding involuntary separations and retirements, the fiscal year 2009 statewide turnover rate was 8.1 percent. This rate, which is often considered more of a true turnover rate because it reflects preventable turnover,

also decreased since fiscal year 2008, Keel's report explained.

Factors that may have had an influence:

- Texas unemployment rates increased from 4.6 percent in fiscal year 2008 to 6.5 percent in fiscal year 2009.
- The average regular, full-time classified employee salary increased from \$32,848 in fiscal year 2005 to \$38,461 in fiscal year 2009.
- Agencies worked to improve retention efforts.

Bond Program To Reopen Shortly

The Texas Permanent School Fund Bond Guarantee Program, closed since March, will resume functions in the first quarter of 2010 to back bonds issued to pay for school construction, saving school districts millions of dollars in interest costs.

The Internal Revenue Service informed the Texas Education Agency that it would revise its rules to allow bonds to be guaranteed up to 500 percent of the cost value of the Permanent School Fund as of Dec. 16. The State Board of Education oversees the fund and sets its capacity.

The Texas Education Agency said it was forced to close the Bond Guarantee Program on March 11 when turmoil in the stock market caused the value of the state's Permanent School Fund to fall dramatically, reduc-

ing its capacity to back bonds.

According to TEA, the Bond Guarantee Program has backed more than \$83 billion in bonds since its inception in 1983.

Friedman To Run For Ag Chief

Hill Country musician, writer and animal rescue activist Richard S. "Kinky" Friedman ended his candidacy for governor and filed to run for state agriculture commissioner.

Friedman, running as a Democrat, will face Tyler rancher Hank Gilbert in the Democratic primary. Gilbert earlier ended his quest to be the Democratic Party's nominee for governor and filed for the agriculture commissioner when Houston Mayor Bill White announced his candidacy for governor.

Republican Todd Staples, a former state senator from Palestine, Texas, is the incumbent agriculture commissioner. Gilbert lost to Staples in the November 2006 election.

Friedman got 12.44 percent of the vote when he ran for governor as an independent in the 2006 general election.

Dome To Get Spruced Up In 2010

The State Preservation Board on Dec. 11 announced the Texas Capitol dome would undergo a 10-month repair project in the coming year. Estimated completion date is December 2010.



Workers will paint, fix leaky windows, remove asbestos and rust, and more. The job is not expected to interfere with Capitol tours and other normal activities.

Earle To Run For Lt. Governor

Former Travis County District Attorney Ronnie Earle, a Democrat who retired in 2008 after 35 years at the post, filed to run for lieutenant governor. Incumbent Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst, a Republican, filed for re-election earlier in December.

Keel Is Named State Agency Chief

The Texas Facilities Commission named former State Rep. Terry Keel, R-Austin, as director of the agency, effective Dec. 31.

Keel is a former Travis County sheriff. And, he served as House parliamentarian for then-speaker Tom Craddick at the end of the 2007 legislative session.

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 Mon.-Thurs.: 8 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.
 Fri. and Sat.: 8 a.m. to 9:15 p.m.
 Sunday: 7:30 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.

Let's Look Back...

24 & 48 YEARS AGO

Jan. 16, 1986

On Monday, Jan. 13, members of the Sparks group led by Margaret Brisco, Janice Obenhaus and Marilyn Mueller planted a tree at the City Ball Park. Members of the Sparks who were on had

for the occasion included Tiffany Wilkerson, Britni Wood, Amy Obenhaus, Michelle Schmidt, Sammi Gertson and Stacie Mueller...

Chester N. Glaiser, 72, of Eagle Lake, passed away on Jan. 8 at Eagle Lake Community Hospital...

Members of the sesquicentennial committee from Eagle Lake planted a Shumark oak. On hand for the planting were Mayor Elmer Struss, Elfe Thomas, Emily Stiles, and Paulette and Bob Klockman...

Mrs. Audrey Thibodeaux Davis of Rochester, New York, mother of Alice Dancy of Eagle Lake, passed away...

Texas A&M University held commencement exercises on Dec. 14. Among those receiving degrees was Suzanne Marie Frybert of Eagle Lake. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Frybert...

Kristi Luedecke, daughter of Tim and Judy Luedecke was honored on her fifth birthday at her home...

McDonald's in Columbus was

the scene of the sixth birthday party for Stacie Marie Mueller, daughter of Stacy and Marilyn Mueller.

June 23, 1960

Army 1st Lt. Robert Zahradnick, son of Mr. and Mrs. David J. Zahradnick, was awarded the Expert Infantryman's Badge while assigned to the 3rd Division's 4th Infantry in Germany...

Last week L.J. Spanihel defeated T.P. Dowdy for the title of the second fight, and during the weekend Ted Brunner defeated Bruce Johnson and Charlie Morgan to win the fourth fight...

Five local fishermen found fishing conditions just right at Rockport. They bought home 370 nice-sized speckled trout. Fishing out at Mills Wharf were Harold L. Williams, Billy Williams, Jack Mann, Bobby Payne and Gene Payne...

Calvin Christopher, son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Mahalite, arrived in Laughlin Hospital June 18 at 11 p.m. The Mahalites have two other sons, Anthony, 3 and Al, 20 months...

Mr. and Mrs. Donald R. Briscoe of Wallis welcomed a son, Douglas Brent into their family. He arrived at Laughlin Hospital June 20 at 11:31 p.m. The Briscoes have another son, Donald Ray, Jr., age two...

Specialist 4 Matthew Zaskoda whose parents are Mr. and Mrs. Steve Horelica of Garwood, participated in the 7th Army tank gunnery qualification program in Gergen-Home, Germany...

Citizens of the area learned of the death of Louis William Frederickson, Sr., prominent rice farmer of the Garwood Community on June 18...

Freddie Walker, nine year old son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Walker is recuperating in Laughlin Hospital from an accidental gunshot wound through the stomach...

A 1960 Corvair driven by Mrs. Lewis Kopecky was heavily damaged in a collision of two cars on W. Main St. near the City's water plant.

COLORADO COUNTY COURTHOUSE REPORT

12 Sentenced In District Court

Twelve individuals were sentenced in Colorado County District Court on Thursday, Dec. 17. They included:

Kassie Gomez Christiansen, escape while arrested/confined - felony. Sentenced to four years ID-TDCJ.

Kassie Gomez Christiansen, bail jumping and fail to appear - felony. Sentenced to four years ID-TDCJ.

Jason J. Christie, unlawful possession firearm by felon. Sentenced to two years ID-TDCJ, probated three years, fined \$500.

James E. Davidson, possession of a controlled substance. Probations conditions modified to ISF.

Mitchell Denley, delivery of controlled substance. Motion to dismiss motion adjudicated or revoke filed.

Donisha Lewis, aggravated assault with deadly weapon. Probation conditions modified, outpatient counseling through Career & Recovery Services.

Stephanie Lira, aggravated assault with deadly weapon. Sentenced to five years deferred

Continued on page 3

Eleventh Annual EAGLE LAKE New Year's Eve

Fireworks SHOW

The Show is put on by an All-Volunteer Crew and relies solely on Donations. Every dollar donated goes directly to the purchase of Fireworks.

Any and All Donations are Greatly Appreciated.

will be held
Thursday
 Dec. 31, 2009
 6:30 p.m.
Calhoun Road
 For More Info: 979-232-0233

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