

Local

Lowest rate of 2.8 percent recorded in February

Unemployment is not a problem in B-CS

By TRACEY BUCHANAN
Battalion Reporter

Unemployment in the Bryan-College Station Standard Statistical Metropolitan Area dropped to 2.8 percent of the civilian labor force in February, 1.9 percentage points lower than the Texas unemployment rate.

The Texas Employment Commission reports from January to February unemployment in the Bryan-College Station SMSA decreased 18 percent from 1,500 workers (3.5 percent of the labor force) to 1,230 workers.

The national unemployment rate is 8 percent.

And from one year ago, unemployment in the area decreased 21.2 percent, from 1,560 in February 1980 to 1,230 in February 1981, the TEC reports.

An SMSA is an area with a population of 50,000 or more

which is used to define the area's civilian labor force. About 25 SMSAs exist in Texas, said Walt Baker, TEC office manager.

The TEC estimated the total civilian labor force in February 1981 for the Bryan-College Station SMSA was 44,260, a 5.6 percent increase over last February's total of 41,920. The civilian labor force is the estimated number of employed and unemployed workers residing in the Bryan-College Station SMSA.

"We have an extremely healthy economy in this area that is increasing industry and causing more people to move here," Baker said.

New industries such as Texas Instruments and Babcock-Wilcox, the growth of Texas A&M University, and the fact that this area is an excellent place to live because of its size, central location and good

school system contributes to the tremendous growth in the past year, Baker said.

Total employment increased from 40,360 in February 1980 to 43,030 in February 1981, a 6.6 percent increase. Total employment was 40,950 in January 1981 and increased by 5.1 percent by the next month, according to the TEC's monthly civilian labor report.

Total employment figures include resident wage and salary workers, self-employed, unpaid family workers and domestics in private households, agricultural workers and workers involved in labor-management disputes, Baker said.

The size of the labor force and the total number employed represent record highs for this area, the TEC report said.

A domino effect begins as the

community grows, Baker said. For example, the new mall will supply about 2,000 new jobs, which will attract new residents. In turn, the increase in population will encourage new support and service industries, like restaurants and supermarkets, to open.

"During the last decade Bryan-College Station was the fastest growing SMSA in the state," Baker said.

Job openings are abundant, he said. The TEC filled 450 vacancies in February, and during the last fiscal year it filled 5,000 vacancies in the Bryan-College Station area.

Mechanics, machinists and experienced secretaries are needed in this area, Baker said.

The TEC estimated that 39,790 non-agricultural wage and salary jobs existed in this SMSA in February 1981, 4.7 percent more than the January 1981 total of 38,000.

The gain of 1,790 workers occurred mainly in non-manufacturing fields, which include jobs in mining, transportation, communications, utilities, trade, finance, insurance, real estate, services and government.

Between January 1981 and February 1981 government jobs, which include Texas A&M workers, increased by 8.7 percent, from 16,700 workers to 18,160. The increase was caused by the return of workers following the

semester break, the report said. The only decrease in non-manufacturing jobs was the 2.5 percent decrease in the number of construction workers. This number dropped from 2,440 in January 1981 to 2,380 in February 1981.

'Mockingbird' is simple, enjoyable

By SHARON D. RENFROW
Battalion Reporter

The simple setting, the small cast, the lack of fancy props and costumes and its style made the Dallas Theater Center's presentation of Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird" a joy to watch.

Lee's story of a girl's maturation in the South during the 30s came to life on the stage of the Bryan Civic Auditorium Tuesday night. The almost empty auditorium did not dampen the spirits of the players; they performed for a full house. From the beginning, the audience of less than 100 was taken from the modern interior of the auditorium and set to the small country town of Maycomb, Ala.

Finch took the case because he had to show the community that Robinson was innocent beyond doubt, even though he knew the man would be pronounced guilty because of community prejudice. The town didn't learn from the trial, but Atticus' children saw that whites and blacks are equal.

The narration kept the audience clear on the action and helped them see objects that were out of their view, but in the view of the characters.

One scene where this style was effective was the incident with the rabid dog. Though there was no actual dog on stage, the audience could see what the characters saw—a mad dog walking "as if its right side was shorter than its left side."

With the narration, setting and costume changes were not needed. The one wall and floor made of unfinished, uneven boards became apparent as the Atticus' house. The short porch with an opening for the door became Scout and Jem's summer playmate's house. Crooked steps leading off stage led to reclusive Boo Radley's house. And with a change of characters or the addition of a few chairs, the same props became the roles.

The audience accepted seeing

the same overalls on Scout or Jem or the same suit on Atticus because the narration and acting did the costume change for the players.

The style and the acting made

the play an excellent escape. After Atticus' final argument to the jury during Robinson's trial, the audience gave a verdict of "not guilty." To bad they weren't in the play.

Review

The date wasn't 1981 anymore, but 1932 when blacks were still considered unequal.

The play was presented in a narrative style with the players serving as story tellers. They set the situation and characters and then assumed the roles.

The primary characters were Atticus Finch, the lawyer who defended the black man accused of rape, Tom Robinson; Scout and Jem, Atticus' children.

The play centered around Finch's defending a lost case. A black man had been wrongly accused of rape, and the community had already decided that he was guilty.

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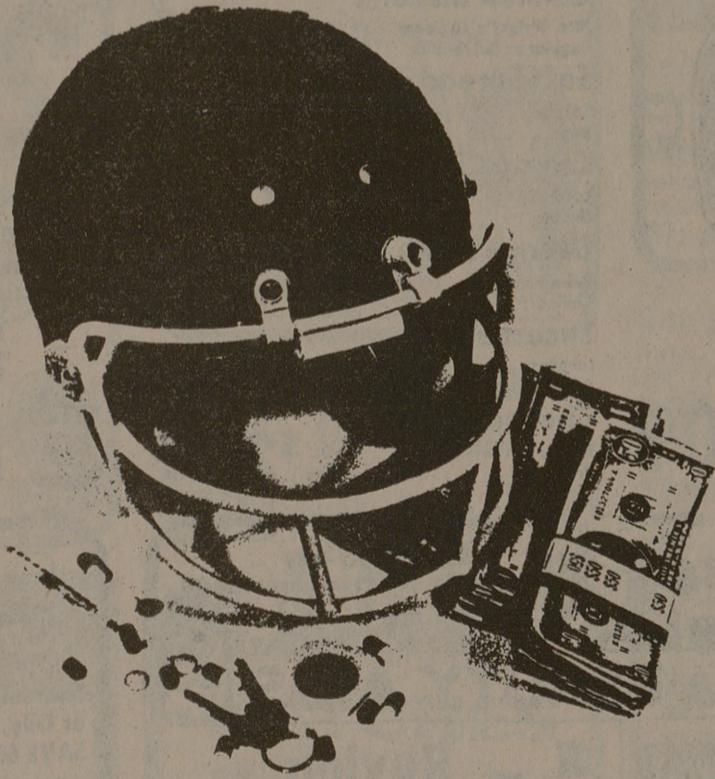
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