

Quirks in the News

No sexism in New York

United Press International
NEW YORK — The city no longer offers jobs to foremen, seamstresses, or linemen, thanks to a liberated New York City Personnel Department.

In an effort to purge sexism from the bureaucracy, the department has adopted new

"neutral" titles for nearly all positions.

Thus "foreman," "able seaman" and "lineman" have become "supervisor," "mariner" and "line repairer," respectively.

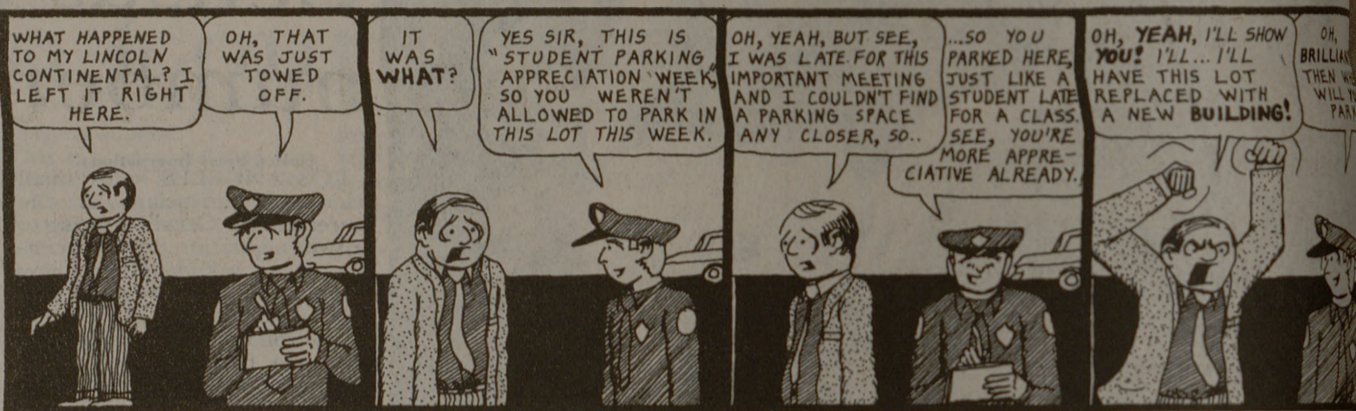
Perhaps the most eye-catching of all was the substitution for seamstress, which is now a "sewer," pronounced soh-er and not to be confused with the underground municipal installation.

Man returns \$20,000

CHICAGO — A disabled ironworker lived up to the philosophical adage, "easy come, easy go," in giving up \$20,000 in uncanceled checks to Wieboldt's Department store Monday.

Edward Japczyk, 63, found the checks scattered in a parking lot across from his home and immediately notified store officials.

Warped



by Scott McCulla



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States' economy suffers recession

Texas faces declining oil industry

United Press International
As oil drilling activity dips to its lowest point in years, and as the nation's economic recession worsens, Texas' economy is hurting — although not as badly as states in the Midwest and Northeast.

"The economy is faced with a double-barreled assault," said Charles Casdorf of the Houston Chamber of Commerce. "We're facing an energy recession and the national recession, which is finally affecting us." The last week in July, Hughes Tool Co. reported 2,671 active drilling rigs in the United States — the lowest number in the past 27 months.

Although Texas' rigs were the nation's most active, with 815 rigs at work, this number represented a drop of 20 from the week before. Last year at this time, Texas had 1,362 rigs working.

In the 35 counties covered by the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Houston, numerous energy related companies both production and support firms, had filed for bankruptcy from January through July. In the U.S. Bank-

ruptcy Court in Dallas for the same period, 17 energy firms told the court they were going under.

"A lot of them just don't have enough capital to wait it out," said Houston court spokeswoman Elayne Shochet Tatar. "And the interest rates are killing all of them."

In June, unemployment in the nation's third most populous state hit a record 7.7 percent — the highest jobless rate since the Texas Employment Commission began keeping such statistics in 1970. An average of more than \$13 million in unemployment benefits were paid out each week in June.

In July, the jobless rate dipped to 7.3 percent, but thousands of Texans supposedly immune from layoffs stood in unemployment lines.

Chuck Bertani, head of the Texas International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, said machinists and steelworkers have felt the brunt of the current hard times because of their dependency on the energy business.

Bertani estimated 11,500 of the 26,000 union machinists in Texas have been laid off in the last nine months. Bertani predicts as many as 50 Texas machine shops will go bankrupt in the next three months.

"With (the big companies) having layoffs like they are, they will keep jobs they have subcontracted out in the past. I know of about 40 shops that totally make their living off Cameron (Iron Works Inc), and I know they are going to go under," Bertani said.

The TEC estimates 40,000 people have been laid off this year and no one knows how many workers have lost their jobs through attrition.

Joe Hlavinka, a 32-year crane operator for ARMC Steel in Houston, last month had his work schedule reduced to one week every three weeks. He said the short schedule probably will remain in effect the rest of the year. Hlavinka, 59, hoped to work another year before retiring, but now is considering early

retirement to draw his pension.

Nancy Smith, 27, of Beaumont planned to take a one year leave of absence from her fifth-grade teaching job at Vidor Elementary School to stay home with her infant. She is heading back to school, however, for fear she may not have a job to return to if she waits too long. Her husband, Chuck, works at Beaumont's Ideco Corp. plant, a subsidiary of Dresser Industries, which builds oil drilling rigs.

Because of Chuck's status as a union official, Mrs. Smith said he had been told he would be one of the last to go if there are more cutbacks, but she said there were daily rumors of more layoffs.

Don Lander, 44, father of three, has worked in the oil equipment design industry most of his life. In September 1981, he was laid off by Baker Production Services, a subsidiary of Baker Oil Tools. A month later he was hired by Smith Industries Inc., only to have his work hours cut in May.

"I started in this field in 1957 and there have been several slow periods, but there's never been anything like this," he said. "I never thought this would ever happen. I always told my wife that I never had to worry about a job in Houston." Two of Lander's children are in college and he's told them they will now have to pay their own way.

"It's unquestionably the most difficult economic period Texas has experienced in a good many years and it is a reflection of probably the deepest kind of recession we've had for a very, very long time," said Terence Travland, assistant chief of the TEC Economic Research Department.

"The last significant recession we had in Texas was really in 1975-1976. The highest rate of unemployment was in June of 1976 when the rate reached 7.0 percent," Travland said.

Dr. Francis "Doug" Tuggle, Dean of Administration at Rice University, believes the worst is yet to come. "I don't look for any substantial pickup for the next

12 to 18 months," he said. Tuggle maintains a Darwinian attitude about energy firms going bankrupt.

"In the post oil-crisis period, there were too many oil companies. This is the shakeout. The fittest firms will survive. The fewer firms that survive will be more fit," Tuggle said. "But when the nation's economic engine recovers, Texas is going to fuel it."

Tuggle believes the state's political and business climate, its lack of a personal income tax and its lack of labor unions, and its "can-do" spirit will help it bounce back from the current bad time. Various pockets of the state support Tuggle's optimism.

Houston, the state's biggest city with the most people dependent on oil, has recorded the highest raw number of layoffs. Unemployment in June was 7.1 percent more than a third higher than it was two years ago.

But Houston is still expanding, largely because people believe demand for oil inevitably will rebound. The National Association of Realtors predicts Houston will lead the nation in housing starts for the eighth consecutive year.

In Dallas, Texas financial, insurance and mercantile capital with a fairly diversified economy, unemployment climbed to 7.2 percent in June.

San Antonio's five military bases have helped provide a steady economy despite the recession, according to Ken Daly, assistant director of the city department of economic and employment development. "The military provides a sort of cushion for the overall economy by providing a steady employment base and steady income," Daly said. "It keeps a large percentage of San Antonio consumers with jobs, which generates more jobs."

However, the manufacturing sector in San Antonio has been hard hit by the recession. Swearingin Aircraft Inc., laid off 400 people earlier this year — the largest single layoff in San

Antonio this year.

Unemployment in San Antonio reached 8.9 percent in June and a recent study by the Antonio Chamber of Commerce said employers in that city are paying 27 percent lower wages than the national average.

In the oil-rich West Texas cities of Midland and Odessa, the downturn in drilling activity tells the story. Midland reported a 7.6 percent unemployment rate in June while Odessa entered an 8.4 percent jobless

In the agricultural center of Lubbock, officials estimate many as half of the farmers in the South Plains and Panhandle are facing heavy losses and some are facing bankruptcy because of damage from heavy rains that hail this year.

State Agriculture Commissioner Reagan Brown estimates damages of \$636 million in cotton and grain crops in the Panhandle. The crop loss, coupled with high interest rates, low commodity prices and disaster for those who are their living off the land. Unemployment in Lubbock in June was 6.2 percent.

In Austin, the economy remains strong with a 4.6 percent unemployment rate in June, one of the lowest in the nation.

Texas Instruments Inc. laid off some workers because of slow demand for semiconductors, and Westinghouse, which operates an industrial motors plant north of Austin, laid off some workers in July because of slow demand for equipment. However, Motorola Inc. recently announced openings at its Austin plant.

In El Paso, jeans manufacturers — outranked in jeans production only by Hong Kong — have lost money from the recession.

In the rich farming land of the Rio Grande Valley, unemployment soared to 13.3 percent in the Brownsville-San Benito Harlingen area and 14.5 percent in the McAllen-Edinburg area.

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Check your boxes for a copy of the 1983 Aggadillo yearbook contract. If for some reason your organization has not received a contract and you group wishes to be included in the Aggadillo yearbook, contact our office at 845-2681 or 845-2611. Alternatively, a representative of your group may drop by our office, RM 0012 in the basement of the Reed McDonald Building and pick up a contract.

Pre-Law Society

General Meeting

Come, Join, Get Acquainted

#308 Rudder 7 p.m.