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Gas prices edging down, lowest in four years

WASHINGTON (AP) — With spring in the wings and vacation season on the way, there is good news for many Americans: cheaper gasoline.

No, the nation is not heading back to the two-bits-a-gallon days. But in some parts of the country, prices have fallen under \$1 a gallon in recent months, the lowest since 1994.

Ten gallons for less than ten bucks? "I knew they were going down, but this is the first day I noticed the price was less than the gallons I bought," said Toni Walling of Des Moines as she purchased gasoline at 99.9 cents-a-gallon.

"It gives people a little break," added Matt McKinney of nearby Waukegan, Iowa. "It saves a little money."

But Ronald Mudge of Bondurant, Iowa, was not satisfied. "It's not low enough," he said. "There's a lot of gas out there and someone in the middle is making a whole lot."

John Strack of Little Rock, Ark., said he was paying about \$1.30 in Jacksonville, Fla., before he moved

recently. He was filling his sport utility vehicle at \$1.01 and said "I noticed it drop four or five cents over the last month."

Gas is not that cheap everywhere, but an American Automobile Association survey found the average price for a gallon of self-service unleaded is \$1.11 this month, 17.3 cents less than a year ago. That is the lowest national average since May 1994 when it was \$1.10.

In Kansas City, Mo., where he was filling up at 94.9 cents-a-gallon, ice cream truck driver George Novick said, "You never know why the prices are going up or down."

Thank the Asian financial crisis, El Niño and improved technology, said Mike Shanahan, a spokesman for the

American Petroleum Institute.

Asia's financial problems have reduced the amount of oil being bought in that region, causing a drop in oil prices. In addition, the El Niño weather pattern so widely blamed for storms in California brought a mild winter to the normally colder parts of the country, reducing the need for heating oil. And, finally, oil companies have been able to find more oil because of better prospecting techniques.

And the apparent settlement with Iraq may bode well for the future.

"We're going to get more Iraqi oil hitting the oil terminals and the terminals are full so prices could come down more," said economist Donald

Ratajczak of Georgia State University.

The Petroleum Institute's Shanahan notes that local prices depend on a variety of other conditions such as taxes, the need for special air cleaning additives in some areas and the competition — or lack of it — between gas stations.

Gasoline is most expensive in the West at \$1.24 for self-serve unleaded regular and cheapest in the Southeast at \$1.04.

The AAA survey found self-serve unleaded averaging \$1.16 in New England, \$1.11 in the Mid-Atlantic states, \$1.06 in the Great Lakes area, \$1.05 in the Midwest and \$1.10 in the Southwest.

But within the regions there are scattered areas where gas can be had for under \$1. These include parts of the Washington suburbs, and, according to a report in Oil & Gas Journal, Atlanta; Des Moines; Detroit; Kansas City, Mo.; Oklahoma City; St. Louis; Tulsa, Okla.; Wichita, Kan.; Houston; Little Rock and Cheyenne, Wyo.

"It's not low enough. There's a lot of gas out there and someone in the middle is making a whole lot."

**Ronald Mudge
Bondurant, Iowa**

Catch me if you can



Splatt! Who sounds like a good paintball player? Brian Walburn is one of the best players in amateur paintball.

CORY WILLIS/TEXAS A&M

Brian Walburn, a junior mechanical engineering major, and members of the Texas A&M Cycling Team practice for a cycling meet this weekend.

ALOT

Continued from Page 1

Conference activities include several small group discussions and three large group presentations. The small groups will discuss topics such as goal setting, team work and communication. The large presentations will explore the definition of leadership and what students can do to get involved at A&M. The high school seniors will spend Friday night either on campus or in the Student Recreation Center.

Jason Potts, a SLO staff member and a freshman microbiology major, said he is excited that the high school seniors will be staying on campus.

"Housing people will give me the time to explain some of the intricacies of dorm life at A&M and how college life really is," he said.

ALOT is a leadership group that provides freshmen with opportunities in leadership, development, guidance and friendship. It consists of 80 freshmen and 26 upperclassmen.

Anderson said he has learned many things from ALOT.

"I have learned about myself and how to deal with other people," he said, "and I have learned that leadership is about caring about people enough to make a difference in their lives."

MONTH

Continued from Page 1

Emile Car Shavazz, coordinator for the African-American Studies Program and professor of American studies at the University of Alabama, said the Hopwood decision occurred because people have forgotten the history of discrimination African-Americans have endured throughout history.

Shavazz said that from the contributions made by the first black student at A&M in 1963, Leroy Sterling, African-Americans have had a legacy of leadership at A&M. Other landmark leaders include the first black student body president, Fred McClure, in 1976, and the first black yell leader, Ronnie McDonald, in 1993.

Shavazz said that the recent institutionalization and commercialization of Black History Month has caused the real issues of it to be ignored.

"The United States has a history of discrimination against African-Americans and many people have forgotten this and think there is not longer a need to firmly address the issue," Shavazz said.

Rice said despite the implications of the Hopwood decision, the struggles for equality and civil rights will never die due to the inhumane treatment African-American received throughout history.

WHAT'S UP

Friday

- Alpha Phi Omega:** Meet to go visit Crestview Retirement Home at 6:30 p.m. at Crestview.
- Alpha Phi Omega:** Meet to go to Kemp Gym at 5:30 p.m. at 133 Koldus.
- Study Abroad Programs Office:** An informational meeting to promote the Italy Spring '99 program will be held from 1:30 to 2 p.m. in Room 154, 161 Bizzell Hall West.
- ATM Roadrunners:** Will run three to four miles starting in front of G. Rollie White at 5:30 p.m. All students and skill levels are welcome. Call Steve at 847-7905 for further information.
- Asian American Christian Fellowship:** Join us for worship and a speaker at 7:30 p.m. in Richardson 144. Call Sunny at 847-3064 for details.

What's Up is a Battalion service that lists non-profit student and faculty events and activities. Items should be submitted no later than three days in advance of the desired run date. Application deadlines and notices are not events and will not be run in What's Up. If you have any questions, please call the newsroom at 845-3313.

Two science quiz competitions in one!

Albert Einstein meets Jacques Cousteau

Texas Regional Finals of the National Science Bowl and National Ocean Sciences Bowl
Saturday, Feb. 28, 3:30 p.m.
Rudder Theater

Come cheer for the top science students in Texas!

NSB Info: 845-7361 NOSB Info: 862-3290 or www-ocean.tamu.edu/NOSB
Hosted by the colleges of Engineering, Geosciences and Science

at stage stores the spotlight's on you!

Stage Stores, Inc. parent company to Bealls & Palais Royal stores, will be hosting an **Information Session on Monday, March 2nd from 6 - 8 pm** in the Hilton Hotel Ballroom. We will be discussing the following career opportunities at our Corporate Office in Houston:

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- FINANCE & ALLOCATION
- INFORMATION SYSTEMS

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CONTRACT RENEWAL

For Fall 1998 - Spring 1999
ON THE WORLD-WIDE WEB

February 28 (12:00 a.m.) -- March 3 (11:59 p.m.)
@ <http://reslife.tamu.edu/>

ALL current on-campus residents are required to either renew or cancel their housing for the Fall 1998-Spring 1999 academic year.

Options for Fall 1998-Spring 1999 academic year:

- Reserve current space
- Request hall change
- Request room change
- Transfer to Corps, Cain, or Residence Life
- Cancel housing contract
- Future housing reservations for Co-op, Student Teaching, Study Abroad, & Internships (must be approved by TAMU)

Proposed (Maximum) Rental Rates for Fall 1998-Spring 1999		
Modular	\$1536	Hot/dry
Commons	\$1416	Non-Air
Balcony	\$1052	
Corridor, Legett	\$ 985	Corps of Cadets

Cain Hall (includes full meal plan and tax of \$1065)

WORK FOR THE PREMIER RESORT OF THE TEXAS GULF COAST

Play on our sandy beaches...

Many different job opportunities are available - servers, cocktail servers, front desk clerks/reservations, room service, valet, bellman.

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For more information, please call Susan Gipe, Human Resources The San Luis Resort and Conference Center 1.800.445.0090

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LAST CHANCE TO PREPARE FOR THE APRIL GRE:

Test 1	Sun, Mar 7th	9am-
Class 1	Sun, Mar 8th	6-9pm
Test 2	Thu, Mar 12th	6-9pm
Class 2	Sat, Mar 21st	9am-
Class 3	Sun, Mar 22nd	6-9pm
Class 4	Thu, Mar 26th	6-9pm
Test 3	Sat, Mar 28th	
Class 5	Sun, Mar 29th	6-9pm
Class 6	Thu, Apr 2nd	6-9pm

Our FAST TRACK course starts on March 7th. Designed for motivated students, it teaches our HIGHEST RETURN TECHNIQUES in the SHORTEST TIME POSSIBLE. If you thought you didn't have time to prepare, THINK AGAIN.

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