



## SENIORS

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AggieLand 2003

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Available 4 PM to 8 AM weekdays, 24 hours a day on weekends



### Society of Women Engineers

General Meeting

When: Wed., Jan. 29<sup>th</sup>

Time: 6:45 p.m.

Where: Rich 101

What: Building Robotic Legos with N.I.

FREE FOOD!

## Just hangin' around



RANDALL FORD • THE BATTALION

Seventy-year-old College Station resident **Bart Braden** hangs on a pole while taking a running break at the corner of Wellborn Road and George Bush Drive. Braden is a veteran of three wars and the oldest basketball referee in the history of Texas.

## Job outlook remains bleak in U.S.

By Leigh Strope  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

West Coast states are being battered by the ailing economy, leading the country again in high unemployment rates last month, while the Dakotas and Nebraska posted the lowest jobless rates.

The new data, released Tuesday by the Labor Department, shows that the job outlook in much of the country remains bleak. But no states reported wild swings in their unemployment rates, suggesting some stabilization — at least for now.

Finding a job is taking longer for people out of work. Last year, jobless workers spent an average of 16.6 weeks looking for employment, up from 13.2 weeks in 2001.

The economy's uneven recovery poses challenges for President Bush, who is pushing for another round of tax cuts to stimulate growth and create jobs. The nation's unemployment rate has hovered around 6 percent since April 2002.

The bumpy recovery is similar to the last recession, when Bush's father was president. High unemployment that failed to start dropping until almost two years after the recession ended helped cost the first President Bush a second term.

Though jobless rates aren't reaching the levels of the last recession, voters who can't find jobs could spell trouble for Bush, particularly in key battleground states such as Michigan, Pennsylvania and West Virginia — which had among the higher unemployment rates of 5.9 percent, 6 percent and 5.6 percent, respectively, in December.

But the West Coast has been particularly hit hard, and Bush, who has viewed political opportunities in that Democrat-backing region, may be forced to shift focus. Many economists predict the nation's jobless rate will continue to rise in coming months, hitting as high as 6.5 percent this summer and ending the year at current levels.

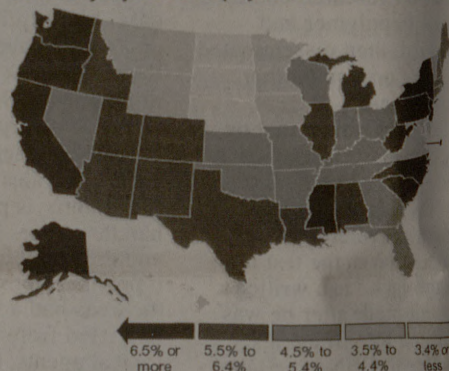
"The economy is flat — there is no new job growth," said Mark Zandi, chief economist at Economy.com

Alaska posted the highest state unemployment

### West Coast sees higher unemployment

Some western states led the country in unemployment rates last month, clearing the national average of 6.0 percent according to Labor Department statistics released Tuesday.

Seasonally adjusted unemployment rates for December 2002



SOURCE: Department of Labor

rate last month at 7.4 percent, rising from 6.8 percent in November. A drop in tourism and low energy prices earlier this year are major factors for the state's job troubles.

The technology bust, the 2001 energy crisis and the weak travel and aviation industries have taken a major toll on West Coast states. Oregon's jobless rate was second highest at 7 percent after dropping from 7.1 percent in November. Washington posted an increase in December to 6.8 percent, up from 6.5 percent; California saw a rise to 6.6 percent, up from 6.5 percent.

Also among the highest rates were Mississippi at 6.7 percent and the District of Columbia at 6.6 percent.

The upper Midwest has consistently posted the lowest unemployment rates in the country. North and South Dakota had jobless rates of 3 percent last month, and Nebraska had 3.4 percent.

Those states have benefited from large agriculture subsidies that helped keep their economies afloat, Zandi said. Many workers laid off by companies in those states return to farming and are not counted as unemployed.



## SPRING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FAIR

Growing Through Service,  
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January 29 & 30, 2003

10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

MSC Flagroom

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## THE VINTAGE HOUSE AT Messina Hof

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Enjoy three special menus served in the most romantic restaurant in the Brazos Valley.

#### WEDNESDAYS...

#### AN EVENING IN TUSCANY

Every Wednesday evening, it's just a short drive to Tuscany and traditional Tuscan cuisine served with a vineyard view. It's four courses for only \$49.95 per couple, plus tax and gratuity.

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Every Thursday evening from 5 to 10pm, the Vintage House offers a new, special menu just for couples. You'll love everything, including the price. Enjoy four courses for only \$49.95 per couple plus tax and gratuity.

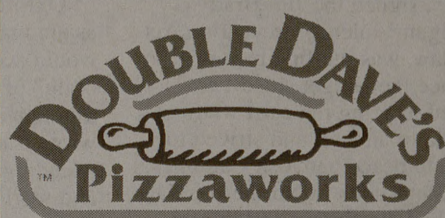
#### FRIDAYS: AGGIELAND STRIP & SHRIMP SPECIAL

Every Friday evening, get the perfect 12 oz. strip and the freshest Gulf shrimp...combined to make this four course evening the highlight of your week...just \$59.95 per couple, plus tax and gratuity.

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## ANNOUNCING WILD WOOLY MONDAYS? & WEDNESDAY MAYHEM?

That's Right! Every Monday and Wednesday enjoy both: **Monday Mayhem & Wild Wooly Wednesday**

Large 1 Topping Pizza \$5.99 Take out

Large 1 Topping Pizza \$6.99 Delivered

or

Our Great All You Can Eat DoubleDave's buffet 5:30-9:00 p.m.

\$6.00 per person includes soft drink or 1st draft!

Additional drafts 50¢

Starts 30 min. earlier!

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