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Dear Client:

How much will the Austin area's population grow in the next five years — between now and 2014? What about other metros in Texas? How will the Austin metro compare to them? And what will be the pace of population growth and workforce gains?

Let's go straight to the bottom line. The 5-county Austin-Round Rock metro area will notch a **2.72% population compound annual growth rate and a 2.42% employment gain** from 2009 to 2014. This percentage gain will lead all metros in the state of Texas, according to economists at The Perryman Group. In terms of actual numbers, **the population gain is forecast to be 241,558 and the employment gain 103,775.**

Of the 25 metro areas in Texas, the Perryman Short-Term Economic Forecast 2009-2014 points out that the **five largest metros will be responsible for 76.29% of the state's total population gain and 72.52% of the jobs added across the state.**

And, as we said, the Austin metro is at the top of the list of the five biggies – by a comfortable percentage growth margin. **Ray Perryman**, the President/CEO of The Perryman Group, says “Texas is expected to continue to grow both through natural increase as well as immigration into the state.”

He noted that Texas saw population gains throughout this past year. “In fact,” Perryman said, “according to Allied Van Lines' Annual Magnet States Report, **Texas ranked as the number one destination state for last year, with more individuals moving to the state than anywhere in the US in 2009.**”

But with this anticipated population growth, will there be enough jobs for those moving into the area? Perryman acknowledges the difficult times when he said Texas has not been untouched by the economic difficulties during the past two years. And he admits that it will **likely be several months before job expansion can be sustained.**

He notes, however, that our economy is performing relatively well compared to the nation as a whole. And he predicted that, of all the Texas metros, **the Austin area will likely experience the fastest employment growth rate between now and 2014.**

Speaking of employment, the Austin area is getting a jump-start on job creation in the 1st quarter of 2010, with high profile Facebook's operational center creating the most buzz.

Facebook announced it will set up an online sales and operations office in Austin and indicated it would create **200 jobs for Central Texans** in the process. Austin economic development leaders were justifiably proud that Austin was selected as the **first US location** for a Facebook operation outside of its HQ in Palo Alto, California.

Facebook cited the Austin area's "**world-class educational system and talented workforce,**" **in addition to the "high quality of life."** Another factor that helped Austin was the luck of geography – **Austin's location in the Central Time Zone.**

In a separate notice from the company that was not released here in Austin, Facebook talked about "multiple support centers in a **variety of time zones.**" And to back up that notion, Facebook revealed plans to open another operation in Hyderabad, India.

The basketball sports frenzy called "March Madness" is underway and this means you better keep a close eye on your computer systems at work.

A large number of employees sneak peeks at the basketball playoff action via live-streaming of the games online. Because of the **bandwidth impact of these streaming sessions,** this practice can slow down corporate computer networks and, according to ScanSafe, can expose those systems to malware.

Just how big is this problem? ScanSafe said that **just a few employees watching a game simultaneously can dominate a network gateway, impairing internal business traffic.** In fact, it mentioned that traffic to popular college basketball Web sites such as NCAA.com and CBSSports.com increases 10,000% during the tournament that ends April 5th. Further, ScanSafe warns that many people watching streaming video of the games could expose companies to a myriad of malware complications, including the theft of proprietary data.

***The Austin American-Statesman* and *The New York Times* have long enjoyed exclusive distribution rights in coffee-sippin', newspaper-readin' Starbucks locations. That's changing.**

For some time now, Starbucks carried the *NYTimes* and the local newspaper in its 6,500 US locations. **Now it will also carry *USA Today*, the top newspaper in the US for several years** with a daily print circulation of nearly 1.9 million. Which raises the question during these times when newspapers are hurting: will this *USA Today* offering increase the total newspaper sales in Starbucks, or will it result in a cut in sales of the *Times* and/or the *Statesman*?

Quick. As a group, what are airline fliers' biggest gripes? Are they the same as yours?

In a survey of 3,200 travelers, **limited leg room and increased airline fees** were each cited by 25% as their biggest gripes. In that same survey, nearly 3 out of 4 respondents said that **large travelers should be required to buy two tickets**.

While there was a heavy focus on moviemaking this past week at the SXSW annual film fest, members of an Austin entertainment "clan" were making little-noticed waves in another way.

The clan's long-prominent name in Austin is **Schenkkan**. You may not be aware of one TV star's work, because he has a different screen name. Another you may have overlooked, because his name is buried in the credits of an epic TV miniseries that started this week. And the third, the patriarch, quietly celebrated a milestone.

A Phi Beta Kappa graduate from UT Austin, **Robert Schenkkan holds the Pulitzer Prize for Drama**, which he received as the author of an impressive epic compilation of ten full-length plays under the umbrella of *The Kentucky Cycle*. It took two long nights on NYC's Broadway to present all parts of *Cycle*.

Currently, he is a significant force behind a major ten-part TV miniseries event that debuted this week on HBO, *The Pacific*, based on the true stories of World War II marines. After the huge success of *Band of Brothers*, Executive Producers **Tom Hanks** and **Steven Spielberg** brought Schenkkan in as a writer/producer on *The Pacific*. **Schenkkan was a writer on episodes #4, #6, #8, and #10.**

Benjamin McKenzie Schenkkan (the writer's nephew) stars in *Southland*, a cop drama on NBC that replaced the long-running *E.R.* He dropped "Schenkkan" to use the screen name **Ben McKenzie** because it was felt he might be confused with little-known actor Ben Schenkman. He got his big break when he was picked in 2003 to star in the acclaimed Fox TV show, *The O.C.*

McKenzie graduated from Austin High where he played wide receiver and defensive back on the football team. His mom and dad are Austin attorney **Pieter Schenkkan** and writer **Frances**, who served on the Austin Planning Commission back in the 1980s. They have two other sons, **Nate** and **Zack**.

The patriarch of Austin's Schenkkan clan is **Robert F. (Bob) Schenkkan**, who was a long-time professor (writing) and administrator at UT Austin. In the early years of TV, Schenkkan was a major force during the early days of both PBS and NPR, and was a key player in the development of KUT-FM and KLRU-TV. **And this month – March 4th, to be precise — Bob Schenkkan celebrated his 93rd birthday here in Austin.**

Less than a month from now, the Democratic and Republican primary election *runoffs* will be held. The rules are different for voting in runoffs. How do they restrict your right to vote?

In races where no candidate got more than 50% of the vote March 2nd, the top two contenders will again be on the ballot April 13th. Each party will conduct its own runoff elections to select the candidate who will appear on the November General Election ballot. **All registered voters are eligible to vote April 13th**, but there are some restrictions. And misconceptions.

There is a popular misconception that you must have voted in the March 2nd primary election in order to vote in the runoff. Wrong! **Any registered voter can vote in the runoff.**

But there is an important restriction: if you voted in either party's primary in March, **you cannot switch to vote in the other party's runoff election.** In other words, you cannot switch parties between the primary and the runoff.

Both Democrats and Republicans have important runoff elections, locally and statewide. For instance, in Travis County **Holly Turner** and **Paul Workman** are in a runoff for the GOP nomination for State Representative, District 47. And in Williamson County, **Larry Gonzales** and **John Gordon** will face off for the GOP nomination for State Representative, District 52.

On the Democratic side, **Mindy Montford** and **Karen Sage** are in a runoff for District Judge. There are other runoffs, such as a number of Congressional contests around the state and a statewide race for the Texas Supreme Court.

The bottom line: **Anyone registered on or before March 13th can vote in a runoff April 13th as long as they did not vote in the opposing party's primary election on March 2nd.**

Dr. Louis Overholster knew his patient was on the verge of work burnout when the patient said he no longer sets his alarm because he knows his cell phone will ring before the alarm goes off!

Sincerely



Editor/Publisher