

Dow 30 industrials  
9,323.02  
up 4.06

S&P 500 index  
1,011.66  
up 0.92

Posted Oklahoma sweet  
\$27.75  
down 0.25

Avg. non-contract gas  
\$5.85  
no change

Gold  
\$363.20  
up 4.20

Dollar in Yen  
\$118.12  
up 0.50

TULSA WORLD

[SECTION E]

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18, 2003

INSIDE

WEATHER: E-8

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# Business

ExxonMobil

LNG terminal  
Gulf Coast considered  
for huge gas-import depot.

E-3

## BIZ QUICKS

### Market edges higher to keep rally going

Wall Street managed slight gains Tuesday as investors battled a temptation to cash in profits from three months of advances culminating in a big rally Monday.

"The market has run a long way and was due for a pause," said Dennis Ferro, chief investment officer of Evergreen Investments. "I think the market is at a point where all the hopes for the second half of the year in economic growth and earnings improvement now need to be validated."

The Dow Jones industrial average closed up 4.06, or 0.04 percent, at 9,323.02, having gained 201 points Monday to its highest level since last July.

The broader market also edged higher. The Nasdaq composite index rose 1.86, or 0.1 percent, to 1,668.44. The Standard & Poor's 500 index inched up 0.92, or 0.1 percent, to 1,011.66.

### Boeing gets 35 proposals so far for 7E7 plant

Boeing Co. has received proposals from about 35 U.S. locations competing for the 7E7 airliner assembly plant, a company executive said Tuesday.

"We're seeing a lot of interest, and we're evaluating them," Mike Bair, head of the 7E7 program, told Bloomberg News at the Paris Air Show.

He declined to say who had submitted proposals for the plant, which will employ up to 1,200 people.

The site proposals are due Friday, and Boeing will make its final choice by the end of the year. Tulsa is among communities planning to submit proposals.

Chicago-based Boeing is designing the "Dreamliner" jet and selecting suppliers this year in preparation to begin lining up orders. The company says the jet will use 20 percent less fuel per seat than current jetliners of a similar size.

Boeing expects the airplane to enter commercial service in 2008.

### Williams completes sale of stake in partnership

Tulsa-based Williams Cos. Inc. has completed the sale of its 54.6 percent stake in Williams Energy Partners in a deal worth \$1.1 billion.

Williams received \$510 million in cash and eliminated \$570 million of debt in the transaction. The partnership, which transports and stores fuel, was sold to a group of investment firms. The group is made up of Madison Dearborn Partners LLC and Carlyle/Riverstone Global Energy and Power Fund II LP.

Williams expects to record a pre-tax gain of at least \$270 million to \$285 million on the transaction.

Williams has nearly completed all of its planned asset sales, generating \$2.75 billion in cash from divestitures this year, the company said.

Williams Energy transports, stores and distributes ammonia and refined petroleum products. The partnership, which will be renamed, earned \$99.2 million last year.

Williams Energy employs 800 people, and nearly all of them will be retained by the new owners, Williams said.

### Southwest adding winglets to Boeing 737-700s

Southwest Airlines Co. said Tuesday it will add curved wingtips to current and future Boeing Co. 737-700 airplanes to reduce fuel use and increase their range.

The winglets will be installed on Southwest's 133 737-700s beginning in October, with completion within two years, the Dallas-based airline said.

When completed, the move will save Southwest \$9.7 million annually, based on a fuel price of 60 cents a gallon, and reduce fuel needs by 12.2 million gallons.

Aviation Partners Boeing, a joint venture of Aviation Partners Worldwide and Boeing Co., will provide 169 sets of the winglets to Southwest. Southwest has options to acquire 373 additional winglets through 2012.

The 8-foot-high winglets add about 5 feet to a plane's wingspan, increase by 115 nautical miles the distance that they can fly and reduce engine maintenance, the airline said. They curve out and up from the wingtip, reducing drag.

The 737-700, Southwest's most modern aircraft, makes up about 35 percent of the carrier's fleet.

### Oneok unit ranks third in customer satisfaction

The energy marketing and trading arm of Tulsa-based Oneok Inc. was ranked third in a recent national survey of customer satisfaction.

The survey results were released by Mastio & Co., a St. Joseph, Mo.-based marketing research firm, in the sixth edition of its Natural Gas Marketing Satisfaction study.

The report drew on 1,000 gas purchasers to rank 49 gas marketing firms. Sempra Energy Trading placed first and BP Plc finished second. ConocoPhillips was fourth and Reliant Energy was fifth.

From Bloomberg, AP, staff reports

# Tulsa jobs outlook brightens

► The Manpower staffing survey points to third-quarter gains.

By LAURIE WINSLOW  
World Staff Writer

The employment outlook leading into the third quarter appears more upbeat for Tulsa than it does for the nation as a whole.

According to Manpower's Employment Outlook Survey, Tulsa-area em-

ployers expect to hire at a fairly brisk pace from July to September.

Of the companies surveyed, 33 percent plan to add employees, while 13 percent intend to reduce their work forces.

An additional 47 percent expect no change, and 7 percent are uncertain of their hiring plans, according to the survey by the staffing firm.

"It looks like the third quarter may have a positive switch in momentum," said Mike Arndt, Manpower's manager for the Tulsa area.

The third-quarter forecast looks brighter than last quarter when 27 percent of local employers said they would add workers, and 30 percent anticipated cutbacks.

A year ago at this time, companies were optimistic as 47 percent planned to hire more workers, and 20 percent expected cutbacks.

Nationwide, however, the job outlook is the weakest it's been in 12 years, according to the survey.

Twenty percent of those surveyed nationwide said they plan to increase

hiring for the third quarter, while 9 percent expect reductions.

A solid 65 percent of the companies surveyed expect no change in hiring, and 6 percent are uncertain of their employment plans, according to the survey.

Employers in five of the 10 industry sectors — construction, wholesale and retail trade, education, services and public administration — expect their third-quarter hiring to be the

SEE JOBS E-2

## El presidente



AMBER WILSON / Tulsa World

Fred Ramos has been named president of the Greater Tulsa Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Ramos will take over the organization's leadership July 1, after resigning as chief technology officer at Tulsa Technology Center.

## Ramos will head Hispanic chamber

By AMBER WILSON  
World Staff Writer

Following a six-month search, the Greater Tulsa Hispanic Chamber of Commerce is introducing Fred Ramos as its new president Wednesday.

Ramos, chief technology officer at Tulsa Technology Center, is leaving that post to take the chamber's helm July 1.

He has broad-ranging goals for the Hispanic population in Oklahoma.

"I'd like to think that's one of the things the selection committee saw," he said. "I've been doing this as an avocation. Now it's my vocation."

Ramos said he became interested in the position as soon as Robert Tobias stepped down as chamber president in December.

"Last year when the president left, I told my wife I wanted to get myself in line to take this position," he said.

Ramos, 53, has a bachelor's degree in computer science from the University of Central Oklahoma and a master's degree in business administration from Oklahoma City University.

In addition to TTC, Ramos has worked as an associate professor and department chair at OCU. He also is a former member of the Hispanic Advisory Council for Tulsa Public Schools.

Ramos said he takes the education of young Hispanics seriously.

"What happens when you can't even get Hispanic kids out of the eighth grade?" he said. "Why don't we pay more attention to common education?"

In addition to education, Ramos said the chamber wants to be an active participant in Tulsa's future.

"We're at a time not only in Tulsa, but throughout the state, that we need to reidentify ourselves, and the Hispanic business community wants to be a part of that," he said. "We'll participate as Tulsans."

"The mayor is envisioning 2025. He's asking us to participate."

He was referring to Mayor Bill LaFortune's Dialog/Visioning 2025 development effort.

Ramos said he wants to see the chamber not only continue to help businesses in the Tulsa area, but also in the Oklahoma City area.

"One of our initiatives is to start a state Hispanic chamber," he said.

SEE RAMOS E-2

## United to offer e-mail

► The in-flight service is critical to business flyers, airline industry watchers say.

By DAVE CARPENTER  
Associated Press

CHICAGO — Get Message: In-flight e-mail and instant messaging are about to become fixtures of the U.S. skies.

Hoping to get a jump on the competition in the scramble for business travelers, United Airlines plans to be the first commercial carrier to offer two-way e-mail capability aboard all its domestic flights.

By the end of the year, passengers on all flights will be able to plug their laptops into jacks on the Verizon Airfone handsets, which will use technology by Tenzing Communications to transmit e-mails.

United has offered JetConnect service on a trial basis on some 767 domestic aircraft since December — charging \$5.99 per flight for instant messaging, one-way text messaging and select news, weather and other information. It is now expanding to JetConnect with e-mail, which increases the cost to \$15.98 but enables passengers to send and receive e-mail, including attachments.

Another 10 cents will be added for each kilobyte of data over 2 kilobytes.

John Tague, United's executive vice president for customer initiatives, said the expanded offering illustrates the airline's focus on adding products and services that are "useful, affordable and in line with what travelers are asking for."

"The availability of e-mail is critical to business flyers," added Bill Pallone, president of Verizon Airfone.

United isn't first with the e-skies concept. Lufthansa, Japan Airlines, British Airways and Scandinavian Airlines System are all trying out or have committed to using a satellite high-speed Internet service offered by Connexion by Boeing this year.

United and several other airlines, including American and Delta, committed in 2001 to buy the service by Connexion, a competitor to Seattle-based Tenzing, which also now counts Cathay Pacific and Virgin Atlantic among its customers. But the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks scrapped those plans as carriers

SEE UNITED E-2

## Costs remain steady as production increases

► The economy gets a boost from May's promising Labor Department report.

By JEANNINE AVERSA  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Consumer prices held steady and big industry boosted production for the first time since February, a double dose of good news for the wobbly economy.

The flat reading in the Labor Department's Consumer Price Index for May, which came after a 0.3 percent decline in April, eased worries that the country could be headed for deflation, an economically dangerous long-term slide in prices, economists said.

The CPI report "should help alleviate some of the nagging fears of deflation,"

said Mark Vitner, economist at Wachovia.

Production at the nation's factories, mines and utilities nudged up by 0.1 percent last month after dropping by a sharp 0.6 percent in both March and April, the Federal Reserve said in a report that economists viewed as a sign the nation's battered industrial sector could be turning a corner.

Also, the Commerce Department reported that housing construction bounced back in May despite rainy weather in some parts of the country, escalating by 6.1 percent to an annual rate of 1.73 million. That performance came after a 6.3 percent decline in April.

The latest batch of economic reports Tuesday raised hopes that the lumbering economy would pick up its pace in the second half of this year.

At the White House, presidential

spokesman Ari Fleischer said the CPI report suggested that deflation is "not a serious worry" and that President Bush "is hopeful the signs of economic growth will continue to gather steam."

Still, many economists believe the Federal Reserve will cut short-term interest rates, now at a 41-year low of 1.25 percent, by at least a quarter of a percentage point at its meeting next Tuesday and Wednesday. The thinking is that the Fed wants to energize the economy and help ward off even the threat of deflation.

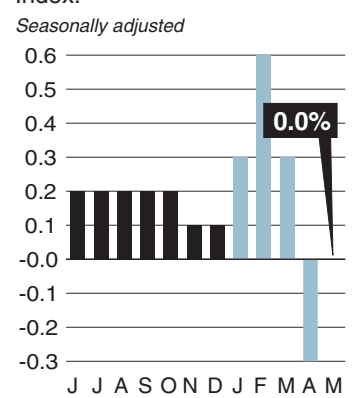
Although Fed policy-makers say the chance of deflation is remote, the central bank still must be alert because of deflation's potential to wreck the economy, economists said.

The United States' last serious defla-

SEE INDEX E-2

### Consumer prices

Here is a look at percent changes from the preceding month in the Consumer Price Index.



SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics AP