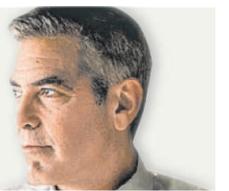




IN MOVIE PREVIEW, P1

# 'THE IDES OF MARCH'

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## Job outlook for Ariz. weakens

Forecast now calls for smaller gains in 2011, '12

By **Jahna Berry**  
The Arizona Republic

The stingy job-creation outlook offered Thursday by the state's economists is shared by business owners such as Christopher Hunter, who operates a Mesa car-parts manufacturing company.

After getting hammered during the recession, Hunter's company is getting back into gear. Special Devices Inc. plans to add up to 15 engineers and laborers to its 400-employee payroll. But with uneven demand and continued uncertainty across the

globe, it's hardly a hiring spree, Hunter said.

Arizona economists are hearing the same theme from managers in nearly every job sector. With growing concerns that the global economy may be slowing toward recession, state economists backed off slightly from the job-growth projections they made in April. Although they predicted job gains in 2011 and 2012, they are expecting fewer jobs will be created than they had estimated in the spring.

See **JOBS**, Page A4



Leah Darling works with Rich Reilly during physical therapy Thursday. The health-care industry is poised to gain more jobs. MARK HENLE/THE REPUBLIC

### More are out of work for longer

The number of long-term unemployed Americans has reached a record high as older workers find it hard to get back into the workforce. **A4**

**Obama pushes jobs bill:** The president challenges Congress to get behind his plan to create jobs or face losing their own in the next election. **A5**



Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, D-Ariz., celebrates the retirement of her husband, Navy Capt. Mark Kelly, along with Vice President Joe Biden on Thursday in Washington. For more photos, go to [news.azcentral.com](http://news.azcentral.com). DAVID LIENEMANN/WHITE HOUSE

## Sharing a special moment

As Kelly retires, Rep. Giffords also in spotlight

By **Jaimee Rose**  
The Arizona Republic

WASHINGTON — She couldn't clap because her right hand is bandaged, and her walk is still unsteady. But as Rep. Gabrielle Giffords sat near the vice president at her husband's retirement ceremony Thursday, she smiled, blew kisses, waved to friends and the message was clear — she's getting better.

"You look good Gabby, I tell you. ... I look forward to welcoming you back, kiddo," Vice President Joe Biden said. "You've been an inspiration to thousands of people.

"It's not every day you encounter examples of sheer, sheer courage, selflessness and dedication, like you see in this couple," he said.

Family, luminaries and friends gathered with Giffords for the coda on her husband Mark Kelly's 25-year military career, which honored his service as an astronaut and a Navy captain. Biden administered the retirement oath at a building in the White House complex and invited Giffords to attach the Distinguished Flying Cross medal to Kelly's uniform.

Wearing a burgundy blazer, black pants, and gray running shoes, she leaned on Kelly and reached her left

hand up to his jacket, where a patch of velcro was waiting. Since Giffords was shot in the head on Jan. 8 near Tucson, use of her right hand is limited, and her staffers thought that wrangling a pin could be tough.

Both Biden and Kelly spoke at the event and Kelly took the opportunity to thank his wife, his voice catching in his throat as he leaned forward on a podium and spoke directly to her: "Gabby, you remind me every day to deny the acceptance of failure," adding that he was jealous of her "true grit and determination."

"They must put something in that Arizona water. ... I look forward to the next phase of our life together and

See **GIFFORDS**, Page A10

**“Every time I see her, there's always progress. I've seen her 10 times since the shooting, and every time, it's a big step.”**

**REP. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ**

A friend of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords', who attended Thursday's retirement ceremony of Giffords' husband

## County tops list for home vacancies

By **Catherine Reagor and Ronald J. Hansen**  
The Arizona Republic

New nationwide data shows just how profoundly the housing boom and bust left an impression on metro Phoenix.

Maricopa County has the highest overall number and percentage of vacant homes among the 10 most populous counties in the U.S., according to census data released Thursday.

Almost 14 percent of all homes are empty in Maricopa County. The data shows 227,696 single-family homes, condominiums and apartments were empty when last year's census was taken.

For comparison, Tucson has about 230,000 housing units. So Maricopa County's vacancies are the equivalent to an empty city the size of Tucson.

During the 10 years between the two census counts, Maricopa County's population grew 24 percent, while its housing stock grew 31 percent.

See **VACANCIES**, Page A10

**Fading American dream:** Census shows biggest homeownership drop since the Depression. **A13**

**Census data:** See more demographic details in an interactive Valley map at [census.azcentral.com](http://census.azcentral.com).

## Cortes drops out of recall election

By **Alia Beard Rau**  
The Arizona Republic

Candidate Olivia Cortes on Thursday withdrew from the Legislative District 18 recall election of Senate President Russell Pearce amid ongoing allegations that her campaign was a sham set up by Pearce supporters to pull votes away from opponent Jerry Lewis.

Pearce will now face only fellow Republican Lewis in the first recall election of a sitting legislator in state history.

Cortes said in a statement that the "constant intimidation and harassment" led to her withdrawal. And her attorney said that the move was the condition of a deal to stop a

See **CORTES**, Page A11

**Making their case:** Pearce and Lewis face off in recall-election debate before a rowdy crowd. **B1**

### SPORTS

#### It's do-or-die today for Diamondbacks

It's a winner-take-all showdown today in Milwaukee as the Diamondbacks take on the Brewers in Game 5 of their playoff series, and D-Backs manager Kirk Gibson (right) is confident his team will prevail. In a rematch of Game 1, Arizona ace Ian Kennedy will face the Brewers' Yovani Gallardo. **C1**



### NATION & WORLD

#### 2nd thoughts on test for prostate

After a review of scientific evidence, a federal task force recommends that most men should not routinely get a widely used blood test to check for prostate cancer because it does not save lives and can lead to unnecessary anxiety, surgery and complications. **A3**

### VALLEY & STATE

**Father held in son's death:** Police say a Gilbert man confesses to squeezing his 2-year-old son to death, saying he was angry at his wife. He is arrested on suspicion of first-degree murder. **B1**

### BUSINESS

**Protest coming to Valley:** The anti-Wall Street movement is heading for Phoenix, with plans for non-violence workshops, a pre-occupation march and the demonstration itself. **D1**

### HEALTHY LIVING

**Breast-cancer truths vs. fears:** It's an emotionally charged disease, so it's all the more important to get the facts. Scottsdale surgeon Linda Liu sets the record straight about 10 myths. **H1**

**High 76 Low 55**  
Partly cloudy. **B8**

Astrology ... **H5** Lottery ... **B2** Quick Flicks ... **P5**  
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