

By JENNIFER JACOBS  
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Even as state agencies deal with the shock of an unprecedented budget cut and layoffs this autumn, a shortfall that could top \$1 billion looms for next year's state budget.

Senate Majority Leader Mike Gronstal, a Democrat, and state Auditor

Davis Vaudt, a Republican, have predicted that the difference between required spending and expected revenue for the budget year beginning July 1 will range between \$750 million and \$1.1 billion.

"I agree with that number, and I hope it's not worse," Iowa Gov. Chet Culver told editors and reporters of

that the state experienced in September, and he called for changes in how the state estimates revenue to obtain more accurate projections.

Those remarks drew sharp criticisms from Republicans, who noted that revenue had been falling for months and said Culver should have acted more

CULVER, PAGE 12A



**OBRADOVICH:** Political columnist Kathie Obradovich says the governor's refusal to raise taxes and agreement with GOP legislative ideas are smart moves politically. **Page 13A**



Watch the video of Culver talking to the Register editorial board online at DesMoinesRegister.com.

Gov. Chet Culver, left, meets with the Des Moines Register editorial board Thursday.

RODNEY WHITE/THE REGISTER

**World Food Prize:** Winner Gebisa Ejeta says Norman Borlaug's "indomitable spirit" should guide efforts to eradicate hunger.

# Gates calls biotech seeds critical to fighting hunger



ANDREA MELENDEZ/THE REGISTER

Gebisa Ejeta, delighted by the sight of entertainers performing dances from his native Ethiopia, gets up and joins the fun Thursday night at World Food Prize festivities at the Iowa Capitol. Ejeta, a Purdue University agronomist, was named the winner of the 2009 prize for developing varieties of sorghum that are more tolerant of drought and weeds. Read more about the ceremony, **Page 6A**

Their productivity advantages can't be ignored in a changing climate, he contends.

By PHILIP BRASHER  
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Poor farmers will need access to genetically engineered seeds if they are to raise enough food as the planet gets warmer and more crowded, says Bill Gates, the Microsoft Corp. chairman who is pouring part of his fortune into alleviating global poverty.

Gates used the keynote address Thursday at the annual World Food Prize symposium to make his first major speech on agriculture. He said food production must be boosted globally without harming the soil and water, but he challenged environmentalists to drop their resistance to high-yield, high-tech



See a video of Gates' speech and read more World Food Prize coverage at DesMoinesRegister.com.

agriculture. Some of them are "instantly hostile to any emphasis on productivity," ignoring the threat to future crop yields posed by global warming, he said.

"They act as if there is no emergency, even though in the poorest, hungriest places on Earth, population is growing faster than productivity, and the climate is changing," Gates said.

Gates' foundation has committed \$1.4 billion to agricultural development, funding everything from

FOOD, PAGE 6A



JOHN GAPS III/REGISTER PHOTOS

Bill Gates answers questions after his address Thursday at the World Food Prize symposium at the Des Moines Marriott Hotel.

## Additional World Food Prize coverage

**GLOBAL EFFORT URGED:** Indra Nooyi, the chief executive of PepsiCo Inc., calls for a world commission on hunger. **Business, Page 10B**

**EDITORIAL:** Bill Gates' appearance at the World Food Prize is a game-changer in the discussion on hunger. **Opinion, Page 14A**

## Social Security freeze may spur stimulus checks

The decision could help Obama's plan to send \$250 checks to seniors.

By STEPHEN OHLEMACHER  
Associated Press

Washington, D.C. — Social Security recipients won't get a cost-of-living increase next year for the first time in more than a third of a century, and that could boost President Barack Obama's plan to send seniors another round of \$250 payments before the congressional elections.

Democratic leaders in Congress have signed onto the plan, greatly improving its chances, even as some budget hawks say the payments are unwarranted and could add to the federal budget deficit. Republican leaders said they, too, favor the payments but don't want to increase the deficit to pay for them.

More than 50 million Social Security recipients will see no increase in their monthly payments next year, the government said Thursday, the first year without an increase since automatic adjustments were adopted in 1975.

Social Security recipients at a senior center in Pembroke Pines, Fla., a suburb of Fort Lauderdale, took it in stride that come January

SOCIAL, PAGE 10A

## Boy feared floating away in homemade balloon found safe

By P. SOLOMON BANDA  
Associated Press

Fort Collins, Colo. — It looked like something out of science fiction and sounded like a parent's worst nightmare: a flying saucer-shaped helium balloon zooming across the skies of Colorado with a boy named Falcon inside.

Or so it seemed.

After a spectacle that dominated cable television and captivated people across the nation, 6-year-old Falcon Heene was found safe at his home Thursday hiding in a cardboard box in the garage rafters.

Sheriff Jim Alderden turned during a news conference, held his thumbs up and said, "He's at the house."

The boy's brother said he saw Falcon climb into the balloon before it took off. Turns out their father had scolded him for playing with the balloon, and little Falcon went to the ga-

BALLOON, PAGE 7A



Falcon Heene, 6, was hiding in his garage attic.

High 48° Low 33°  
Mostly cloudy.  
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