Human services to lose 150 to 400 employees

Regional administrative offices also may be closed

By JENNIFER JACOBS
jejacobs@dmreg.com

From 150 to 400 employees at the Department of Human Services will likely be laid off to meet the state's 10 percent budget cut, a top official said Wednesday.

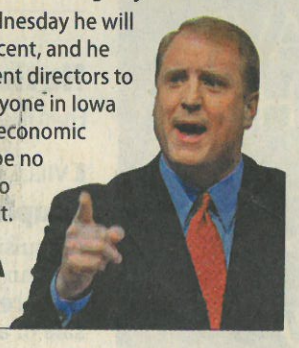
Human Services Director Charlie Krogmeier said he's trying hard to use other strategies to reduce the impact of the $132 million cut.

Gov. Chet Culver last Thursday ordered across-the-board cuts in state government totaling $565 million.

This is the third announcement in as many days that layoffs in a state branch or agency will be unavoidable. The court

DHS, PAGE 10A

Culver to take 10% pay cut



Gov. Chet Culver said Wednesday he will cut his own pay by 10 percent, and he will ask all state department directors to do the same. He said everyone in Iowa has been affected by the economic recession, "and it should be no different for me." So far, no one else is taking a pay cut.

Article and related content, Pages 10A-11A

Gates to urge renewal of Green Revolution

Microsoft founder plans major speech at Food Prize event

By PHILIP BRASHER
pbrasher@dmreg.com

Transforming how people use computers may have been the easy part. Now, Bill Gates is putting some of his fortune toward solving a problem that has vexed scientists and governments for decades — reducing global hunger.

Over the past three years, his foundation has committed $1.4 billion toward agricultural development, funding projects ranging from breeding higher-yielding plants to helping African farmers find new markets for their crops and assisting Indian women in managing their soil and water.

In another significant move for the development world, experts say, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is requiring independent analyses of the projects being funded to see which ones work and which ones don't.

"The overall approach we are taking is that investments in agriculture need to be across the

GATES, PAGE 20A

WATCH LIVE VIDEO TODAY: Watch live streaming video of Bill Gates' presentation at 9:15 a.m. and find a schedule of other live coverage of the 2009 World Food Prize symposium at DesMoinesRegister.com/live.

FOOD PRIZE LAUREATE: The 2009 World Food Prize will be awarded to Gebisa Ejeta of Ethiopia, whose sorghum hybrids have resulted in increased yields. **Business, Page 11B**

"Helping the poorest small-holder farmers grow more crops and get them to market is the world's single most powerful lever for reducing hunger and poverty."

— Excerpt from Bill Gates' planned speech today at the World Food Prize symposium

REGISTER PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MARK MARTURELLO FROM GATES FOUNDATION PHOTOS

Tax amnesty program lures 7,500 applicants

An unprecedented 7,500 tax dodgers, with accounts ranging from just more than $10,000 to more than $100 million, have applied for the Internal Revenue Service's tax amnesty program. **Page 6A**

Branstad expected to resign as school president

Former Gov. Terry Branstad is expected to resign as president of Des Moines University during an address to the school Friday, a university board member said Wednesday. **Metro & Iowa, Page 1B**

chief's huge debt unlikely to be paid

By TOM WITOSKY
twitosky@dmreg.com

Creditors of James Myers, president of the now-defunct Regency Cos. empire, will be lucky to get much if anything in return for the $183 million they are owed by the home and commercial property developer, a University of Iowa law professor and bankruptcy expert predicted.

The sum of Myers' debt is thought to be a record in Iowa.

"Statistics show that in 98 percent of these kinds of cases, there is nothing left for creditors," Patrick Bauer said Wednesday. "After exemptions are applied, you usually see that secured creditors get what's left, and that's very little. Anything that might not be unencumbered is likely nonexistent."

Myers, 38, filed a 103-page document seeking personal liquidation of his debts under Chapter 7 of the federal bankruptcy code on Tuesday. He listed $1.09 million in assets and $183 million in liabilities.

MYERS, PAGE 8A

Flu leaving empty seats in classes across state

By CYNTHIA REYNAUD
creynaud@dmreg.com

The large numbers of absences at metro Des Moines schools this week are probably just the beginning of a winter season plagued by H1N1 flu, health officials say.

"I think we're just getting started, unfortunately," said Patricia Quinlisk, medical director for the Iowa Department of Health.

Many school districts across the state have seen larger-than-normal numbers of sick children in recent weeks, their ranks increased by suspected cases of H1N1 flu.

Ten of 98 schools across the Des Moines metro area reported an absence rate of more than 10 percent Wednesday, compared with five a week earlier, according to Polk County Health Department reports.

In Des Moines, Wright Elementary and Brody Middle schools have had the highest average

FLU, PAGE 12A

High 46° Low 35°
Rain showers.
Page 18B

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Index

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DOW	NASDAQ	S&P	BONDS	GOLD	CRUDE OIL	T-BILLS
30 INDUSTRIALS	COMPOSITE	500	10-YEAR TREASURIES			6-MONTH TREASURIES
10,015.86	2,172.23	1,092.02	3.42%	$1,063.90	$75.18	0.14%
+144.80	+32.34	+18.83	+0.11	–$0.30	+$1.03	even

Dow ends above 10,000 for first time in a year

Since early March, the industrial average has gained 53 percent.

By TIM PARADIS
Associated Press

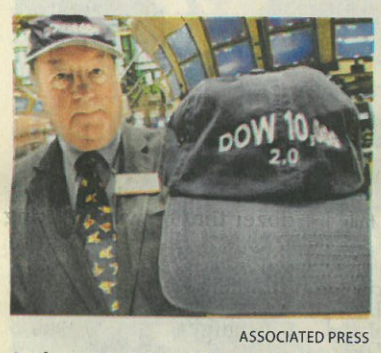
New York, N.Y. — When the Dow Jones industrial average first passed 10,000, traders tossed commemorative caps and uncorked champagne. This time around, the feeling was more like relief.

The best-known barometer of the stock market entered five-figure territory again Wednesday, the most visible sign yet that investors believe the economy is clawing its way back from the worst downturn since the Depression.

The milestone caps a stunning 53 percent comeback for the Dow since early March, when stocks were at their lowest levels in more than a decade.

"It's almost like an announcement that the bear market is over," said Arthur Hogan, chief market analyst at Jefferies & Co. in Boston. "That is an eye-opener

DOW, PAGE 12B



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Arthur Cashin, director of floor operations for UBS Financial Services, wears his 1999 "Dow 10,000" cap while holding the 2009 2.0 version at the New York Stock Exchange on Wednesday.

Iowa companies see share prices double from early in year

The Dow Jones industrials' close above 10,000 was good news to many Iowa companies, including seven whose share prices have at least doubled from lows earlier this year.

The Iowa company with the biggest gain this year is Davenport-based newspaper publisher Lee Enterprises, whose shares had slumped to penny-stock territory. Lee closed Wednesday at a 22-month high of $4.01, 14 times its Feb. 10 low of 28 cents.

FBL Financial Group of West Des Moines closed at $21.68, 3 cents less than its 2009 peak.

World Food Prize
2009 Laureate

Teaching Africa to feed itself

Food Prize laureate works to revolutionize agriculture

'Farmers, even though they are illiterate, they are not dumb'

RODNEY WHITE/THE REGISTER

The 2009 World Food Prize will be awarded to Gebisa Ejeta, 59, of Ethiopia, whose sorghum hybrids have resulted in increased yields.

By PHILIP BRASHER
pbrasher@dmreg.com

Growing up poor in rural Ethiopia, Gebisa Ejeta benefitted from two imports from America: basketball and training in agriculture.

The tall young man who would become the 2009 World Food Prize laureate learned basketball well enough at a high school and agricultural college started by a U.S. university to play for the Ethiopian national team.

More important for his country, the agriculture he learned led him to a career in plant breeding, and he went on to dramatically improve yields of sorghum, a crop critical to his home country.

Now, his goal is to spread that basic agricultural training to millions of poor farmers who need it. He said the United States and other countries lost interest in that kind of education, to the detriment of food production in Africa.

Simple agronomic practices common in the West, such as planting seeds at the right time and controlling weeds, "could revolutionize African agriculture," the Purdue University agronomist said.

Show poor farmers they can earn a decent income using those methods and they'll adopt them, he said. "Farmers, even though they are illiterate, they are not dumb."

In fact, until farmers see a value in adopting conventional farming practices, it's premature to push them toward the genetically engineered seeds now widely popular with American farmers, he said. "Africa is not hungry because of lack of biotechnology," he said.

» Bill Gates calls for a new Green Revolution to feed the world.
Article, Page 1A

Ejeta, 59, is heartened by the Obama administration's interest in agricultural development.

President Barack Obama has called for doubling U.S. agricultural aid funding to $1 billion a year. Funding such programs fell sharply starting in the 1980s because of opposition from U.S. farm groups that objected to helping farmers learn to compete with American growers. The bulk of U.S. aid was directed instead to donations of U.S.-grown food.

The food assistance "saved lives and stopped people from being hungry," but the aid "hasn't done much to the development of these

EJETA, PAGE 12B

Garage-sale values placed on Myers' personal property

Spencer firm to close; 65 jobs

Business Watch

From Register staff and news services

Worries persist despite retail sales strength

Retail sales outside of autos showed surprising strength in September, but economists worry the rebound in all-important consumer spending will be short-lived as American families contend with rising unemployment and tight credit.

Removing autos, sales rose a better-than-expected 0.5 percent, led by gains at furniture stores, general merchandise stores and specialty clothing stores.

Many economists saw that as a sign that Americans are starting to spend again, a critical development for any recovery because consumer spending accounts for 70 percent of total economic activity.

"American consumers look like they are making their way back," said Mark Zandi, chief economist at **Moody's Economy.com**.

"They are cautious, but they are no longer panicked. They are not spending with abandon, but they are spending enough to ensure that the nation's recovery will continue."

PepsiCo iPhone application draws criticism

PepsiCo Inc. is facing criticism for an iPhone application that promises to help men "score" with two dozen stereotypes of women by giving users pickup lines and a scoreboard to keep track of their conquests.

An apology by the company — which is using the application "Amp up before you score" to market its Amp energy drink — is igniting more online criticism. But the company is sticking by the application.

A spokeswoman said the application is available only to people 17 and older who "choose to opt in to the experience."

The application lets users select from stereotypes of women, like the "foreign exchange student" or "nerd" or "cougar." Then it offers possible pickup lines like, "Wasn't I in Space Academy with you?" for the nerd.

Dollar loses punch and crude hits $75 at the close

Oil prices on Wednesday rose above $75 a barrel for the first time in a year because of a weak dollar and the belief that the coming holiday shopping season will bring more traffic to the roads.

Benchmark crude for November delivery added $1.03 to settle at $75.18 on the **New York Mercantile Exchange**. The last time crude finished above $75 a barrel was Oct. 14, 2008, exactly one year ago.

Humane Society: IHOP's eggs aren't 'cruelty free'

The **Humane Society of the United States** filed complaints Wednesday against the **International House of Pancakes**, alleging that the restaurant chain lies about the living conditions of the chickens that lay the eggs for its omelets and pancakes.

The chain claims that its eggs are "cruelty free" and that animals used for its food receive "dignified, humane treatment." The animal welfare group filed complaints with federal regulators saying the Glendale, Calif., company is engaged in "false or deceptive advertising."

The complaints say the eggs for IHOP's 1,421 U.S. restaurants come from chickens raised in cramped cages that do not allow them to stretch their wings, walk around or nest.

The Humane Society and its supporters have waged a long-running battle against the restaurant industry over the conditions in which chickens are raised.

Iowa is the nation's No. 1 egg producer.

Stocks of Iowa Interest

	Close	Change		Close	Change
AT&T	25.83	-0.07	Lennox	35.70	+0.50
Aegon	9.23	+0.35	Marsh & McLennan	25.29	+0.31
Alcoa	14.32	+0.21	Mediacm	5.33	+0.10
Alliant Energy	27.17	-0.05	Meredith	31.58	+0.93
American Equity Life	6.96	+0.22	MetaFincl	23.50	-0.21
Ames National Corp	24.60	+0.04	MidWestOne	8.50	-0.47
Archer Daniels	29.91	-0.04	Monsnto	77.59	+1.12
Arts Way	3.99	-0.23	NCentBsh	15.90	...
Bank of America	18.59	+0.78	PepsiCo	61.62	+1.02
Berkshire Hathaway A	102000.00	+1410.00	Principal Financial	29.47	+1.66
BonTon	8.42	+0.12	Procter & Gamble	57.31	+0.05
Burlington Northern	86.50	+4.03	Qwest	3.69	-0.12
Caseys	32.68	+0.39	Regions Financial	6.09	+0.13
Citigroup	5.00	+0.17	Rockwell Collins	52.28	+1.02
ConAgra	21.10	-0.40	Sauer-Danfoss	7.95	+0.22
Deere	43.75	+1.10	SearsHldgs	72.42	+2.70
DuPont	34.56	+1.22	SmithfF	14.08	+0.03
EMC Insurance Group	21.97	+0.11	Target	51.35	+1.25
Exxon Mobil	71.84	+1.58	Terra Industries	35.50	+0.42
FBL Financial	21.68	+1.70	3M	76.57	+1.92
Flexsteel	8.43	-0.13	Tyson	12.38	-0.31
FordM	7.66	+0.04	Union Pacific	62.86	+2.95
Gannett	13.48	+0.33	United Fire	20.89	+0.38
GreenPlns	7.39	+0.32	United Parcel	57.21	+1.48
HNI Corp	23.15	+0.41	US Bancorp	23.94	+1.09
Heartland Express	15.07	+0.37	ValeroE	18.81	-0.37
Heartland Financial	15.29	+0.24	Wal Mart	50.19	-0.15
Hormel	35.35	+0.06	Wells Fargo	31.34	+1.28
ING	18.73	+0.55	West Bank	5.17	+0.21
IBM	128.35	+1.33	Whrlpl	72.86	+1.03
Iowa Telecom	12.39	+0.10	Winnebago	14.36	-0.05
Lee Enterprises	4.01	+0.27			

Grains & Livestock

CORN $3.83, +$0.01

FUTURES

Futures trading on the Chicago Board of Trade:

SOYBEANS: 5,000 bu min.-cents per bushel

	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	SETTLE	CHG.

EJETA

FROM PAGE 11B

sectors of agriculture in developing countries," he said.

"If we don't recognize the needs of the poor and the problem of agricultural development in developing countries, it really puts out a very bad image about assistance from the United States. The intent is being questioned."

Guided toward grad studies

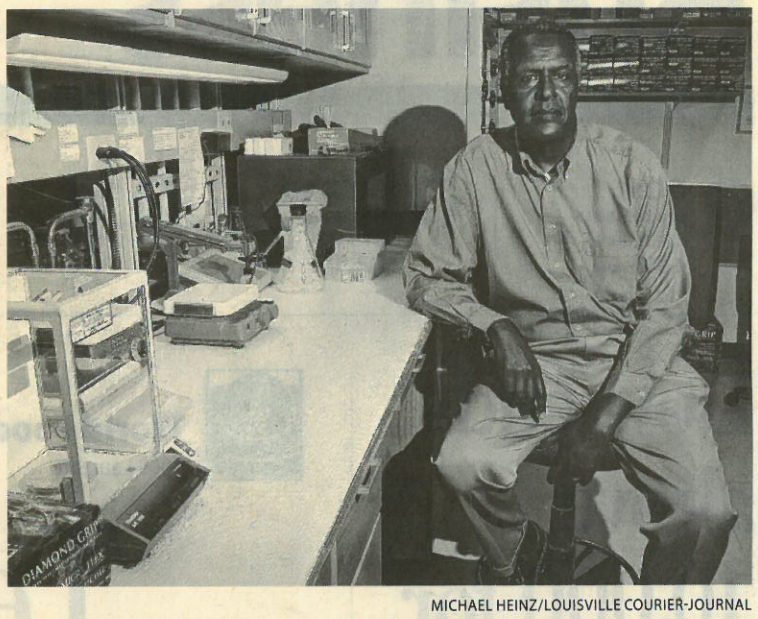
Ejeta, who grew up in a thatched hut, wound up in agricultural science after he qualified to attend a local secondary school and then Haramaya University, both founded by Oklahoma State University.

At the college, besides becoming a center on the basketball team, he met a Purdue professor who steered him toward graduate studies in the United States.

At Purdue, Ejeta teamed with a colleague to develop varieties of sorghum, a staple crop in Ethiopia, resistant to a weed that causes an estimated $7 billion in damage annually to African crops. The researchers unlocked the biochemical means by which the parasitic weed, known as Striga, interacts with sorghum and chokes its growth. Chemicals from the sorghum or other grain crops trigger germination of the Striga plants, which then suck nutrients from the roots of the host.

Combining that resistance to weeds with earlier advancements in drought tolerance, Ejeta developed sorghum that could yield up to four times as much grain as previous varieties.

Ejeta's achievement has played a major role in improving agricultural productivity in Ethiopia, said Joachim Von Braun, director general of the International Food Policy Research Institute. Another factor: The government sent out 60,000 extension agents to assist farmers. While the advisers were poorly trained, they still made a difference, Von Braun said.



MICHAEL HEINZ/LOUISVILLE COURIER-JOURNAL

Purdue University professor Gebisa Ejeta, 59, pictured in June in his lab at the university in West Lafayette, Ind., says he hopes to use the Food Prize to "push toward transformative change" in African agriculture.

While Ethiopia still has one of the world's worst malnutrition problems, the prevalence of hunger there has dropped from 44 percent of the population to 31 percent since 1990, according to the institute.

Continuous teaching

Ejeta travels frequently to Africa for his research and also mentors African graduate students at Purdue. Because work on sorghum was aimed at farmers in Africa, his achievement went unrecognized for a long time, said the chairman of Purdue's agronomy department, Craig Beyrouty.

"Oftentimes, people in the United States don't have an understanding and appreciation for the depth and breadth of work he's involved with," Beyrouty said.

Ejeta said he will continue his research into weed resistance, but he hopes to use the $250,000 World Food Prize as a platform to work with development groups and international agencies to "push toward transformative change" in African agriculture.

"I have the energy, I have the vision for it, with the hope that agencies would join me in that fight," he said.

As for that other import from America, Ejeta didn't develop an interest in basketball by choice originally. While staying at the high school one summer, the students were told that "everybody is going to play whether you like it or not," the 6-foot 7-inch scientist said.

"They just put me under the basket and I got the rebounds. Our team won, so senior year in high school I was on the varsity."

His career peaked his senior year in college, when he was selected for the Ethiopian national team. The team's quest for the Olympics ended abruptly when the military reneged on plans to fly the players to a qualifying game in Nairobi against the Kenyan team.

That wasn't the end of the Ejeta basketball legacy.

Three of his daughters starred in the sport in the United States. One played at Duke University and two at the University of Wisconsin.

ELBERT

FROM PAGE 11B

lenders, there was still a huge hole, which is why he filed for personal bankruptcy Tuesday.

His bankruptcy case lists assets of just more than $1 million and liabilities of more than $183 million. Even if you believe, as many people will, that his assets are understated and his liabilities are overstated, that's still a big gap to fill.

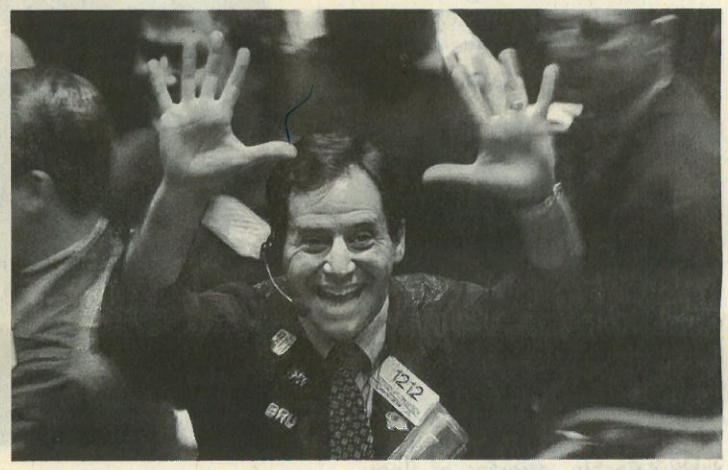
Given the number of people — from homeowners and real estate agents to contractors and subcontractors — who were burned by Regency's failure last year, it's a safe bet that a lot of people will be poring through Myers' bankruptcy records.

It's also a safe bet that a lot of them will do double takes when they see the values Myers has listed on four pages of personal property.

The value given for the 64 items on those pages is about $7,000. That presumably includes all the furniture, appliances and other personal property, not including clothing, in Myers' 3,250-square-foot home in Waukee. On the list are three refrigerators, five TVs, a personal computer and home office furniture, two sets of golf clubs, exercise equipment and patio furniture.

Anyone who believes he can furnish a house like Myers' for $7,000 is seriously delusional. Most people I know would claim a bigger tax deduction for items like Myers lists than the values he provided.

What the $7,000 represents, said Steven Wandro, Myers' bankruptcy lawyer, is what the items might fetch at a garage



ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

In this March 29, 1999, photo, a trader smiles on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange while holding up 10 fingers after the Dow ended the day above 10,000 for the first time. The average on Wednesday reclaimed the 10,000 mark for the first time in a year.

DOW

FROM PAGE 11B

— 'Hey, you know what, things must be getting better because the Dow is over 10,000.' "

Cheers went up briefly when the Dow eclipsed the milestone in the early afternoon, during a daylong rally driven by encouraging earnings reports from Intel Corp. and JPMorgan Chase & Co. The average closed at 10,015.86, up 144.80 points.

It was the first time the Dow had touched 10,000 since October 2008, that time on the way down.

Ethan Harris, head of North America economics at Bank of America Merrill Lynch, described it as a "relief rally that the world is not coming to an end."

The mood was far from the euphoria of March 1999, when the Dow surpassed 10,000 for the first time. The Internet then people debated whether there was such a thing as a boom without end.

"If this is a bubble, it sure is hard to pop," the Wall Street Journal marveled on its front page.

It did pop, of course. And then came the lost decade.

The Dow peaked at 14,164 in October 2007, then lost more than half its value after the financial meltdown last fall. At its low point, the average stood at 6,547.05. The breathtaking rally since then brings stocks to roughly break-even for the past 10 years.

So where does the market go from here?

Some market watchers see 10,000 as an illusion because there are still lingering threats to an economic recovery — rising unemployment, weak consumer spending and a battered housing market.

Also, concerns are showing up in the technical charts that pro-