

## Home Magic

Nuggets dominate another fellow division leader in Denver **6A**



## Plants in peril

FLC exhibit shows endangered flora in illustration **1B**



Ignacio waives fees to help store rebuild **3A**

# THE DURANGO HERALD

Thursday

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## Tens of thousands likely dead in Haiti

### Many more probably trapped from quake

By Jonathan M. Katz  
Associated Press Writer

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti – Dazed survivors wandered past dead bodies in rubble-strewn streets Wednesday, crying for loved ones, and rescuers desperately searched collapsed buildings as fear rose that the death toll from Haiti's devastating earthquake could reach into the tens of thousands.

The first cargo planes with food, water, medical supplies, shelter and sniffer dogs headed to the Western Hemisphere's poorest nation a day after the magnitude-7 quake flattened much of the capital of 2 million people.

Tuesday's earthquake brought down buildings great and small – from shacks in shantytowns to President Rene Preval's gleaming white National Palace, where a dome tilted ominously above the manicured grounds.

See *Quake*, 2A

### Durangoans watch, worry, hurry to help

By Ann Butler  
Herald Staff Writer

For those Durango residents who have a connection to Haiti, the news coming after Tuesday's earthquake and aftershocks is all too real.

"I stayed up all last night (Tuesday night)," said Shaun Stanley, who spent a month in Haiti in May filming a documentary for Compassion International, a charity that works with children's development. "I couldn't get their faces out of my mind."

See *Durangoans*, 8A



PATRICK FARRELL/AP

Girls cry as a little girl is removed from the rubble Wednesday in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Tuesday's magnitude-7 earthquake left a landscape of collapsed buildings – hospitals, schools, churches, ramshackle homes, even the gleaming national palace – the rubble sending up a white cloud that shrouded the entire capital. Tens of thousands are likely dead.

### Red Cross gears up to provide aid

By Dale Rodebaugh  
Herald Staff Writer

The Southwest Colorado Chapter of the American Red Cross is joining the effort to raise \$1 million for earthquake relief in Haiti.

"We've been swamped with calls from people who want to know what they can do," chapter Executive Director Cindi Shank said Wednesday while enroute to Durango from Denver. "It's Durango, so people are wonderful and want to step up whether

See *Aid*, 8A

### Enticed through ice



JERRY McBRIDE/Herald

Jerry Thomas, left, and his brother Jim Thomas ice fish on Pastorius Reservoir on Wednesday afternoon. The brothers caught their limit of rainbow trout. "I just got a new smoker, and I'm having a lot of fun with it smoking some of the fish we catch. They taste delicious," Jerry Thomas said. The ice on the lake was 2 feet thick.

## Legislature begins with grim mood

By Joe Hanel  
Herald Denver Bureau

DENVER – There was no happy new year for state legislators Wednesday on the first day of their session.

The first day – traditionally a sort of family reunion with inspiring speeches – lacked the high notes this year, thanks to the recession and a persistent gap in the state budget.

"This session is not about platitudes. It's about getting the job done," said Senate President Brandon Shaffer, D-Longmont, in his opening day speech.

Speaker of the House Terrance Carroll said the century's first decade wasn't easy.

"Two wars, two recessions – one nearly resulting in economic collapse – disasters both natural and man-made. If anything, history's long march, which rarely presents time to exhale, is speeding up," said Carroll, D-Denver.

### Watch online

For the first time, Senate floor debates are being broadcast on cable television and the Internet. The House put in TV cameras two years ago. In Southwest Colorado, the broadcasts are available online. Visit [www.leg.state.co.us](http://www.leg.state.co.us) and click on Video/Audio Broadcasts of Current Proceedings at the top of the page.

Lawmakers expressed hope for at least some bipartisan efforts, with both Gov. Bill Ritter and Senate Minority Leader Josh Penry, R-Grand Junction, out of the governor's race.

But even the prime area of cooperation – the Public Employees Retirement Association – involves the grim task of cutting benefits and increasing contributions workers must make.

See *Legislature*, 2A

## County may revise buy-local policy

### Businesses hope for bigger discount

By Katie Burford  
Herald Staff Writer

Local businesses expressed satisfaction Wednesday with La Plata County's buy-local policy but suggested improvements, such as placing a greater premium on local labor.

Their comments came during a meeting organized by the county as it looks at possible revisions to its procurement policy, which takes 2 percent off the bid of companies determined to be local according to several criteria.

An online survey conducted by the county in the fall found overwhelming support for the

### If you go

A second open house about the county's local procurement policy will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. today at the Road and Bridge department, 1365 South Camino del Rio.

Vendors can register at [www.rockymountainbidsystem.com](http://www.rockymountainbidsystem.com) to do business with the county.

policy. Additionally, about 70 percent of respondents said the 2 percent deduction should be increased.

Janalee Hogan, contracting agent for the county, told about a dozen vendors who attended the meeting that raising the percentage had to be balanced with budget constraints.

See *Policy*, 2A

## Taliban cause Afghan deaths to soar

### Civilian casualties at highest level of war in 2009

By Kim Gamel  
Associated Press Writer

KABUL – Taliban suicide bombings and other attacks caused Afghan civilian deaths to soar last year to the highest annual level of the war, a U.N. report found Wednesday, while deaths attributed to allied troops dropped nearly 30 percent. Many Afghans now blame the violence on the Taliban rather than foreign forces.

A decline in NATO killings of civilians has become a key U.S. goal for winning over the Afghan people. Public outrage about rising death tolls prompted the top commander Gen. Stanley Mc-



ABDUL KHALIQ/AP

A U.S. Marine talks Wednesday to an Afghan sitting on a car destroyed the previous day in a clash in Laki, south of Kabul. A spokesman for the provincial governor in Helmand said insurgents organized the Tuesday protest that left six civilians dead and seven others wounded.

Chrystal last year to tighten the rules on the use of airstrikes and other weaponry if civilians are at risk.

The United Nations said 2,412 civilians were killed in 2009 – a 14 percent increase over the 2,118 who died in 2008. Nearly

70 percent of civilian deaths last year, or 1,630, were caused by the insurgents, the report found.

NATO and allied Afghan forces were responsible for 25 percent of the deaths, or 596, the U.N. said, down from 39 percent, or 828, in 2008.

The remainder could not be attributed to either side: civilians caught in the crossfire or killed by unexploded ordnance, according to the report.

More than half the civilian deaths were a result of suicide attacks and other bombings as well as assassinations and executions – despite an order last year by Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar to avoid endangering noncombatants. The U.N. said Taliban attacks were mainly aimed at government or international forces, but civilians can

See *Afghanistan*, 8A

### Coming Friday

#### Avalanche of live music

Abbey Theatre to host seven concerts in eight nights  
**Arts & Entertainment**

### More headlines

Authorities look for clues in Coal Bank Pass crash  
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Obama, Dems claim progress on health bill  
**Page 5A**

Yemen kills al-Qaida suspect  
**Page 10B**

### Weather



High: 40  
Low: 16

Periods of snow this morning up to an inch; otherwise, cloudy. Snow shower this evening. Mostly sunny Friday. High 41. Partly sunny Saturday.

See *WeatherWatch*, back page

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