



MAKE THAT CALL
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not linked, study finds **6A**



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THE Durango HERALD

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Dream meets reality



Scott and Aggie Hedlund move boxes into a bedroom of their newly purchased condominium in Silver Peaks near Fort Lewis College. The couple worked with the Regional Housing Authority in making their purchase.

SHAUN STANLEY/Durango Herald photos

Homeownership too risky for many living on the edge in Durango

BY LYNDA EDWARDS
HERALD STAFF WRITER

Durangoans have joked for years that people will work three jobs to pay the rent in Durango because this lovely river town encircled by mountains is paradise.

But local affordable-housing advocates increasingly are seeing clients who are homeless despite working several jobs or were once middle class until a job loss or medical problem threw them behind.

"If you lose your home in Durango, you are not in paradise," said Sarada Leavenworth, division director for Volunteers of America, which operates the Durango Community Shelter.

The continuing recession combined with Durango's low wages and limited job opportunities has prompted the city's affordable-housing organizations to



See **HOMEOWNERSHIP, 14A** Aggie Hedlund moves a futon while moving into her new condo.

ELECTION 2011:
BALLOT ISSUE 4A

Voters to decide fire tax

Foes cite recession, supporters the efficiencies

BY SHANE BENJAMIN
HERALD STAFF WRITER

Voters in November will be asked to approve a district-wide property tax that would raise taxes for most residents in the Durango Fire & Rescue Authority, especially in the city.

Proponents say Ballot Issue 4A would create a unified taxing district and eliminate redundancies in governance. The extra money would help restore funding to 2010 levels, which has declined as a result of reduced property values and lower gas production.

"Our ability to provide proper service to the constituents and provide our firefighters with what they need to do their job is being challenged," said DFRA Chief Dan Noonan. "Our budget will drop below the amount of money we collected in 2006 ... if this doesn't pass. Nobody speaks to how we're going to maintain services with all those losses."



Noonan

Opponents say nearly everybody is making sacrifices during these tough economic times, and so should the fire department. Now is not the time to raise taxes on homeowners and commercial properties, said Jeff Mannix, who started Taxpayers for Fiscal Responsibility, a political committee opposed to Ballot Issue 4A.

"This fire district is getting along just fine," Mannix said. "We're not in an emergency here. The fire department is not going broke."

DFRA was formed in 2002 by combining an ambulance service and three fire districts: Durango, Animas and Hermosa Cliffs. Voters made it official in 2006 by creating the Durango Fire Protection District, but they rejected a uniform property tax to fund the district. That means each district maintains separate funding mechanisms and independent boards of directors that make up the authority.

Noonan said consolidating the agency would save about \$800,000 in redundant and retained spending among the districts, including audits, accounting fees, director fees, legal fees and insurance costs.

See **TAX, 14A**

Gadhafi's gone, but Libya's path unclear

BY BRADLEY KLAPPER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON – Libya's victorious revolutionaries now face a new threat: Themselves.

The secular and the religious, the politicians and the militants all basked Thursday in the demise of a dictator after fighters killed Moammar Gadhafi and eradicated once and for all his four decades of repression in Libya. But while congratulations poured in from across the world, the Obama administration and others tempered the celebrations with a dose of caution, conscious that Libya's formerly ragtag band of rebels must now avoid falling prey to extremists among themselves, or the type of political infighting that has hijacked the hopes of previous revolutions.

Gadhafi's death clears a cloud over Libya's shaky interim government while focusing new scrutiny on the former rebels and exiles now in charge and on possible candidates to lead a permanent government. Despite a public embrace of Libya's transitional lead-



DAVID SPERRY/Associated Press

A revolutionary Libyan fighter inspects the tunnels where Moammar Gadhafi is claimed to have been found Thursday, in Sirte, Libya.

ership, the U.S. remains leery of some of the motives of those who have promised a quick move to elections and democracy.

And, while no official said it, the fear of an Islamist surge in power hangs over Libya's unsure future.

"This is a momentous day in

the history of Libya," President Barack Obama declared from the White House Rose Garden. "The dark shadow of tyranny has been lifted, and with this enormous promise the Libyan people now have a great responsibility:

See **LIBYA, 14A**

Fracking to get federal oversight

Standards to address concerns about water contamination

BY HEATHER SCOFIELD
HERALD STAFF WRITER

Environmental advocates lauded a Thursday announcement that federal regulators will develop national standards for the disposal of polluted wastewaters from fracking for natural gas.

"We think this is a solid step in the right direction," said Bruce Baizel, an attorney with the Oil and Gas Accountability Project in Durango.

Hydraulic fracturing, a technique that uses millions of gallons of water alongside sand and chemical additives to unlock natural gas in deep formations, is being used in Colorado, New

Mexico, Pennsylvania, Texas and other states. The practice has increased dramatically in recent years, raising concerns about the potential impact on water quality.

The Environmental Protection Agency announced Thursday it will draft standards for fracking wastewater that drillers would have to meet before sending it to treatment plants.

Baizel said the regulatory move will set national standards for coal-bed methane wastewater pretreatment and discharge in 2013 and for shale gas wastewater in 2014.

"In many states, both standards and enforcement have been lacking," Baizel said.

It has created a need for national rules that rely on "economically achievable technologies," he said.

See **FRACKING, 14A**

IN TOMORROW'S PAPER

A pair of nationally ranked FLC soccer sides host their final regular-season games at Dirks Field

Abby | **4B**
City, Region, State | **3A**
Classifieds | **7A, 1C**

Local briefs | **7A**
Lotto | **14A**
Movies | **3B**

Nation | **6A**
Outdoors | **12A**
Sports | **8A**

Today: Sunny much of the time and pleasant; breezy this afternoon.
High 65. | Low 28. More weather | **6C**

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