



BEST IN SHOW

New exhibit celebrates the beauty of rescue dogs 1B

NEW LEADER

Arthur Kunkel taking over Demons boys golf 1C

THE Durango HERALD

Weekend Edition

SERVING THE HEART OF SOUTHWEST COLORADO | DURANGOHERALD.COM | FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 2026 | \$2.00

LA PLATA COUNTY FAIR

Good eats, quality quilts and plenty of livestock



Melidy Jahnke, 18, competes in senior sheep showmanship with her lamb on Wednesday during the La Plata County Fair at the fairgrounds in Durango. She went on to win the grand champion ribbon.

JERRY MCBRIDE/Durango Herald photos

‘Rooted in TRADITION’

BY GABRIELLE WALLACE
HERALD STAFF WRITER

Under radiant sun rays and smoky skies, the La Plata County Fair drew people in from near and far this week, each with their own undertakings and pursuits. One man traveled over 2,000 miles so his grandchildren could attend the fair

and he could people-watch. A 4-H member contemplated how her days in the program are nearing their end – until her focus shifted back to her hogs and how she hopes they’ll behave in the show ring. One couple even tried their hands at a new business venture, giddy to get started.

See FAIR, 8A



Jolene Broffitt, 9, reads a book with her hog Speckles after showing in market swine during the La Plata County Fair on Thursday at the fairgrounds. Jolene is reading “Warriors,” by Erin Hunter.

LA PLATA COUNTY

Republicans try to keep unified front, avoid state infighting

Performance in November is tied to influence with GOP national committee

BY JESSIE BOWMAN
HERALD STAFF WRITER

Leaders of the La Plata County Republican Party want local members to put aside the in-

ternal divisions that have been characteristic of the Colorado GOP for years and unite behind the party’s candidates ahead of the November election.

“If you’re seeing any of the party infighting, do not comment on it. Do not react to it. Scroll on by. Don’t feed into it,” Vice Chair Lisa Zimmerman told attendees Tuesday during the monthly central committee meeting at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4031 in Durango. Her remarks referenced ongoing disputes about prima-

ry election results and recent turnover within the state party leadership.

This spring, party members ousted former leader Brita Horn with a vote of no-confidence. It was the continuation of years of internal unrest and divided in-party factions that members have said make it impossible to effectively organize and fund-

raise. Donors have avoided the state party, whose coffers have hit rock bottom.

Similar infighting hit the LPC Republicans several years ago, but they have made serious efforts to unite and present a unified front. Headed into 2026 midterms, their focus is on running

See REPUBLICANS, 8A

A&E | 1B
City, Region, State | 3A
Obituaries | 4A

Opinion | 8B
Southwest Life | 4B
Sports | 1C

 /thedurangoherald
 @durangoherald

Today: Patchy smoke then sunny.
Mostly clear tonight. High 100 | Low 60.
More weather | 6C

News tips | 247-3504 or 375-4567
Subscribe | 375-4530
Place a classified ad | 247-3504



Healing Happens Here

Thoughtfully designed spaces that support comfort, connection, and healing.



SAN JUAN REGIONAL
MEDICAL CENTER

