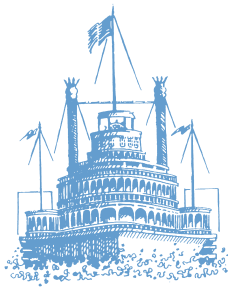


SATURDAY

DECEMBER 8, 2007

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO

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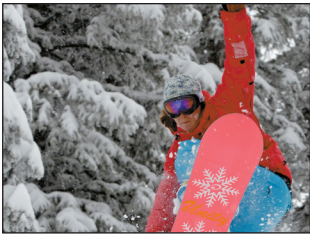
STEAMBOAT TODAY

ROUTT COUNTY'S DAILY NEWSPAPER

FREE

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STEAMBOAT SPRINGS



Storm Peak opens today

Recent snowfall allows lift to open; storm could drop up to 12 more inches today

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NATION

Forecasting research

Team's new method predicts an above-average hurricane season in 2008

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SPORTS



Playing with heart

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Can you dig it?



JOHN F. RUSSELL/STAFF

Rich Gibson shovels snow from in front of the driveway of his house on the Boulevard in downtown Steamboat Springs on Friday. Winter storms dumped a thick layer of snow in the area thrilling skiers and local business owners who have been waiting for a taste of winter.

Slides on the slopes

Avalanche tests deem backcountry snowpack 'tricky,' 'tender'

Tom Ross
PILOT & TODAY STAFF

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

The signs are strongly cautionary for backcountry snowmobilers, skiers and snowboarders thinking about their first big expedition of the winter.

Steamboat Ski Area spokes-

man Mike Lane confirmed that ski patrollers conducting routine avalanche control work at Mount Werner on Thursday deliberately triggered slides that broke to a depth of 3 feet. Lane said the avalanche work was being conducted between the East Face and Chute One trails.

Uncontrolled avalanches are very rare at the ski area.

Scott Toepfer of the Colorado Avalanche Information Center filed a report on information he received from the Steamboat patrol. He said the avalanches broke on slopes steeper than 38 degrees that face northeast at

about 10,600 feet. They were up to 200 feet wide.

They were notable for the way they were triggered.

"Some of the slopes did not release with explosives, then later fractured with ski cuts," Toepfer said. "These are indi-

See **Avalanche**, page 11

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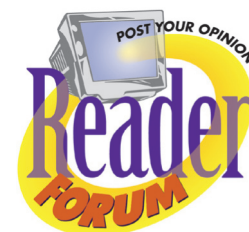
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SKI TOWN USA SNOW REPORT

Steamboat Ski Area

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--------|-------------|--------|
| New snow — Mid-mountain* | 9 in. | Total snow† | 63 in. |
| New snow — Summit | 9 in. | Trails open | 32/165 |
| Base — Mid-mountain | 29 in. | Lifts open | 6/20 |
| Base — Summit | 29 in. | Conditions | Powder |

*24-hour snowfall as of 12:30 p.m. previous day; † total snow beginning Oct. 18 as measured at mid-mountain



READER FORUM

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