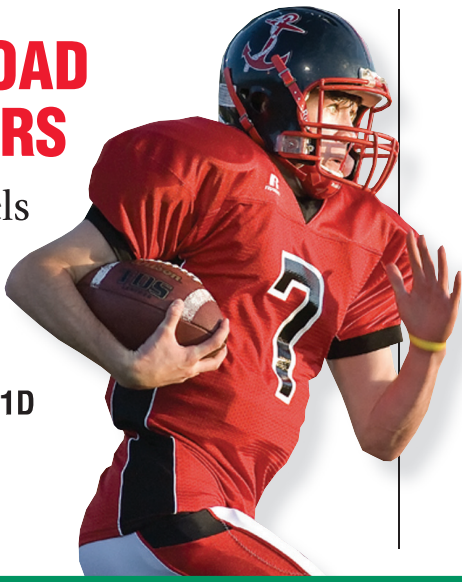


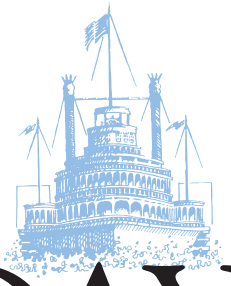
**LONG ROAD FOR SAILORS**

Team travels 400 miles to Cortez this week

SPORTS 1D



STEAMBOAT PILOT & TODAY



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**MINING VOLCANIC ROCK**

Yampa man hauls scoria for roads

BUSINESS 1B



**City: Big box, big dollars**

Planners say Steamboat can't lose large retail revenue

Tom Ross  
PILOT & TODAY STAFF

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

Wary of the damage a big box retailer outside the city limits could wreak on city finances, Steamboat Springs officials are studying how to fit a super store into the west of Steamboat area that has long been planned for city expansion.

The threat of, for example, a

Home Depot in Hayden is the resulting unprecedented sales tax leakage from the local economy, already an issue for the city's revenue stream.

"The impact of leakage is huge," Interim City Manager Wendy DuBord said last week. "What happens if you get a large-format retailer outside the city limits? You're exacerbating the leakage problem we already have. It could be very damaging."

Leakage, in this context, refers to the dollars Steamboat residents spend elsewhere. City planners have long bemoaned the loss of local sales tax revenue to Internet shopping and visits to Silverthorne, for example. Although Steamboat officials have not decided to welcome big box retailers as a way to combat leakage, they have decided to

See **Big box**, page 14A



HANS HALLGREN/CRAIG DAILY PRESS

Tasha, left, and Barbara Burnett load purchases into the trunk of their car at Wal-Mart Supercenter in Craig. The retail giant is the first big box store in Craig.

**RNC spurs local GOP**

Mike Lawrence  
PILOT & TODAY STAFF

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin is revving local Republicans like a snowmobile with a high-powered engine.

A week after Democrats flooded Colorado for their party's national convention, which brought more than 80,000 to Invesco Field in Denver on Aug. 28 and catapulted U.S. Sen. Barack Obama to a burst of momentum in the race for the White House, local Republicans found an answer in St. Paul. As the vice presidential choice of U.S. Sen. John McCain, Palin put the spark to a convention Routt County Republicans found energetic, exciting and very relevant to Northwest Colorado.

"I think Palin's interests and background will reach right into Routt County," said Vance Halvorson, chairman of the Routt County Republican Central Committee. "We have a lot of hunters and outdoor people who really identify with values expressed by Palin. ... I think people are excited."

Geneva and Jack Taylor, of Steamboat Springs, witnessed that excitement firsthand Wednesday night, from the floor of the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul. The pair of Steamboat Springs residents — Jack Taylor is a state senator in his final year of service — were part of the Colorado delegation at this year's Republican convention, with seats next to delegations from Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Wednesday night, Geneva Taylor said, Republicans from across the country rose when Palin took the stage.

See **RNC**, page 13A



ROMAIN BLANQUART/DETROIT FREE PRESS

Vice presidential candidate Gov. Sarah Palin, of Alaska, speaks at Freedom Hill auditorium in Sterling Heights, Mich., on Friday.

**Palin juggles family, politics**

Martha Mendoza  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASILLA, ALASKA

The mother kneels in the snow, cheerfully posing beside her bundled up daughter, behind the bloody, dead caribou the mom just shot.

Maybe not your typical family photo. But that's Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, the disarming mom who's not afraid to carry arms or use them.

Palin would be a heartbeat away from the presidency if she and Republican nominee John McCain win in November. She was introduced to the country by McCain as very much the woman in that photo: tough and loving. She's the ethics-protecting, belt-tightening mom who easily juggles family and her government job.

A visitor to her office can see Palin, a 44-year-old mother of five, as she coos to baby Trig and changes his diapers. A lush bear pelt shot by her father is draped over the couch, and a three-foot king crab shell is perched on a table. Daughters Piper, Willow and Bristol stroll in and out, and crayon drawings are tucked

See **Palin**, page 12A



ZACH FRIDELL/STAFF

Steamboat Springs School District Director of Facilities Rick Denney, left, and Finance Director Dale Mellor take their turn flipping burgers during a picnic for all district employees Sept. 4. The picnic was funded by the Education Fund Board's half-cent sales tax for education, which is up for renewal on the November ballot.

**Fund vote nears**

Campaign for half-cent sales tax gearing up

A new breed of yard sign will begin sprouting across Steamboat Springs in the coming months, as the "1/2 Cent Makes Sense" campaign to renew the city's Education Fund Board sales tax begins a push to the November elections.

During strategy sessions, Steamboat Springs School Board President Robin Crossan has led the group to make promotional materials for the campaign. The group is now in the process of creating buttons, handouts, yard signs, bumper stickers and a host of other advertisements ahead of the Sept. 23 public meeting.

At that meeting, Crossan hopes to create a separate leadership team to push the campaign to completion, but Fund Board President Tom Ptach said he was surprised by the low turnouts for campaign strategy sessions.

See **Funds**, page 13A

**Storm sparks fears near Gulf**

Hurricane Ike set to make landfall just days after Hanna

Brian Skoloff  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KEY WEST, FLA.

Hurricane Ike grew to fierce Category 4 strength Saturday as it roared on an uncertain path that forced millions, from the Caribbean to Florida and Louisiana to Mexico, to wonder nervously where it eventually would strike.

Preparations stretched more

than 1,000 miles as the massive, 135-mph storm took a southwesterly shift that could send it over Cuba and the Florida Keys by Tuesday before heading into the warm open waters of the Gulf of Mexico. And once again, a possible target was New Orleans and the already storm-weary U.S. Gulf Coast.

"These storms have a mind of their own," Florida Gov. Charlie Crist said after a meeting with

mayors and emergency officials. "There are no rules, so what we have to do is be prepared, be smart, vigilant and alert."

First in Ike's path was the low-lying British territory of Turks and Caicos, already pummeled for four days this week by Tropical Storm Hanna. At the airport in Providenciales, Patrick Munroe had hoped to catch a departing flight but was

See **Storm**, page 12A



TODD SUMLIN/CHARLOTTE OBSERVER

A large tree crashed through this Wilmington, N.C., home Saturday. Tropical Storm Hanna brought high winds and rain to the area.

PAGE DESIGNED BY NICOLE MILLER



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**OUTSIDE**

Abundant sunshine. High of 72.  
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**VIEWPOINTS**

LAST WEEK: Will John McCain's choice of Sarah Palin for vice president help him get elected? Results/5A

THIS WEEK: Should the city cut community support funding for nonprofits and human services because of projected decreases in sales tax revenues?

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