

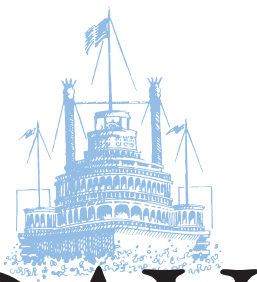
**A BEER FEST WITH CLASS**

Second annual event offers tastes of Colorado

STYLE 1E



STEAMBOAT  
**PILOT & TODAY**



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2008

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**STARBUCK  
KEYS  
SAILOR  
WIN**

Steamboat Springs grabs 2-0 victory against Centaurus

SPORTS 1D



**Use tax incites passion**

Council poised to pass on millions in uncollected revenue

Brandon Gee  
PILOT & TODAY STAFF

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

Some say they're simply being fair. Others stop short of calling it corruption. Both sides promise to be out in force Tuesday when Steamboat Springs City Council members consider the second and final reading of an ordinance that would prevent city accountants from collecting what they estimate is \$4.6 million

**If you go**

**What:** Steamboat Springs City Council meeting  
**When:** 5 p.m. Tuesday  
**Where:** Centennial Hall, 124 10th St.  
**Call:** City offices at 879-2060 for more information

owed to them by construction contractors.

The ordinance concerns a city Finance Department plan to begin requiring reconciliations of

building-use tax deposits collected in conjunction with construction permits. Revenue Supervisor Kim Weber said Wednesday that a 1991 ordinance gave the city the right to require such reconciliations, which could be audited by the city. But in practice, the city changed nothing about the way it had been operating since it began collecting building-use tax in 1974.

See **Use tax**, page 11A



MATT STENSLAND/STAFF

**The 465,000-square-foot One Steamboat Place** project at the base of the Steamboat Ski Area makes up nearly a quarter of the square footage under open permits. The project's building-use tax deposit was \$2.9 million.

**Visa caps block help**

Employers look for seasonal workers

Blythe Terrell  
PILOT & TODAY STAFF

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

The H-2B visa pinch has forced Steamboat Springs employers to get creative with ski season hiring.

Steamboat Ski and Resort Corp., for example, is angling to take in foreign workers through other visa programs. Resort Group found a way to snag H-2B workers who already are in the country. The employers also are ramping up domestic recruiting.

Federal policy on H-2B visas is a major concern for both.

The issue for businesses that require seasonal workers is this: The U.S. government has capped H-2B visas, which allow foreign workers to come in for non-agricultural jobs, at 66,000 a year. Those visas are parceled out in two even cycles. The 33,000 visas that serve the winter season were gone in July. Until last year, Congress had allowed previous H-2B workers to return to their seasonal jobs without being counted toward the cap.

Congress has not renewed that extension.

It's been a challenge for Ski Corp., which adds about 1,700 workers for the ski season, said Trish Sullivan, Ski Corp.'s vice president of human resources. About 10 percent of the company's seasonal workers are foreign, she said. Last year, H-2B visas were still available when Ski Corp. needed them. This year, they disappeared much earlier, Sullivan said.

Hiring officials instead are focusing on J-1 student visas and Q visas, which allow for-

See **Visas**, page 12A

**Officials assess damage as Ike passes**

Allen G. Breed  
and Pauline Arrillaga  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON

Rescue crews in high-wheel trucks, helicopters and boats ventured out to pluck people from their homes Saturday in an all-out search for thousands of Texans who stubbornly stayed behind overnight to face Hurricane Ike.

The storm blew out skyscraper windows, cut power to millions and swamped thousands of homes along the coast. Yachts were carried up onto roadways, buildings and homes collapsed, and cars floated in floodwaters.

Officials began searching for survivors by late morning, just hours after Ike roared ashore at Galveston with 110 mph winds, heavy rains and towering waves. Overnight, dispatchers received thousands of calls from frightened residents who bucked mandatory orders to leave as the storm closed in. Authorities estimated there were about 140,000 or more who stayed, despite warnings they could die.

"There was a mandatory evacuation, and people didn't leave, and that is very frustrating because now, we are having to deal with everybody who did not heed the order. This is why we do it, and they had enough time to get out. It's just unfortunate that they decided to stay," said Steve LeBlanc, city manager in Galveston.

Sedonia Owen, 75, and her son, Lindy McKissick, defied evacuation orders in Galveston because they wanted to protect their neighborhood from possible looters. She was watching floodwaters recede from her front porch Saturday morning, armed with a shotgun.

"My neighbors told me, 'You've got my permission. Anybody who goes into my house, you can shoot them,'" said Owen.

See **Ike**, page 9A

2008 Steamboat Springs South Meets Old West Festival



MATT STENSLAND/STAFF

**Steamboat Springs resident Nancy Working, right,** enjoys chili and beer Saturday with her sister Cindy Jeruss, who was visiting from California. The two were attending the South Meets Old West Festival at 12th and Yampa Streets.

**Chili day unites crowd**

South Meets Old West Festival combines cultural food, dancing

**SUNDAY FOCUS**

STORY BY  
MELINDA DUDLEY

**W**hen you're making salsa by the gallon, it takes all night to chop enough chiles to satisfy the crowd, Dana Thelander said Saturday at the South Meets Old West Festival.

"It takes awhile, especially when you use the fresh green

chiles, because you have to chop 'em and clean 'em all," teammate Marralee Figueroa said as hungry hands reached into her booth for a taste of "Diva's Dynamite Salsa."

A hungry crowd ran chili cook-off contestants out of their cre-

ations early Saturday afternoon during the festival — a new event combining Mainstreet Steamboat Springs' Downtown Hoedown & Chili Challenge and Integrated Community's Festival of the

See **Festival**, page 10A



MATT STENSLAND/STAFF

**Max Huppert**, director of nutritional services for the Steamboat Springs School District, fillets fresh salmon for student lunches last week at Steamboat Springs High School.

**Max Huppert cooks up café atmosphere**

Steamboat Springs High School's food services director finds niche in school lunches

Zach Fridell  
PILOT & TODAY STAFF

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

Filleting a fresh, whole salmon from Alaska, Max Huppert looks the part of an internationally experienced hotel chef. And although it's true Huppert has spent years working as a hotel chef around the world, the prime fish he prepared last week will be served to students at Steamboat Springs High School.

Huppert, the director of nutritional services for the Steamboat

Springs School District, is transforming local school lunches from the stereotypical visions of beige mush to that of high-class, worldly cuisine.

"We're the only one in the whole U.S. that has a lunch program like this," Huppert boasted last week.

Huppert, with a shaved head and tattoos, said he has increased the quality of the basic produce and meats as he expanded the menu offerings.

"We're trying to get away from all that pre-made stuff that

has all those additives," he said. "But we still have to use some to offset the costs."

Huppert said the food supplied by the state school food system often is filled with chemicals. As an example, he pointed to the list of ingredients on a box of fajita-flavored chicken strips. The ingredients included several types of phosphates and additives to give the strips artificial grill marks and flavor. In contrast, Huppert now buys whole chicken breasts, with no additives, and the staff seasons the

meat with fresh herbs instead of mixes.

The school district's nutritional services department also is buying fresh fruit instead of canned fruit to cut down on students' sugar intake, and the new baking program is providing the schools with fresh-baked breads and rolls.

Many of the staples of the menu are being reinvented, Huppert added. Barbecue beef sandwiches still can be found

See **Huppert**, page 12A

PAGE DESIGNED BY CHRISTOPHER WOYTKO



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**OUTSIDE**

Plenty of sunshine. High of 69.  
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**VIEWPOINTS**

LAST WEEK: Should the city cut community support funding for nonprofits and human services because of projected decreases in sales tax revenues? Results/5A

THIS WEEK: How should the city of Steamboat Springs prioritize funding for tourism marketing?

**DELIVERY PROBLEM?**

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