

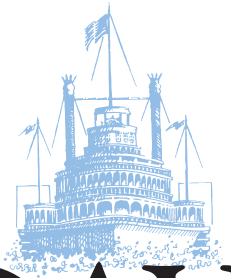
**LODWICK EYEING RETURN**

Nordic combined skier trains for world stage

SPORTS 1D



STEAMBOAT  
**PILOT & TODAY**



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**WAR OF THE WORDS**

Poetry slams give local writers voice

STYLE 1E



**Jon Quinn wants property tax**

Brandon Gee  
PILOT & TODAY STAFF

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

Jon Quinn is waging a lonely war. For about a year, the first-term Steamboat Springs City Councilman periodically has raised the issue of a city property tax. Sometimes he does

it under council members' reports at the end of City Council meetings. Sometimes he floats the idea during budget discussions. Sometimes he reaches for connections to other subjects.

Almost always, the suggestion is met with a cool response, if any. But in the face of tough city bud-

get discussions, a weakening national economy and an expected decline in the city's main source of revenue — sales tax — now might be the time for Quinn to find some allies.

"There's only so much the city of Steamboat can do to get people to

See **Property tax**, page 12A

**By the numbers**

Sources of municipal tax revenue (2004, statewide)

|               |                         |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| Total tax     | \$2,576,657,705         |
| Property tax  | \$433,820,003 (16.8%)   |
| Sales/use tax | \$1,816,164,575 (70.5%) |

Source: Colorado Municipal League



MATT STENSLAND/STAFF

Solandt Memorial Hospital Board President Kathy Hockin stands under elm trees surrounding the historic Hayden building, which is slated for a \$700,000 improvement project.

**Helping historic hospital**

Solandt board to raise funds for improvements

Blythe Terrell  
PILOT & TODAY STAFF

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

Honey-colored autumn sunshine slipped over the windowsill in Solandt Memorial Hospital's sunroom Wednesday, spreading across the space where tuberculosis patients once convalesced.

Vestiges of Solandt's past are visible decades after the building ended its tour of duty as a hospital. The Hayden building opened in 1923 and ceased operation as a hospital in the late 1960s, though it has housed medical services since.

Now, the hospital board is working to raise thousands of dollars for structural and cosmetic improvements. The State Historical Fund probably will provide much of the nearly \$700,000 needed, board President Kathy Hockin said. But the group must round up thousands of dollars in matching grants.

About \$80,000 has been pledged to the building, which is on the Routt County Register of

See **Solandt**, page 10A



MATT STENSLAND/STAFF

Future owners of units at First Tracks at Wildhorse Meadows take a hardhat tour at the First Tracks construction site Friday afternoon. The Steamboat Springs School District is working with Wildhorse developers to create housing opportunities for school district employees.

**Affordable a stretch**

Teachers struggle to buy deed-restricted housing

**SUNDAY FOCUS**

STORY BY ZACH FRIDELL

A new cooperation between First Tracks at Wildhorse Meadows and the Steamboat Springs School District is attempting to create housing opportunities for school staff and increase teacher retention rates.

District Superintendent Shalee Cunningham said last week that she is interested in creating hous-

ing opportunities to help district personnel and to keep young faculty and staff in Steamboat Springs longer.

"Whatever we can do to help

retain not only our teachers, but all of our staff," she said. "Teacher retention and recruitment has been one of our goals. We have had a hard time keeping them."

To help create the opportunities for teachers, Cunningham also has been in talks with local Colorado Mountain College officials who face many of the same issues. She

is working with First Tracks, the affordable housing component of the Wildhorse Meadows development off Mount Werner Road, to give teachers information about their options.

First Tracks recently held an informational session at Steam-

See **Housing**, page 11A

**Online learning under way in McCoy**

Rock Creek Academy enrolls 7 students in 1st year as charter school

Melinda Dudley  
PILOT & TODAY STAFF

MCCOY

During the summer, Kendra Thompson went from having dozens of classmates at Soroco Middle School to being the sole eighth-grader at Rock Creek Academy.

"The biggest difference is the size of the classes," said Kendra, a student at the recently opened

charter school in McCoy. "I think it's pretty cool that I'm the oldest."

The tiny school's initial enrollment of seven students, spread across nine grades, is lower than organizers originally hoped, but the students — and their parents — are thrilled with the one-on-one attention it facilitates, Rock Creek Academy Director Dawn Mutchelknaus said.

The school's lower elemen-

tary students joined teacher Becky Ingle at a semi-circle table Friday morning as they worked on grade-level assignments with help from Ingle to sound out tough words.

"They're all one big group. The kids don't really differentiate themselves," Mutchelknaus said. "The tough part is for the teacher. If it's art time, she needs seven different art projects."

Parents and other area resi-

dents credit the success of their grass-roots effort to community dedication. Mutchelknaus said continued local support will keep Rock Creek Academy going.

"People will drive by really slow. ... They want to see what's happening," Mutchelknaus said. "This is the biggest thing to happen here since the school closed in 1991."

See **Rock Creek**, page 11A



MATT STENSLAND/STAFF

Rock Creek Academy teacher Becky Ingle works with students at the charter school in McCoy on Friday. Seven students are enrolled in the school's first year.



PAGE DESIGNED BY NICOLE MILLER



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**OUTSIDE**

Sunny and warm. High of 74. Page 2A



**VIEWPOINTS**

LAST WEEK: Do you agree with the City Council's decision to reconcile building-use taxes on open permits? Results/5A

THIS WEEK: Do you support Triple Crown's new program that asks for concessions from local property managers?

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