



FREE



STEAMBOAT SPRINGS



Teen plan to be settled

City Council asked to make decision on addition to Howelsen Ice Arena

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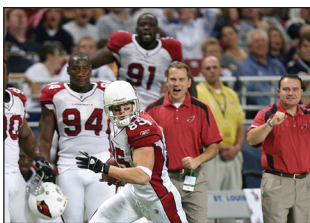
COLORADO

Latino votes help Obama

Hispanics assist Democrats in achieving victory with key battleground states

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SPORTS



Cardinals beat 49ers

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TOM ROSS/STAFF

Army veteran Bert Kempers recalls his role as a photographer in the Signal Corps in post-war Germany during the 1950s. Today is Veterans Day, a national holiday honoring the service of all military veterans.

Veterans tell their tales

Doak residents describe military experience in South Pacific, Europe

Blythe Terrell
 PILOT & TODAY STAFF

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

Sixty-six years ago, Elvin Miles donned a Navy uniform. Fifty-three years ago, Bert Kempers donned an Army uniform.

The two veterans saw the world — Miles from a Navy ship in the South Pacific and Kempers from behind a camera in Germany. Today, the nation honors their service with the Veterans Day holiday.

On Monday, Miles and Kempers shared their stories at the Doak Walker Care Center in Steamboat Springs.

Miles enlisted in the Navy in 1942 when he was 18, figuring he would be drafted to fight in World War II anyway. His eyesight wasn't good enough for the Marine Corps, and Miles chose the Navy because a buddy planned to enlist in that branch.

As it turned out, "he was in the Army," Miles said with a laugh.

Miles spent the next four years in the South Pacific. His group was the first to enter Nagasaki and Hiroshima after the U.S. dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities, he said. Miles also recalled destroying mines in the ocean with .50-caliber machine guns.

"We'd go to those islands, drag cables, cut those mines loose, and when they come to the top, we'd take our small guns and shoot them to explode them," Miles said.

The process was risky, he

said, admitting there was an element of fun to it.

"You'd think you blew up the whole ocean," he said.

Miles, who said he grew up on a farm between Steamboat Springs and Oak Creek, finished his Navy service as a petty officer third class. He returned to the Yampa Valley and worked as a coal miner and a truck driver before breaking his hip.

Miles said he was lucky to have survived the war.

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LOTTO

Monday night's Cash 5 numbers: 8-9-15-17-20
 Drawings are held Monday through Saturday.

WEATHER

Cloudy and a snow shower.
 High of 38.
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