

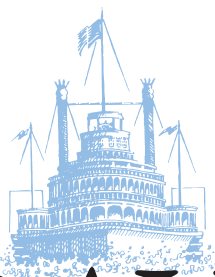
HEADED TO STATE

Soroco's Bruggink earns bid

SPORTS 1C



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PILOT & TODAY



SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2009

VOLUME 122, NUMBER 31 • STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO • www.steamboatpilot.com

POWER OF HEELING

Therapy dogs calm hospital patients

ROUTT COUNTY 1D



Fund slash nears

City braces for multimillion-dollar budget reductions

Brandon Gee
PILOT & TODAY STAFF

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

You know that finances are tight in Steamboat Springs when even reductions in snowplowing are discussed as a possible budget cut.

On the heels of four straight months of sales tax declines — with drops of about 9 percent in November and December — city officials now treat it as a certainty, rather than a possibility, that the city will have to reopen its 2009 budget to find considerable savings. Last week, Steamboat Springs City Councilwoman Cari Hermacinski said the city could be looking at a cut of at least \$2 million; interim City Manager Wendy DuBord said cuts could amount to 10 percent of the city's \$56 million budget.

"It will be millions," DuBord said, "and we will have several options on the table."

The city already cut about \$2 million from its 2009 budget last year in an effort to balance it without using reserves. Councilman Scott Myller said he would hope to make the additional cuts without dipping into reserves, but he doesn't know whether it will be possible. Myller also said that although he thinks the city was successful in making its first round of cuts largely unnoticeable to most residents, the second round of reductions probably will be conspicuous.

"We're tracking everything we can, but we know at this March meeting, we're going to have to make significant cuts," DuBord said, referring to a

See **Budget**, page 11A



MATT STENSLAND/STAFF

Jimiann Murphy, an assistant teacher at the Discovery Learning Center, reads a book to her students Friday. Murphy is taking early childhood education classes at Colorado Mountain College.

Day care a costly affair

With demand increasing, parents look to other options

Zach Fridell
PILOT & TODAY STAFF

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

In 2007, there were 1,543 children younger than 5 in Routt County. That number could reach 2,260 by 2020, according to the state demography office — meaning without significant change, the shortage of local day care is only getting worse.

While the population of young children is increasing, the number of day care slots

On the 'Net

■ View local child care statistics in Yampa Valley Partner's Community Indicators Project on the Web at www.yampavalleypartners.com.

■ To read the 2009 Routt County Early Care and Education Needs Assessment, visit this story at www.steamboatpilot.com.

available is not keeping pace. According to the Community Indicators Project from Yampa Valley Partners, there has been a slight decrease in day care avail-

able during the past 10 years. According to the report, with data from the QualiStar day care provider network, Routt County had space for 640 students in 2008, down from 650 available in 1997. The impact could felt the most in Steamboat Springs, where nearly three quarters of the county's babies are born.

That scarcity of care has led Steamboat Springs City Councilwoman Cari Her-

See **Child care**, page 11A

Owners left in the cold

Locals tangled in confusion of lawsuits, bankruptcies at Lake Village

Dallas Robinson was supposed to be settled into a house on his Lake Village lot by now.

He bought nearly a third of an acre in the Hayden subdivision in fall 2006, calculating that he could build his house in about a year. Instead, the spot's only resident is a rusted Mack truck, planted in snow and weeds, abandoned by an unknown person after Robinson bought Lot 44.

Lake Village

A two-part series about the failing Lake Village subdivision in Hayden

■ **Today:** Bankruptcies and lawsuits involving Lake Village have left lot owners sitting on empty land, waiting for answers
■ **Feb. 22:** A look at what went wrong with Lake Village and whether it could have been avoided.

have been mired in legal and financial problems since a contractor filed mechanic's liens in September 2007. Their Chapter 11 bankruptcy became a Chapter 7. A Denver

See **Lake Village**, page 10A



MATT STENSLAND/STAFF

Hayden resident Dallas Robinson is making mortgage payments on a lot he owns in the Lake Village subdivision on the south side of Hayden. He can't build on the site because the development is tied up in a legal battle.

New shooting range facility planned

Northwest Colorado law enforcement to use 40-acre site west of Steamboat

Melinda Dudley
PILOT & TODAY STAFF

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

Thanks to a land donation from Peabody Energy, plans for a Northwest Colorado firing range and training facility for law enforcement are poised to get off the ground.

The impetus to develop the proposed Northwest Colorado Law Enforcement Training Facility came to a head in recent years as encroaching development drew closer to the Routt County Rifle Club's range west

of Steamboat Springs, said Routt County Sheriff's Office Investigator Ken Klinger. The range shares a border with the proposed Steamboat 700 development.

Best estimates are that the existing range could be gone within two to three years, Routt County Sheriff Gary Wall said, though the Rifle Club has expressed a desire to relocate.

For non-firearms training, the Routt County Sheriff's Office currently uses whatever space it can get its hands on, including the Routt County Justice

Center, Yampa Valley Regional Airport, Colorado Mountain College's Alpine Campus and school buildings across the county, Wall said.

The Northwest Colorado Law Enforcement Training Facility would not only provide a permanent space for training exercises, but the firing range will be designed with a law enforcement-specific focus, such as the inclusion of a 300-yard lane for sniper training.

"Presently, there's no place to practice that," Undersheriff David Bustos said.

"We as law enforcement train a little bit differently than your average civilian," Klinger said. "We train tactical teams, and it's easier if we have our own space."

Klinger and others working on the project approached Peabody Energy, which owns Twentymile Coal Co., while looking at potential land for the facility. Peabody has offered a 40-acre parcel off Routt County Road 33, about two miles from the mine.

See **Training**, page 11A



MATT STENSLAND/STAFF

A shooting range for a new Northwest Colorado Law Enforcement Training Facility might be partly operational as soon as early summer for local law enforcement. Sheriff's Office investigators, from left, Ken Klinger and Mike Curzon, Steamboat Springs' director of public safety J.D. Hays and Sgt. Miles DeYoung, of the Sheriff's Office, are involved with the project.

PAGE DESIGNED BY NICOLE MILLER



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SKI TOWN USA SNOW REPORT

Steamboat Ski Area	
New snow — Mid-mountain	0.25 in.
New snow — Summit	1 in.
Base — Mid-mountain	72 in.
Base — Summit	83 in.
Total snow†	272.5 in.
Trails open	165/165
Lifts open	16/18
Conditions	Powder/packed powder

*24-hour snowfall as of 12:30 p.m. previous day; †total snow beginning Oct. 21 as measured at mid-mountain FOR UP-TO-DATE ROAD CONDITIONS, INCLUDING RABBIT EARS PASS, call 511 or visit www.cotrip.org

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