



STEAMBOAT SPRINGS



Expansion complete

Open house Wednesday for renovated parks and recreation building

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SPORTS



Tigers off to state

Page 23

Correction

Waste Management increased its fee for emptying the Green Machine in Oak Creek and Yampa from \$95 to \$225. A story in Thursday's *Steamboat Today* misstated the increase. Fifteen thousand copies of "Recycling Guidelines for the Yampa Valley" were printed this year. The same story misstated the number of copies printed.



JOHN F. RUSSELL/STAFF

Bartender Megan Mathews punches in a drink order at the Old Town Pub in downtown Steamboat Springs. Like most in the restaurant business, Mathews enjoys the benefit of free or discounted shift meals. A bill sponsored in the state Legislature by Sen. Al White, R-Hayden, aims to protect the meals from taxation by the Colorado Department of Revenue.

Tax threatens shift meal

Sen. White bill aims to protect benefit for restaurant employees

Brandon Gee
PILOT & TODAY STAFF

On the 'Net

Visit www.steamboatpilot.com to download Senate Bill 121.

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

The benefit of free or discounted food enjoyed by numerous Steamboat Springs restaurant employees is threatened, says state Sen. Al White, who is the prime sponsor of a bill to protect shift meals from state taxes.

White, R-Hayden, said Senate Bill 121 aims to clarify a 1978

law that exempted employee meals from state sales tax. The bill goes before the state Senate next week. An independent fiscal analysis shows the bill would reduce state general fund revenues by \$400,000 a year at a time when state finances are so tight the Legislature is consid-

ering cutting higher education spending by \$300 million.

Although the 1978 bill exempted shift meals from sales tax, it also states that the meals will be considered part of an employee's wages. If a restaurant owner does not record the meals as compensation in their wage documentation, the Colorado Department of Revenue is justified in charging sales tax on shift meals, department spokesman Mark

Couch said.

"The law is clear that employee meals are subject to sales tax or must be declared as part of the employee's wages or salaries and income," Couch said.

But Pete Meersman, CEO of the Colorado Restaurant Association, said that approach runs contrary to the spirit and intent of the 1978 law, and claims the Department of

See **Tax**, page 11

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SKI TOWN USA SNOW REPORT

Steamboat Ski Area

New snow — Mid-mountain*	1 in.	Total snow†	389 in.
New snow — Summit	3 in.	Trails open	165/165
Base — Mid-mountain	79 in.	Lifts open	14/18
Base — Summit	110 in.	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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