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TOTALLY WICKED

Popular Broadway musical "Wicked" returns to First Interstate Center for the Arts on Wednesday through March 27. **INSIDE 7**

THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

FRIDAY, March 4, 2022

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Spokane, Washington

TROUBLE AT THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Software update leaves local vets in a bind

Many VA medical center activities screech to halt after computer system corrupts patient data

By Orion Donovan-Smith
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Work ground to a halt at Spokane's Veterans Affairs hospital Thursday after an update to a troubled computer system left patient data corrupted and unusable, according to patients and internal emails.

In an email sent Thursday morning and obtained by

The Spokesman-Review, Robert Fischer, director of the Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center, told employees to stop using the electronic health record system they rely on to coordinate health care and "Assume all electronic patient data is corrupted/inaccurate."

Services would continue for patients already admitted to the hospital, he wrote, but no new

patients would be admitted "until further notice" and the hospital's chief of surgery would make an assessment about the safety of continuing surgeries.

Fischer directed staff to use "downtime procedures," which involve writing patients' information by hand and entering it into the system when it comes back online. A Spokesman-Review investigation in Decem-

ber found the system has seen multiple outages since it was launched in October 2020 at Mann-Grandstaff, but Fischer wrote Thursday's downtime was "unlike previous episodes insofar as all data" in multiple software programs "may be corrupted."

Problems with the system,

See **DATA, 7**

SHERRY SIGNS OFF

Popular weatherman, anchor retires Friday after more than 30 years at KREM-TV

By Kip Hill
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Tom Sherry credits his longevity in the broadcast news business to the traits he shared with a former on-air partner.

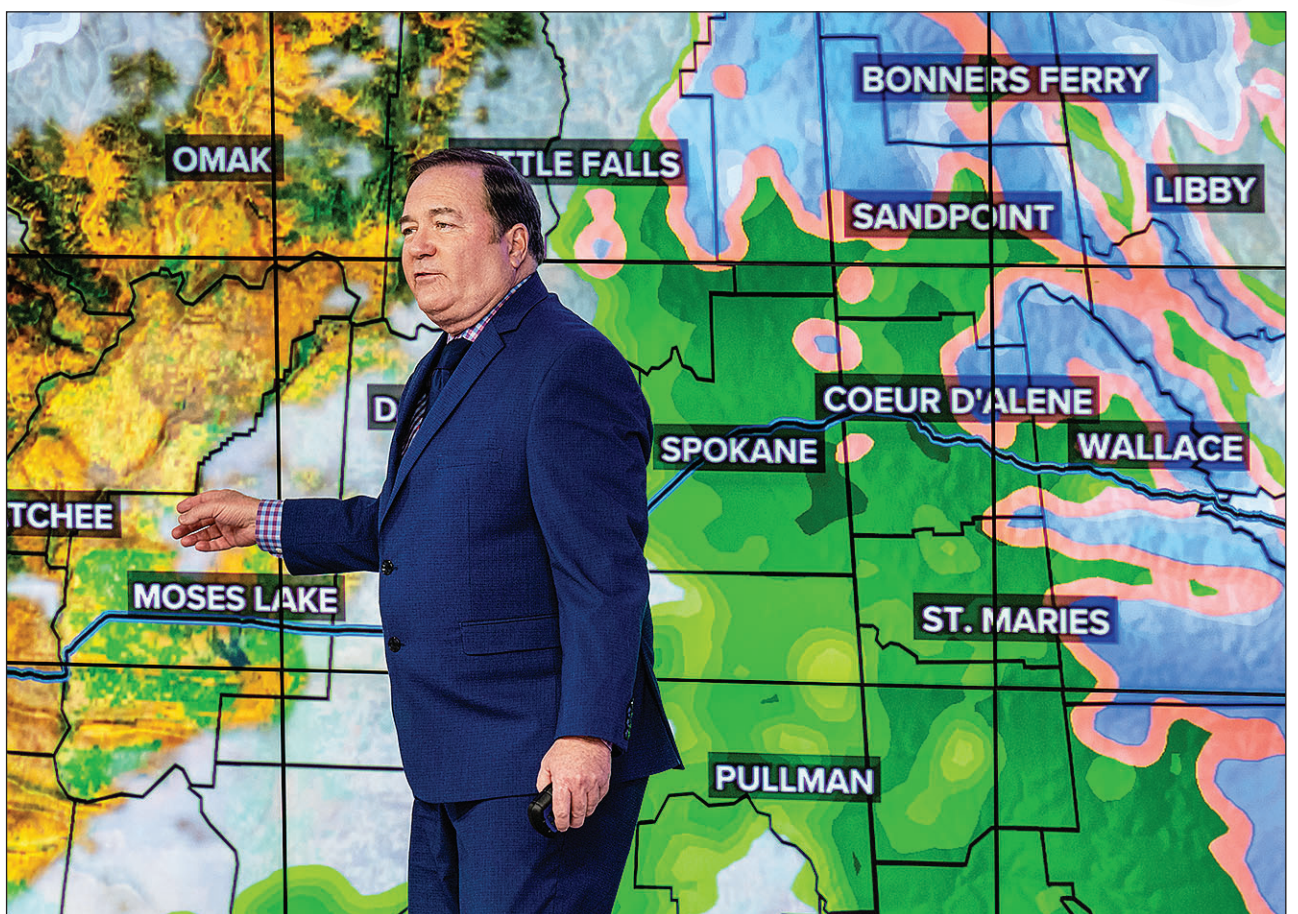
"I like people," Sherry, the 62-year-old weather forecaster and anchorman at KREM-TV, said from his studio home of more than three decades this week. "I had a golden retriever dog for a long time, Doppler the weather dog, and really I think my personality is the same as his. I just really like people."

Spokane has liked Sherry for decades, embracing him with awards, donations to an annual Thanksgiving turkey drives and cheering crowds at live broadcasts during high school football games. At 6 p.m. Friday, Sherry will appear on his last regular broadcast at the CBS affiliate, though he's vowed to return for guest appearances and to help usher along his established philanthropic efforts.

Sherry, who grew up in Southern California as a CB radio enthusiast, came to TV from radio. He was the drive-time talent and program director at KDRK when he took the weekend weather job at KREM. He credited the man he would ultimately replace, Peter Colford, for preparing him to appear on camera when Colford was out due to colon cancer treatment.

"He told the audience, 'When I'm

See **SHERRY, 7**



COLIN MULVANY/THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Tom Sherry does the weather forecast during KREM's 4 p.m. newscast on Wednesday. Sherry, a longtime KREM weatherman and anchor, signs off the air Friday after more than 30 years in the news business in Spokane.

WCC BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

The unobvious and completely practical guide for Zags fans in Vegas



ROB CURLEY
SPOKESMAN EDITOR

Look, we aren't rookies here. Basketball fans from around these parts have migrated each spring to Las Vegas since 2009. We know things.

One of the only sure bets in Sin City is that any self-respecting Gonzaga fan can give you better and more truthful advice on the college hoops conference tournament capital of the world than any of those glorified, pay-for-play tourism guides you find in your hotel room on the Strip.

So, this is a travelogue for the Bulldog basketball junkies who can tell you where to still find a \$5 blackjack table or a decent steak that doesn't require refinancing your South Hill home that the New York Times says everyone now wants to buy.

If you're looking for suggestions that include the Bellagio fountains or that big Ferris wheel, or where to watch an overpriced show starring French-Canadian acrobats, this is not the guide for you.

See **VEGAS, 9**



◀ Raiders' Shake, one of the Black Tap's "crazyshakes."

▶ The "Lake of Dreams" show at the Wynn.



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