

# THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

TROUBLE AT THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

## Oracle announces rebuild of records system

Top exec tells Senate committee its plans to make 'train wreck' Cerner application cloud-based

By Orion Donovan-Smith  
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

WASHINGTON — In a pair of hearings this week, Congress ramped up its scrutiny of the Department of Veterans Affairs' \$10 billion contract with Oracle

to modernize veterans' medical records, as the tech giant promised to revamp the troubled computer system it acquired only months earlier.

On Wednesday, a top VA official told a Senate Appropriations subcommittee the electronic health

record system developed by Cerner Corp., for which Spokane's VA medical center has served as the pilot site since October 2020, "needs major improvements." Oracle acquired Cerner in a \$28 billion deal that closed in June.

"Just one vet harmed is one vet

too many," VA Deputy Secretary Donald Remy said. "And right now, the bottom line is that the Cerner system is not delivering for veterans in the ways that it should. Not even close."

A report released in July by the VA Office of Inspector General,

an independent watchdog agency, found 149 cases of harm at Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center due to delays in care caused by the system. That report focused on just one of dozens of issues

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THURSDAY, September 22, 2022

140th VOL., ISSUE 106 - EST. MAY 19, 1883

Spokane, Washington

## HOW AN EXTINCT VOLCANO (AND OTHER MARKET FORCES) MIGHT THREATEN AMERICA'S BEER SUPPLY



By Thomas Clouse  
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

A national shortage of carbon dioxide may not sound like a big deal, unless you rely on that gas to pressurize lines and kegs and provide the tiny bubbles that make a brew a beer.

No-Li Brewhouse owner John Bryant said carbon dioxide is used virtually everywhere in the brewing process. So it has been a shock as the cost CO2 has tripled in the past 24 months.

The blame rests with supply chain issues and an extinct volcano in Mississippi.

Called the Jackson Dome, the volcano sits about 2,900 feet below the city of Jackson — specifically beneath the Mississippi Coliseum. It holds a massive reservoir of CO2 that is tapped, stored and delivered to industries across the country, including brewers.

Shortages began in mid-2020 when production of ethanol — of which carbon dioxide is a byproduct — slowed as more people stayed home. This summer, the problem became more acute when CO2 in the Jackson Dome became contaminated by gas from a nearby mine.

"We hope to be patient," Bryant said when asked if the shortage will cause higher prices for his beers. "We don't control prices at the store level. That's dictated by our distributors."

See **BREWERS, 12**

## CITY'S HOUSING HEAD WILL STEP DOWN BY END OF MONTH

Hall, tasked with issuing shelter services, is latest to leave in string of staffing woes

By Kip Hill and Colin Tiernan  
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

The man hired less than three months ago to lead Spokane's housing, homelessness and community development initiatives is leaving the job at the end of September.

John E. Hall III will depart Sept. 30 for a job on the East Coast, said Brian Coddington, spokesman for Mayor Nadine Woodward. He was hired in June to lead the city's Neighborhood, Housing and Human Services division, part of Woodward's plan

to bring stability to an office that had experienced frequent turnover.

Jenn Cerecedes, director of the Community, Housing and Human Services department, will serve as interim division director for the first two weeks of October. The position will then be filled on an interim basis by Eric Finch, who had served as head of the division prior to Hall's hiring.

Hall informed the mayor's office in a Sept. 14 letter that he would be leaving. The housing

See **RESIGN, 12**

## College band leaders transform rock classics

Rivera, friends 'Get Ready' for symphony performance on Friday

By Ed Condran  
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Checking out a clip of Scorpions' "Rock You Like a Hurricane" with the Berlin Philharmonic or Metallica's "For Whom the Bell Tolls" with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra will give music fans an idea of what Peter Rivera's show will deliver Friday at the Fox

Theater.

The Berlin Philharmonic adds so much depth to "Rock You Like a Hurricane" that it hits the gut in a unique manner. Thanks to the San Francisco Orchestra's string section, "For Whom the Bell Tolls" surges like a tidal wave.

How will Rivera's classic Rare

See **RIVERA, 7**



COURTESY OF J. ALAN PAUL PHOTOGRAPHY

### IF YOU GO

**Peter Rivera's R&B Celebrate Symphony featuring Gonzaga's alumni horn section and Whitworth String Orchestra**

**WHEN:** 7 p.m., Friday.

**WHERE:** Fox Theater, 1001 W. Sprague.

**COST:** \$22, \$32 and \$42. VIP tickets are \$102. The VIP event is at 5:30 p.m.

**INFO:** 509-624-1200, foxtheaterspokane.org

**NOTE:** Proceeds will benefit both university music departments

## OFFICER FACES ASSAULT ACCUSATION

After investigating sexual assault allegation, Pullman police recommend Spokane police officer Andrew Richmond be charged. **NW, 1**

## CELEBRATING ROSH HASHANAH

Jewish community in Spokane and around the world ready for upcoming High Holy Days that begin Sunday evening. **SERENDIPITY, 1**

