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FEAST OF SAINT PATRICK

Missed last week's celebrations? There's still plenty of food, drink, live music events through the weekend. Also note: Green beer is out and Irish whiskey-inspired lucky libations are in. **FOOD, 1**



THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

WEDNESDAY, March 16, 2022

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Spokane, Washington

THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VA PROPOSES MORE SERVICES FOR VETERANS IN SPOKANE, RICHLAND

Fewer suggested for Walla Walla under sweeping plan unveiled Monday; Congress, commission must approve

By Orion Donovan-Smith
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs on Monday unveiled a sweeping set of recommendations that would expand health care services in Spokane, Richland and Yakima

while downsizing the VA hospital in Walla Walla, if Congress and an independent commission accept the proposal.

The recommendations are part of a process, mandated by Congress in 2018, that aims to modernize and adapt VA's network of 171 hospitals and more

than 1,100 clinics to meet the changing needs of the more than 9 million veterans who rely on them. The average VA facility was built nearly 60 years ago, according to the department, and in that time the nation's veteran

See **VETERANS, 9**

Spokane Children's Theater director resigns following allegations

By Emma Epperly
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

The director of Spokane Children's Theater resigned Tuesday following allegations of ignored concerns about predatory behavior by an employee now accused of raping a teen girl in the theater parking lot, discrimination against a transgender actress and a toxic work environment.

In a Facebook post Tuesday morning, the theater announced that Doug Beschta had resigned from his role as managing director. The theater also posted a new anti-discrimination policy and code of conduct for employees.

It's the first time the theater has made a public statement following the allegations that were

See **RESIGNS, 9**

WAR IN UKRAINE

Spokesman-Review reporter Eli Francovich is in Eastern Europe to cover stories with ties to Spokane. Francovich's articles will appear throughout the week. His trip was paid for largely by Spokesman-Review readers who have donated to the Community Journalism Fund and through the newspaper's Northwest Passages event series. To help support this trip and similar newsroom efforts, contributions can be made at www.spokesman.com/thanks.

Refugees, helpers face hurdles at border

As millions flee Ukraine, regulatory blocks, organizational issues slow aid

By Eli Francovich
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

WARSAW, Poland – Olga Gorbachova knew she had to act fast when war erupted in Ukraine.

She was born in Ukraine but is now a farmer in Australia. But her 76-year-old mother still lived in Kharkiv, a Ukrainian town less than 30 miles from the Russian border. As Russians advanced, her mother fled making it safely to Poland, where Gorbachova met her and now hopes to relocate her to Australia.

The only problem? Her mother doesn't have a passport.

That's why Gorbachova and her mom were waiting Tuesday in front of the Ukrainian consulate in Warsaw among at least 100 other refugees. The crowd

MORE ON UKRAINE

MOSCOW FORCES STEP UP UKRAINE BOMBARDMENT

An estimated 20,000 civilians flee encircled Mariupol by way of a humanitarian corridor.

NEWS, 3

was mostly women and children all whom hope to get a passport from the Ukrainian government so that they can go to other countries.

"She needs documents," Gorbachova said.

Others' stories echoed this sentiment, a repetitive dirge of

See **WARSAW, 7**



ELI FRANCOVICH/THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Ukrainian refugees crowd around a Ukrainian government official in front of the country's consulate office in Warsaw, Poland, on Tuesday. Many refugees don't have passports, but are applying in hopes of leaving.

Jimmy Fallon's team is Gonzaga – this year

'Tonight Show' host sends students Rowdy Rags with special game day request that includes Spice Girls lyrics

By Ed Condran
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Jimmy Fallon not only acknowledges that Gonzaga exists, the chat show host is championing the Bulldogs.

"The Tonight Show" host surprised Gonzaga nation, but not the university, when Fallon announced Monday night that he and his popular program are supporting the Bulldogs' run for their first NCAA basketball

crown.

"We were made aware of it (last Thursday)," Senior Associate Athletic Director Devon Thomas said. "We're super excited that they chose Gonzaga as their team for March Madness. It's great for our school and our program. It's awesome."

"Here at 'The Tonight Show' we like to pick a team to do something fun with every year,"

See **FALLON, 9**

MORE ON ZAGS

WHO WORE IT BEST?

John Blanchette ranks best players in Gonzaga history by jersey number. **SPORTS, 1**

ESPN'S FARNHAM/FLEMING TALK ON GU'S PROSPECTS

West Side broadcasting duo predicts the road ahead for GU. **SPORTS, 1**



THE TONIGHT SHOW

Some rain
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